

CHOYA Umeshu

A Brief Guide to Umeshu

Are you familiar with Japanese alcohol? In reality, there are so many types of alcohol in Japan- chūhai, highball, sake, shochū, umeshu, etc. In this issue, I would like to highlight my personal favourite, umeshu! It has a long history in Japan and is often consumed because of the health benefits it offers. Even for those who are not a big fan of alcoholic drinks, I am pretty sure you will fall in love with umeshu once you try it. It is sweet and silky, and gently goes down your throat.

About Umeshu

Umeshu, or *ume* fruit liqueur, is a popular Japanese alcohol drink. It is categorized as a liqueur, which is a type of distilled spirit. Authentic *umeshu* is made with only 3 ingredients- *ume*, sugar and distilled spirit (cane spirit, brandy, etc.). By ageing the entire fruit with the seed remains, *umeshu* contains the optimal balance of *ume* extract and alcohol. It is sweet and sour at the same time, with a smooth mouthfeel, and the aroma of *ume* fruit.



Ume Are Not Plums

Though frequently translated as "plum" in English, according to CHOYA, *ume* is actually neither plum nor apricot. Its scientific name is *Prunus mume Sieb. et Zucc.*, originated from China and can now be found in Japan, Korea, Taiwan and Vietnam. Each *ume* fruit contains multiple amino acids and organic acids. They are also higher in acidic content compared to plums. There are more than 300 species of *ume* in Japan, which grow only in special areas during the *tsuyu* rainy season.



Benefits of Umeshu

Due to the fact that *umeshu* contains 15 times more citric acid compared to lemon, along with other essential minerals and antioxidants it helps you to recover from burnout, boost your energy level, relieve and prevent certain digestive issues. Tasty *umeshu* also stimulates your appetite.

Brief History of Ume and Umeshu



Year 750: In the famous *Man'yōshū*, Japan's oldest collection of *waka* poems, *ume* blossoms are incorporated into 118 poems.

Year 1550: During the Sengoku (Warring States) Era, there were many feudal lords that ordered the planting of *ume* trees as a source of medicine in preparation for war.

Year 1697: The term *umeshu* appeared for the first time in the "*Honcho-shokkan*" book of Japanese cuisine. *Ume* is described as a medicinal agent that stops the accumulation of phlegm, relieves parched and sore throat, improves the appetite, and dissolves poisons.

Year 1904: *Umeboshi* became part of the food supplies sent to frontline soldiers during the Russo-Japanese War. The term *hi-nomaru bento* (a boxed lunch of white rice with a pickled *ume* in the centre, recalling the Japanese flag) originated during this time.

Year 1965: *Nanko-ume* is registered to the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry.

*Information adapted from independent research by CHOYA Umeshu Co., Ltd.

