

### **Tsuki no Katsura (Masuda Tokubee Shōten)**

Masuda Tokubee Shōten was established in 1675, and its sake-making traditions have been carefully handed down for more than three centuries. Today, the brewery is presided over by its fourteenth-generation owner, sake aficionado, and author Masuda Tokubee XIV.

During the Edo period (1603–1867), Masuda Tokubee Shōten was an inn on the road south from Kyoto with a side business selling rice. When the Boshin War (1868–1869) broke out, the Masuda family supported the shogunate against the ultimately victorious pro-emperor rebels. During the Battle of Toba-Fushimi (January 1868), the brewery was destroyed in the fighting by the rebels.

Masuda Tokubee Shōten was the first to make *nigori* sake, a milky, rough-filtered sparkling sake in the 1960s. It still makes it today under the brand Tsuki no Katsura. Tsuki no Katsura *nigori* is bottled while it is still fermenting, giving it its distinct effervesce.

Unlike wine, it is generally necessary to drink Japanese sake while it is still relatively “young”—that is, within a short time after its production. However, it is possible to age sake. When Tokubee XIV’s father, Keiichi, began aging sake in 1961, he took inspiration from the family’s copy of an Edo-period dictionary of culinary culture, the *Honchō shokkan*. Today, Masuda Tokubee Shōten is well known for the quality of its *koshu*.