

### **Momo no Shizuku (Matsumoto Shuzō)**

Over the years, the clear spring waters of Fushimi have attracted sake brewers from outside the city, and Matsumoto Shuzō is a prime example. The brewery was founded in 1791 in the Higashiyama district of Kyoto by Matsumoto Jihei (dates unknown). In 1922 the company, attracted by the pure water of Fushimi, established a second location beside the Takasegawa River. Today, the brewery's tall red brick chimney is a prominent landmark.

Matsumoto Shuzō specializes in *junmai* sake, which is produced without the addition of brewer's alcohol. In particular, Matsumoto Shuzō is known for a sake called Momo no Shizuku, which means "dewdrops of the peach" in reference to a poem by legendary wandering haiku master Matsuo Bashō (1644–1694). Momo no Shizuku has been brewed since 1983.

In 1685, Bashō was in the Fushimi area visiting his close friend and fellow haiku poet Ninkō (1606–1686), the abbot of Saiganji temple. Expressing his deep respect for his friend and the hope to be blessed with even a shred of the priest's holy virtue, Bashō crafted the following poem:

*waga kinu ni*  
*Fushimi no momo no*  
*shizuku seyo*

On my silk robe  
put a drop  
of the peaches of Fushimi

In Bashō's day, the Japanese peaches (*momo*) of Fushimi were rare and commanded a high price. By choosing a name that references Bashō's poem, Matsumoto Shuzō aims to convey the spirit of respect, humility, and gentle luxury that infuses its sake.