



## Liquor Burn's Guide to Japanese Plum Wine 梅酒 (Umeshu)



Japanese plum wine, or ume-shu (sounds like 'eww-may-shoe'), is a liqueur made from steeping ume (Japanese plums), while still unripe and green, in alcohol and sugar. Simple! In Japan shochu is typically used to make umeshu. Umeshu has a sweet flavor and aroma. It is also slightly sour. It often appeals to people who dislike alcohol. It typically has an alcohol content of about 10%~15% by volume, which is similar to sake.

Like shochu, umeshu is enjoyed in a variety of ways. Many people enjoy drinking it neat or on the rocks. It can be served hot or cold depending on the season and personal preference. It also mixes well with soda, tonic, or green tea. There are also many umeshu cocktails in Japan.

★ Pro Tip: You can identify a bottle of umeshu by looking for these kanji characters: 梅酒. Some bottles also come with the plums inside. A sour treat! Yum.

### Umeshu 101: How it's Made

The process for making umeshu is similar to many other types of fruit liqueurs. Professional producers in Japan have developed very refined methods for making premium quality umeshu. However, Japanese people also enjoy making their own umeshu at home. It is often a family tradition. Let's take a look!

#### Japanese Recipe for Homemade Umeshu

##### Ingredients:

- Unripe green ume fruits
- Sugar. Rock sugar is preferred but granulated sugar can be used if you remember to shake the container often. This keeps the sugar from settling at the bottom.
- Shochu, or a similar spirit such as vodka.
- Time! 1 or more years.



**Directions:**

1. Wash the ume and remove the stem pit at the top. Let the ume dry.
2. Weigh the ume on a scale. The sugar needed is typically half the weight of the fruit. For example, 1kg of ume fruit will require .5 kg of sugar. The shochu needed is about 1L for every 1kg of ume.
3. Thoroughly clean and sterilize a large jar or container that has an airtight top.
4. Put a layer of ume in the jar. After this put a layer of sugar on top of the ume. Repeat the process until you have used everything. Some people also layer in shiso leaves!
5. Fill the jar with shochu. The liquor must completely cover the fruit. Make sure to leave a few inches of air at the top of the jar.
6. Seal the lid tight and store the jar in a cool dark place. Wait 6 months and remove the ume. It is also common to keep the ume in the jar for longer. Let the umeshu settle and mature for another few months before drinking. For best taste one to two years is recommended for making umeshu. Some people wait even longer!



★★ Pro Tip: Make two batches at a time. One batch you can drink after one year and the other batch you can drink after two years. Enjoy the difference!

**Beyond the Home**

This simple example gives you the basic concepts behind the making of umeshu. Japanese producers have turned umeshu into an art, much like fine wine or sake. Please enjoy the many delicious varieties of premium umeshu! Let's take a look at the recommended bottles at Liquor Burn Gion.

## Recommended Umeshu 梅酒

English	Japanese 日本語	Price	No.
"Kiss of Peach" by Takara Brewery	宝 桃のくちどけ	¥ 1300	50
Ume Genshu Shirakaga by Sapporo	S p 梅原酒 白加賀	¥ 1250	51
'The Black' by Choya	チヨーヤ ザ・ブラック	¥ 895	52

