

SAKE-TASTING EVENT

Japanese brewers and Master Sake Sommelier Yuji Matsumoto to attend

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Sake-Tasting Event: Tradition~Taste~Trends

Invitations have been mailed to Houston-area Japanese and fusion restaurateurs, chefs, sommeliers and beverage distributors for the Tuesday, November 3, 2009 sake-tasting event from 2:00-4:00 p.m. at a private residence in the Piney Point Village area. Registration starts at 1:30 pm. *Although free, attendance is limited and advance registration is required.*

Coming from Japan are sake brewers **Yohei Ito**, Senior Managing Director, Akita Seishu (Dewatsuru Brand), established in 1865, and **Jouji Sato**, President of Hinomaru Brewery (Manabito Brand), founded in 1689. Los Angeles-based **Master Sake Sommelier Yuji Matsumoto** will conduct the sake-tasting.

Organized by JETRO-Houston with the support of Akita Prefecture, Consulate-General of Japan at Houston and the Japan-America Society of Houston, one may taste 15 super premium sake found in the ASPEC portfolio made from rice grown in specially commissioned, eco-friendly fields from 5 sake brewers.

Akita Sake Promotion and Export Council (ASPEC)

ASPEC is a new consortium of five award-winning breweries in Akita that have joined together to bring the best of their breweries to the United States. ASPEC brewers partner with nature to create sake that is balanced, the distilled essence of the nature that surrounds them. Akita Prefecture, one of Japan's most important sake-producing states, is cherished for its natural beauty and pure waters and is considered to be "The Empire of Beautiful Sake."



Master Sake Sommelier Matsumoto

Matsumoto, born in Japan just south of Tokyo, in 1991 became President of the first formal, full-training sushi school which he also founded in Venice, California. While educating others about sushi and Japanese food culture, he began to study sake and, in 2004, received the Sake Sommelier certificate from the largest sake organization in Japan, the Sake Service Institute (SSI). In 2006, Matsumoto represented the North America West Coast region for the World Sake Competition held in Tokyo where he became a finalist. He became the first and only Master Sake Sommelier in North America in 2008.

Matsumoto has held more than 300 seminars in the past four years, passionately sharing his knowledge in public sake tasting. He is frequently heard on radio programs and seen on TV shows about sake and Japanese culture and writes regular sake columns for leading food publications. He joined Kabuki Japanese Restaurants, Inc. in 2008 to expand the innovative chain's beverage program and serves as sake sommelier and beverage director for their locations in Southern California, Arizona and Las Vegas.

www.aspec-sake.com

www.learnaboutsake.com

www.jashhouston.org

www.houston.us.emb-japan.go.jp

www.jetro.org