



TOKYO
WHISKY & SPIRITS
COMPETITION

Tokyo Whisky & Spirits Competition TWSC2020 Results Announcement



Superior Gold Awarded to 12 Japanese and International Entries

Judging held remotely to prevent the spread of infection

The Tokyo Whisky & Spirits Competition, operated by the TWSC Executive Committee, is Japan's first whisky and spirits competition. Now in its second year, this year's Western spirits division featured 427 entries from inside and outside of Japan. The rigorous judging process was conducted entirely blindly, resulting in 12 Superior Gold winners, 79 Gold winners, 154 Silver winners, and 83 Bronze winners. To prevent the transmission of the novel coronavirus, this year's judging sessions were held remotely instead of in-person. New for the 2020 competition is a division for Japan's traditional spirit, shochu, where entries are still in the judging process. Results for the shochu division are expected to be available in mid-July.

Results

Superior Gold was awarded to entries that scored above a certain threshold. Entries were divided into spirits categories such as whisky, brandy, rum, gin, vodka, and tequila, as well as by country/region, primary ingredient, and maturation length. The below 12 entries have been awarded Superior Gold.



- Glenfarclas 1997 22 Years Old The Family Reserve (Scotch whisky/Single malt)
- Tomatin 30 Years Old (Scotch whisky/Single malt)
- The Essence of Suntory Whisky Yamazaki Distillery Refill Sherry Cask (Japanese whisky/Single malt)
- Komagatake 1991 28 Years Old Single Cask No.160 (Japanese whisky/Single malt)
- Rittenhouse Rye Bottled In Bond (American whiskey/Rye)
- Kavalan Solist Ex-Bourbon (World whisky/Single malt)
- Kavalan Solist Oloroso Sherry (World whisky/Single malt)
- Kavalan Solist Vinho Barrique (World whisky/Single malt)
- Jean Fillieux Christophe Fillieux No.1 (Cognac)
- Cane Island Nicaragua 12 Years Old Single Estate (Rum)
- Ron Abuelo Finish Collection XV Oloroso (Rum)
- Don Julio Anejo (Tequila)

In addition, 79 Gold winners, 154 Silver winners, and 83 Bronze winners have also been announced on the TWSC Official Homepage today.

Mamoru Tsuchiya, Chair of the TWSC Executive Committee, provided the below comments about trends within this year's field of winners:

"This year's results once again represent a strong showing from Taiwan, such as Kavalan. Though the panel of judges may have been somewhat tough on Scotch due to their extensive experience with the spirit, Taiwan has demonstrated their whisky-making prowess while simultaneously attracting international attention for their containment of the coronavirus. Compared to blended whiskies, single malts featured prominently in the awards. In American whiskey, we see a trend towards individuality, with rye whiskies earning higher ratings than Bourbon. In Japan, where many new distilleries are emerging, this year's new "Japanese New Make Whisky" category includes both Silver and Bronze winners with maturities under 2 years. These results in Japanese whisky exemplify the category's potential and gives us plenty to look forward to."

***Mamoru Tsuchiya is Japan's foremost whisky critic. For interview requests, please send inquiries to the representatives listed below.

What is TWSC?

In recent years, whisky and spirits have attracted unprecedented levels of attention. In Japan, 2016-18 saw the birth of several distilleries throughout the country, marking the start of the "Japan Craft Distillery Era." This phenomenon is not limited to Japan: it is also observed in Scotland, Ireland, Europe, the US, Canada, and even in Asian countries such as Taiwan and India.

Whisky and spirits from throughout the world congregate in Japan, and Japan domestically produces high quality whisky and other spirits. Thanks to winning awards at spirits competitions held in the UK and the US, "Japanese Whisky" and "Japanese Spirits" are internationally recognized categories. However, up until now, these competitions were "the world rating Japan" rather than "Japan rating the world." With the goals of further improving Japanese liquor and supporting drinking culture, TWSC was first held in 2019, garnering international attention by judging spirits here in Japan. In this second year of TWSC, a new division has been added for Japan's traditional spirit, shochu.

The rigorous judging process requires ratings be given based on blind tasting, where judges are not informed of the name of each spirit. Each entry is given a score of up to 100 points by 6-7 judges (4-6 this year due to remote judging), and the final result is the average of the judges' scores.

Coronavirus Countermeasures

Utilizing remote judging to continue TWSC2020

The first TWSC included a group judging session attended by roughly 180 judges in person. For TWSC2020, the judging session was initially delayed from March to May to prevent the spread of coronavirus infection, but this plan was abandoned. Instead, a remote judging process was devised where TWSC staff divvied each entry into 20ml mini bottles. These were then sent to judges with specific instructions regarding tasting order and glassware. Judges conducted tasting sessions of 5 to 8 items at a time at home or their place of work. Despite making every effort to reduce the manual labor associated with preparing those mini bottles, such as narrowing the judge pool from over 100 judges to 37 judges, TWSC staff hand-filled and shipped a total of over 2000 mini bottles.



Re-bottling into mini bottles



Mini bottles shipped with instructions for tasting order



Tasting using specified glassware

[TWSC2020 Information]

- Official Homepage <http://tokyowhiskyspiritscompetition.jp/>
- Judging Panel 37 judges such as famous bartenders from throughout Japan, Masters of Whisky, Whisky instructors, Spirits industry importers, sellers, and makers, and industry publication writers
- Categories 130 categories broken down by spirits (whisky, brandy, rum, gin, vodka, tequila, and other spirits), country/region, primary ingredients, and maturation length
- Entries Western spirits division: 427 entries
Shochu division: 258 entries
- Organizer Tokyo Whisky & Spirits Competition Executive Committee
- Executive Committee Chair Japan Whisky Research Centre President Mamoru Tsuchiya
- Planning/Operation Japan Whisky Research Centre
- With Support From Japan Tequila Association / R.U.M. JAPAN Association / Japan Vodka Association / Association Japonaise de Cognac / Japan Spirits & Liqueurs Makers Association / Women's Association for Japanese SAKE & WINE lovers, Embassy of Ireland / U.S. Agricultural Trade Office, American Embassy / Embassy of Armenia / Welsh Government Japan Representative Office / Embassy of the Republic of Armenia / Embassy of Canada / Embassy of Jamaica / Scottish Development International / Taipei Economic and Cultural Representative Office / Embassy of the Federal Republic of Germany / Embassy of México/

<Please direct all media inquiries to:>

Japan Whisky Research Centre PIC: Kato, Mochizuki Phone: +81-3-6277-4103
E-mail: twsc@scotchclub.org
Tokyo-to Shibuya-ku Hiroo 5-23-6 Hasegawa #10 Bldg. 2F 150-0012