

Honkaku-Shochu. Its History, Technology and Culture

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Summary

Honkaku-Shochu is Japanese traditional distilled liquor, dating back to at least 500 years ago. Various raw materials such as a sweet potato, rice and barley are used and there are many production centers distributed around Kyusyu.

The manufacturing process is unique in the way that microbes, fermentation and distillation are skillfully married together. Much wisdom was applied to overcome the problems of the sweet potato and the hot climate in the southern part of the country of Japan. After 1975, various novel types of shochu obtained by adopting new technologies were introduced, and this enlarged the market dramatically. In addition, adhesion to strict voluntary standards by Honkaku-shochu makers contributed greatly to winning the trust of consumers.