

# Hitotoki Junmai Kioke Jikomi



A very special project by Imayo Tsukasa with this sake produced in Kioke Jikomi, in cedar wood barrels. The difficulty was to adjust the balances, without scarring too much. The result is very interesting, a nose with discreet woody scents and a rich sake with marked umami and a long finish.

## A sake produced in cedar barrels

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72cl - alc. 15% vol.

Product Type: Sake Nihonshu

Category: Junmai

Alcohol: Alc. 15% Vol.

Format: 72cl bottle

Producer: Imayo Tsusaka

Region: Pref. of Niigata

Rice type: Gohyakymangoku

Rice milling: 65%

Tasting temp.: Cold to room temp.

Aromatic profile: Mineral, vivid

**About the project :** Traditionally, barrels made from sugi wood (Japanese cedar) were used to produce sake, miso and soy sauce. Wood provides the most favourable conditions for fermentation, with microbial flora helping the reactions. What's more, the use of this material allows more flexible control of temperature and humidity. But after the destruction of the Second World War, the whole country had to be rebuilt, and the use of wood was favoured for houses, to the detriment of other traditional uses, including sake production. Added to this was the disappearance of many cask-making specialists, and with them their know-how. Breweries could no longer maintain wooden casks, so they switched to enamelled steel vats. Today, a few workshops have gone back to making cedar casks, but only one of them, Fujii, is capable of producing containers large enough for sake production. It is these casks that Imayo Tsukasa has chosen to use.

Hitotoki sake is produced during the coldest period of the year, from the end of January, and the casks are used exclusively for the production of this sake. The idea is to control the impact of the wood on the nose, and to add very light woody touches, while keeping the sake clean and easy to drink. Indeed, the aromas brought on by the wood during fermentation have to work perfectly with the sake's own aromas, in other words the challenge was to turn the woody aromas to the sake's advantage. In the past, sakes produced in this way had strong woody notes, but with unpolished rice, rich sakes with strong umami and lots of flavour, sweetness and colour. Sakes that today would be considered unsophisticated. But Imayo Tsukasa's style is rather clear and delicate, with sakes that are light and easy on the palate.

**Detailed tasting notes :** A special project by Imayo Tsukasa with this sake produced in Kioke Jikomi, Japanese cedar wood casks. It is made during the coldest period of the year, from the end of January, and the barrels are used exclusively for its production. The idea is to control the impact of the cask. The challenge was met, as the aromas of cedar work to the sake's advantage. The nose has discreet woody notes and scents of resin. The palate is rich, with pronounced umami and a long finish. Imayo Tsukasa's clear, delicate style is wonderfully reproduced in this light, mouth-watering sake.

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**Serving suggestions :** Enjoy chilled as an aperitif or with a meal. It goes wonderfully well with shellfish, white fish and simply prepared dishes.