

Gekkeikan Ōkura Sake Museum

The Gekkeikan Ōkura Sake Museum is housed in a converted sake brewery building built in 1909. The museum was opened in 1982 and presents a comprehensive history of sake production in Fushimi. Around 400 tools used in Gekkeikan's historical production process are on permanent exhibit. The museum traces Gekkeikan's history from 1637, when it was founded as the Kasagiya brewery, through its boom years in the 1890s and up to the present day.

The museum entrance is a replica of a Taishō era (1912–1926) sake shop, and huge vintage wooden sake tubs are on display in the inner courtyard between the museum and the Uchigura brewery building.

The Uchigura contains a fermentation room, where sake continues to be produced year-round at an output of about 40 kiloliters—approximately the same yearly output as the whole company in 1637. The fermentation room contains several huge, open-topped vats that contain fermenting sake. The fermenting mash can be seen through special glass windows set in the side of each vat.

Inside the museum building are individual exhibits of sake-making tools that were used to brew sake before industrialization at the end of the nineteenth century. Also on display is the specific history of Gekkeikan sake, in particular its Tama no Izumi brand. Fans of package and graphic design will enjoy seeing how sake bottles and advertising materials have evolved over the centuries. One particularly rare bottle bears a label stating, “Made in Occupied Japan,” and another is over 70 centimeters tall. The latter was used only for advertising purposes—if filled with sake, it would be too heavy to lift, let alone pour.

Visitors can sample a representative range of the company's sake in a fully stocked tasting area.