

Keichō (Heiwa Shuzō)

Heiwa Shuzō was founded by a rice trader from Kawachi in southern Osaka Prefecture named Kawachiya Yohei (dates unknown), who became successful in central Osaka's Kyōbashi district. By 1744, the rice-trading company had moved to Fushimi and begun to produce and sell sake with the permission of the local government—the Fushimi magistrate's office strictly controlled how many companies were allowed to make sake. By the beginning of the Meiji era (1868–1912), Heiwa Shuzō had become one of Fushimi's most successful sake producers by volume.

As Japan began to modernize in the late 1800s, the Kawachiya family collected rent from farmers in the form of rice, which it used to produce a sake called Keichō. The Heiwa Shuzō joint-stock company was founded in 1948 during the postwar period when farming techniques underwent great changes along with economic development. For a time, the company specialized in selling sake to other breweries, but in 1989 Heiwa Shuzō relaunched the Keichō brand, selling directly to customers. Its trademark *junmai daiginjō* sakes, Keichō Fushimi no Sake and Keichō Koban, are well known for their dryness—an unusual trait for Fushimi sake.

Currently housed on the first floor of an inconspicuous apartment building in the heart of Fushimi, Heiwa Shuzō maintains the traditional brewing techniques that have brought it success since the mid-eighteenth century.