

The 2024 Sake Professional Course Level II
with SEC-certification testing for
Advanced Sake Professional Certification
To be held **February 13-17, 2024**



The Sake Professional Course Level Two with SEC-backed Advanced Sake Professional certification testing will focus on taking your current presumably high level of understanding related to sake to the next level. This will include plenty of new material not presented anywhere else in English.

The main objectives of Level II are to seriously deepen your understanding of the sake world and how sake is made, and then focus on developing tasting skills and an understanding of styles, quality levels, and potential faults through focused and guided tasting exercises.

We will talk in much more depth about the production process, including details such as temperature curves and times for koji making, moto preparation, and how changing these affects everything else. We will also discuss rice distribution in Japan and how it affects the sake world.



However, the course will focus mostly on tasting exercises designed to attune palates to things like rice varieties, yeast differences, pasteurization related issues, grades and production methods, and levels of maturity. These will include taking copious notes on blindly tasted sake, and discussing these openly, as well as exercises geared toward assessing and blindly identifying various sake styles and characteristics.

I have again convinced good friend and well known and prominent taster Haruo Matsuzaki to give us a lecture and guided tasting on sake from all over Japan and what affects style, and how to improve our tasting skills and abilities. Matsuzaki-san has easily taught me more about sake than any other single person over the years, and the few hours that he gives us will be invaluable.

We will furthermore have a lecture in English from Shuso Imada, an industry consultant that is currently working at the Information Center at the Japan Sake and Shochu Producer's Association on the state of the sake industry from an insider's point of view.

The above will take two full days to complete. Each evening will again be spent at a restaurant replete with a range of good sake to which you need to be exposed.

The third day we will take a bus out to Nagano to visit the two breweries making Masumi sake, the company name of which is Miyasaka Jouzo.

The morning of the fourth day will be set aside for the Level II test, about which more information will be provided. It will be mostly short-answer (rather than multiple choice) questions and incorporate a tasting element as well. That afternoon we will head down by bus to Kanagawa Prefecture to see the micro-compact-sakagura making the wonderful sake Tensei. We will then enjoy dinner in their old, cavernous incredibly charming kura environs.



Day five will be a trip to another sake brewery, Izumibashi in Kanagawa, the brewery making the eponymous sake Izumibashi. We will wrap the week up on Saturday after that visit, at about noon or a bit later. It will be an intense, sake-centric educational week!

The cost for SPC2 will be USD\$1500, and payment will be handled via Paypal, and the deadline for payment will be December 18th. (Please be sure to bear the Paypal charges on your end.) For those that live in Japan and can send payment via domestic wire transfer, the amount will be JPY 215,000 for the five days' course. Unfortunately, I am not able to accept international wire transfers; your understanding is appreciated.

Dinner with sake will be included Monday, Tuesday and Thursday, and lunch will be included on Wednesday, but other meals will not be included in the tuition. Travel expenses such as train and bus, and accommodations are also to be paid separately by each participant.



Your local travel expenses will include minimal train travel around Tokyo, and your share for the bus trips up to Masumi in Nagano and Tensei in Kanagawa. We will be renting a limousine bus and splitting the costs amongst us, and with 20 people it should be about 20,000 yen each person (round trip) for both days combined. Saturday, the trip to the third brewery of the course, Izumibashi, will be out of pocket too, but will only be a few hundred yen as we will go by local train.

Important: Please note, *this time we will be asking participants to find and arrange their own hotel arrangements*, as well find your own way to the venue. We will of course help with a list of suggested hotels in the area, maps and walking instructions to the venue, and more. But since everyone has a smart phone these days (right?), map applications should help immensely. Your willingness to cooperate on these two points will be very much appreciated. Please find a hotel within a reasonable distance of the venue. The JSS is located in the NS Toranomom Building, 1 Chome-6-15 Nishishinbashi, Minato City, Tokyo 105-000, phone 03-3501-0101

Here is the address in Japanese:

〒105-0003 東京都港区西新橋 1 丁目 6 番 15 号 日本酒造虎ノ門ビル

[Here is a link](#) to the Google Map for the JSS.

The schedule is as below. Note, the evening venues have yet to be determined, and content is subject to change.

Tuesday, Day 1 (February 13)

9:30 – 12:00 Intro, Orientation, Review of Production Process, Other Topics

12:00 – 3:30 Continuation of program, Rice Production, Rice Distribution

3:00 – 5:00 Guest Lecture by Shuso Imada, the state of the industry

Dinner at a sake pub

Wednesday, Day 2 (February 14)

9:30 – 12:00 Lecture, Tasting with Haruo Matsuzaki .

12:00 – 1:00 Lunch

1:00 – 5:00 Extensive tasting practice

Dinner at a sake pub

Thursday, Day 3 (February 15)

7:00 am – 7:00 pm Visit the two Masumi kura in Nagano

Evening: free time to study or rest

Friday, Day 4 (February 16)

Testing day

9:00 – 12:00 ASP Exam

3:00 Kumazawa Shuzo, primo brewer of Tensei in Kanagawa for tour and dinner.

Saturday, Day 5 (February 17)

7:00 – 12:00 Visit to Izumibashi brewery in Kanagawa.

(end)