

SAKE & WAGYU DINNER -日本酒と和牛食事会 –November 15, 2018

The 2018 Sake and Wagyu dinner was a sell out! Twenty two lucky people had the chance to try a range of different Nihonshu (Sake) products alongside perfectly matched seafood and Yakiniku meat.



It didn't take long for the volume to rise and laughter begin as people (many new to the ASJV), got to know each other and shared their common interests. Resident Sake guy Trevor Fleming and Sake Master Toshi Maeda presented contrasting Sake from Yamaguchi, Fushimi and Niigata whilst the delicious Robbins Island Wagyu from Tasmania was certainly a crowd favourite. The night was capped off with a HAIKU competition incorporating the theme of Yakiniku or Sake, with first prize going to AJSV member Owain Boushel.



What you thought you knew about Sake...

1) Sake is to be enjoyed HOT

Indeed, sake was traditionally served warmed. This was related to the fact that sake was, until about 30 or 40 years ago, much, much rougher, fuller, sweeter and woodier than it is now. Warming suited it much better back then. Nowadays the technology has improved and it has become a more refined beverage with delicate characters that will be masked when the sake is warmed.

2) Sake is high in alcohol

Although Sake holds the honour of being the only alcoholic product that can 'naturally' achieve up to 20% Alcohol, it is commonly watered down to smooth out the edges and reduced to between 13% and 16%. If there is 140ml in a standard glass of wine at 13% alc, you are ok to safely drink a 180ml (tokkuri or carafe) of Sake when you go to a restaurant and still be under the limit. A caveat to this is drinking hot sake, which will inevitably HIT you quickly as it enters your bloodstream faster. Beyond the normal pros and cons of alcohol consumption, sake is free from sulfites. It is also light and comparatively free of hangover-causing congeners. Premium sake is free from additives and preservatives.

3) You cannot match Sake with western food

Sake seems to go REALLY well with Japanese Food - on its HOME ground it's unbeatable! However, there are some rules you can depend on when enjoying sake with Western cuisine that are similar to matching wine and food.

- An oily dish of fish for example will work with an astringent style of sake ie, acid cutting through oil to create a harmony. (note
- An aromatic or herbal sake will go nicely with a similarly prepared dish that uses herbal elements.00

The basic idea is BALANCE – If the Sake is a delicate style – there's a good chance you will overpower it with a brash and full flavoured dish – but nothing beats experimentation.

4) Sake gets better with age

Unless the brewer is producing a line of sake that is destined as an aged sake (KOSHU), its best to drink sake as young as possible. Sake is usually brewed during winter and then stored for 6 months before distribution. By the time it gets to Australia, it will have been ready for 2-3 months so best to consume with two years of the production date on the bottle.



Thanks to Trevor, Toshi and the team at WagyuOne for putting on a great event and check out www.sakejapan.com.au to buy the products featured on the night.