

August 1, 2022

To whom it may concern,

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## Tokyo Whisky & Spirits Competition 2023

### Official Announcement

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※Image: Judging session of the 2019 competition

**On August 1, 2022, the Japan Whisky Research Centre announces the 5<sup>th</sup> holding of the “Tokyo Whisky & Spirits Competition 2023” (TWSC2023).**

With the first competition held in 2019, TWSC is now in its 5<sup>th</sup> year. From 2020, the Shochu Division was established, and now there are both Western Spirits and Shochu Divisions. 2022 saw the most entries ever: 519 brands in the Western Spirits Division, and 281 in the Shochu Division. 23 brands took home Superior Gold in the Western Spirits Division, 24 brands were awarded the same in the Shochu Division, and 5 brands were awarded Best of the Best.

Given the increased global interest in Japanese whisky and other spirits, TWSC’s profile has been raised amongst Asia’s largest and as Japan’s only spirits judging competition. Entries for the 2023 competition launch on September 1, 2022. More entries are expected for this year’s competition.

Held by: TWSC Executive Committee, planning/management by Japan Whisky Research Centre

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**Please direct inquiries to:**

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HP : <http://tokyowhiskyspiritscompetition.jp/>

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## What is the Tokyo Whisky & Spirits Competition (TWSC)?

- **One of Asia’s largest, and the only one in Japan**

TWSC is Japan’s only whisky, spirits, and shochu competition, and one of the largest in Asia. (TWSC2022 figures) 800 bottles entered / 251 whisk(e)y bottles, 268 spirits bottles, and 281 shochu bottles

- **Over 300 experts from across Japan**

The judge pool consists of bartenders, manufacturers, importers, and more, as well as Whisky Connoisseur certification holders. Over 300 spirits experts from across Japan.

- **Evaluation via blind tasting**

Because entries are judged via blind tasting, entries can be evaluated directly without any influence from unnecessary information.

- **Shochu judged by Western spirits experts**

A panel consisting of both western spirits and shochu experts judges the Shochu Division. Since TWSC’s experts’ tastes are more aligned with those of drinkers overseas, TWSC results can be a key to overseas success. TWSC also has a partnership with an English language website, enabling reach outside of Japan.

- **Several special awards**

Apart from Superior Gold, Gold, Silver, and Bronze medals, awards are also given for Best of the Best, Category Winner, Cost Performance, Design, Best Distillery, SDGs, and more. Multiple factors are evaluated.

- **Judge commentary feedback to entrants**

At TWSC, comments collected from judges are fed back to entrants. This is a free service provided for all entries, regardless of the awards. Rather than just results, judges’ scoring logic and suggestions for improvement are given to entrants, enabling future product/service quality improvement. Many entrants have found new aspects of their products as well as renewed confidence in their brands.



Best of the Best winners from 2022

## Tokyo Whisky & Spirits Competition 2023 details

### 【Western Spirits & Shochu Divisions】

- Entry period : Thursday September 1, 2022 – Wednesday December 15, 2022  
 ※Early bird discount (5% off) for entries by September 30
- Judging Round 1 (remote) : Mid January 2023 – Mid February
- Judging Round 2 (judging session) : Early March 2023 in Tokyo
- Results announced : May 2023
- Awards ceremony : End of June/early July 2023

For entry instructions, visit the TWSC Official Homepage or inquire to the TWSC office. Entry sheets and the category list will be announced in late August.

**TWSC Official Homepage** <https://tokyowhiskyspiritscompetition.jp/>

## Judging Methodology

### ○ Judging Standards

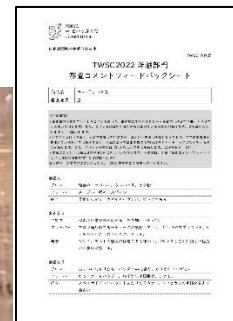
Prior to judging, all judges view an explainer video and taste the same sample to align their judging standards. The video is available online and viewable by anyone. To maintain a high level of transparency and fairness, TWSC’s scoring standards and methodology are made public.

### ○ Judging Round 1 [Remote Judging]

Entries to be rated are divided into mini bottles, then sent to judges along with designated tasting glasses. One judge is responsible for approximately 30 to 40 items. Each entry is judged by at least 10 judges. Judges evaluate entries blindly, and assign scores up to 100 points based on three aspects: 1) aroma, 2) flavor, and 3) overall.

### ○ Judging Round 2 [Judging Session] (TBD)

High-ranked items from Round 1 are evaluated again in Round 2. Each item is tasted blindly by 8 judges, who again assign scores up to 100 points.



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## Japanese Whisky Labeling Standards

The Japan Spirits & Liqueurs Makers Association implemented their “Standards for Labeling Japanese Whisky” on April 1, 2021. TWSC will accept entries based upon this standard. Please see the below page for details.

### **Japanese Whisky Definition at TWSC**

<https://tokyowhiskyspiritscompetition.jp/japanese/>

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## Japan Whisky Research Centre

The Japan Whisky Research Centre is an enthusiast organization headed by whisky critic Mamoru Tsuchiya that disseminates information about whiskies from across the world. Since its inception in March 2001, the organization has been involved in a variety of projects such as publishing Whisky Galore whisky magazine, running “Whisky Festival,” the “Whisky Connoisseur Qualification Certification Exam,” and “Whisky Kentei.” (Homepage: <https://scotchclub.org/>)

### **TWSC Executive Committee Chair/Japan Whisky Research Centre Representative Director Mamoru Tsuchiya**

Born in 1954 on Sado Island, Niigata Prefecture, Japan. As a whisky journalist utilizing his experience as a UK-based reporter from 1987 to 1993, he was named one of the "World's Best Five Whisky Writers" by Highland Distillers in 1998. Upon return to Japan, he established the Japan Whisky Research Centre (Scotch Whisky Research Centre at the time), and he has been passionately involved in spreading whisky and its culture throughout Japan via lectures, writing, running the Whisky Connoisseur exam, Whisky Festival, and Whisky Kentei, as well as publishing a whisky magazine. He was also the whisky historical investigator for NHK's serialized TV drama "Massan," which aired in 2014.

He has published several books such as The Complete Guide to Single Malt Whisky, The Complete Guide to Blended Whisky (Shogakukan), Taketsuru's Life and Whisky (Tokyo Shoseki), The Literacy of Whisky (Kadokawa), and Whisky for a Richer Life (MyNavi Books). He is the editor of the bimonthly "Whisky Galore" magazine.