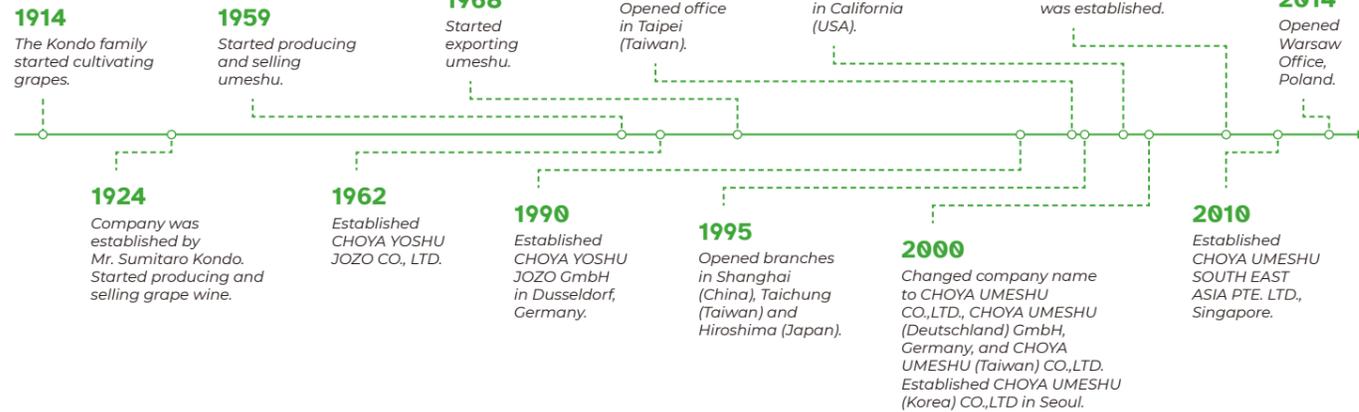
About CHOYA Umeshu

In this issue, Senyum would like to focus on a popular brand called CHOYA umeshu. As biggest producer of *umeshu* in the world, CHOYA is very particular about producing *umeshu* of the finest quality. You might be wondering, what makes CHOYA so unique amongst the many *umeshu* makers in Japan? Is it the ingredients that they use, or is it their manufacturing methods that make them stand out from the rest? Well, stay curious and keep reading, because I am going to reveal the special points of CHOYA's premium *umeshu*!

Mr. Kondo, President of CHOYA



History of CHOYA



CHOYA's Products

CHOYA produces a wide range of *umeshu*: for instance, non-alcoholic *umeshu*, brown sugar *umeshu*, etc. However, in this issue we would like to specially introduce you to **The CHOYA Extra Series** and **CHOYA Yuzu** with cooperation from JBrands.

The CHOYA Extra Series

The base ingredient of this series of *umeshu* is 100% premium Japanese Nanko *ume*, from a famous *ume* region called Kishu. These *umeshu* are made with special care and love.

CHOYA Yuzu

Made with the best *yuzu* citrus, 100% grown from Shikoku island. A delicious and refreshing infusion with extraordinary hints of floral wonder, thanks to the *yuzu* zest.



1 Extra Years (Main and original premium umeshu)

Sweet, nutty / smoky aroma with notes of almond and marzipan, balanced by natural acidity.

Alcohol: 17% alc./vol.
 Ingredients: *ume* fruit, sugar, cane spirit
 Special points:
 · Aged 2-3 years
 · Authentic, traditional style *umeshu*



2 Extra Shiso (Extra healthy premium umeshu)

Sweet with acidic notes of *ume* and exotic herbaceous aroma of *shiso* (Perilla leaves).

Alcohol: 17% alc./vol.
 Ingredients: *ume*, sugar, cane spirit, perilla extract,
 Special points:
 · Aged 2-3 years
 · No artificial colouring
 · *Shiso* may strengthen immune system and relieve allergies



3 Royal Honey (Most premium umeshu, contains royal jelly)

Mild sweetness and pleasant honey aroma followed by notes of almond and marzipan.

Alcohol: 17% alc./vol.
 Ingredients: honey, *ume* fruit, cane spirit, royal jelly
 Special points:
 · Aged 2-3 years
 · 100% natural honey with royal jelly, no sugar added
 · Contains over 40 different nutrients
 · Good for beauty (has anti-aging effect)
 · Controls hormonal balance

CHOYA Yuzu

Alcohol: 15% alc./vol.
 Content: 750ml
 Ingredients: sugar, *yuzu* and cane spirit
 Special point: natural top-quality *yuzu*, freshly harvested from Shikoku island. No artificial additives such as acidulants, colourings, flavourings, or preservatives.



Where to buy:

Village Grocer | B.I.G. | Jaya Grocer

For any inquiries:
 www.jbrands.com.my
 jbrandsmalaysia@gmail.com
 012-4535503

JBrands

Enjoy Umeshu! Bon Appétit~

Do you know that you can drink *umeshu* in many ways to get the best out of Japanese *ume*? There are some simple methods to enjoy this fruit liqueur. Alternatively, you can also turn it into cocktails!

