

Sake

Sado Island, like Niigata Prefecture in general, is famous for its rice and for the dry sake (*karakuchi*) that is brewed from it. Sado was once home to 200 sake breweries, but now only five remain. Hokusetsu Shuzo produces YK35, a *daiginjo* (the highest-grade sake) which is served in luxury restaurants around the world. Kato Shuzoten is famed for Kintsuru, a *junmai* (pure sake made without added alcohol or sugar). Obata Shuzo is run by a young couple and is known for both its Manotsuru brand and for innovative undertakings such as the *gakkogura* project, in which a brewery to produce Obata's sake was built inside a former school. Tenryo no Sato makes the Tenryohai brand, while Henmi Shuzo, the smallest brewery on Sado and the owner of the Itaru and Shinryo brands, has been brewing sake since the Meiji era (1868–1912).

Brewery tours are available for a behind-the-scenes look, and a bottle of sake makes for a special souvenir to take home. Despite its high quality, the price of sake produced on Sado is relatively low. The *honjozo* type, which has a light taste and fruity aroma, is recommended for first-timers.