Basic Ways to Drink



Straight: drink the chilled Umeshu in a cold glass



On the rocks



With hot tea/ water

Cocktails

CHOYA Mojito

Ingredients:
 · 45ml CHOYA
 · 2 tsp brown sugar
 · 8 mint leaves
 · 2 lime wedges
 · club soda to taste

Muddle the brown sugar, mint leaves, and lime wedges together in a tumbler, add the CHOYA and a dash of soda.



CHOYA Kamikaze

Ingredients:
 · 15ml CHOYA
 · 30ml vodka
 · 15ml lime juice

Pour the CHOYA, vodka, and lime juice into a cocktail shaker, and fill with ice cubes. Shake well then strain into a martini glass.



CHOYA Yuzu Fizz

Ingredients:
 · 1 part CHOYA Yuzu
 · 2 parts soda
 · wedge of lime

Pour the CHOYA Yuzu into a highball glass, top up with the soda, and add a wedge of lime.



CHOYA Sparkling

Ingredients:
 · 1 part CHOYA
 · 2 parts soda

Mix the CHOYA and gin in a martini glass, serving over crushed ice if desired.



CHOYA Golden Bridge

Ingredients:
 · 45ml CHOYA Honey
 · 20ml vodka

Mix the CHOYA Honey and vodka in a martini glass.



CHOYA Red + Champagne

Ingredients:
 · 60ml CHOYA Shiso
 · 60ml Champagne

Pour the CHOYA Shiso into a Champagne glass, top up with Champagne.



Yuzu Mojito

Ingredients:
 · 60ml CHOYA Yuzu
 · 8 mint leaves
 · a dash of club soda
 · crushed ice

Muddle the mint leaves and CHOYA Yuzu in a tumbler. Add the crushed ice and club soda. Stir gently.



Yuzukaze

Ingredients:
 · 3 parts CHOYA Yuzu
 · 1 part white curaçao
 · 1 part lime juice
 · ice cubes

Pour the CHOYA Yuzu, white curaçao, and lime juice into a cocktail shaker and fill with ice cubes. Shake well, then strain into a martini glass.



CHOYA Gin

Ingredients:
 · 7 parts CHOYA
 · 3 parts gin

Mix the CHOYA and gin in a martini glass, serving over crushed ice if desired.



Main Course and Dessert

Umeshu is not just for drinking, you can use it to cook wholesome meals too! Let's look at these easy and tasty recipes that you can make at home using CHOYA *Umeshu*.



Umeshu Japanese Curry

Simmer one or two deseeded *ume* with the curry. This gives it a rich and mild taste. The spiciness of the curry and the sweet-sour taste of the *ume* go well together.



Umeshu Jelly

Soak the gelatin powder in water, then heat up in a pot. After it gets soft, add lemon juice and plum wine (diluted with water). Pour the cooled gelatin solution into cups containing *ume* fruits. Store the jelly in the fridge until solidified.



Umeshu Donuts

Mix ready-made pancake mix, milk and eggs together into dough. Then, cut into equal size of any shape. Wrap an *ume* fruit in the middle of each dough piece. Roll into bite-sized balls. Deep fry in oil and sprinkle with cinnamon sugar. Simple and tasty!

J-Brands (M) Sdn Bhd is the exclusive and sole distributor of premium CHOYA Umeshu in Malaysia. All of their products are 100% authentic and imported directly from CHOYA Umeshu in Japan. Thanks to JBrands, we can now shop *umeshu* online and get it delivered right to our doorstep!

EDITOR'S NOTE

Just like any other Japanese products, CHOYA's *Umeshu* is of exceptional quality because it is manufactured with the Japanese kodawari spirit (a relentless pursuit of perfection). I always believe that outstanding Japanese products deserve to gain more exposure in Malaysia. Now, how about getting one (or more) *umeshu* this weekend to wind down?



(Vender ♡)