



Uméshu 梅酒 PLUM WINE

Made from *ao umé* plums, *koorizatō* rock sugar and *shōchū*

Green plums (*ao umé*) are better suited for *uméshu* (plum wine); Yellow-with-blush *umé* are better for *uméboshi*.



Prepare plums: Soak fruit in fresh cold water for 1-2 hours (leeches out tannins). Gently but thoroughly pat each plum dry. Moisture and/or bruises and scratches create an opportunity for unwanted molds to flourish.

Most importantly, to prevent mold, carefully and completely remove the stem from each piece of fruit. Use a toothpick, angled to gouge out the stem bit.



To make 1800 ml (scant gallon) *uméshu*:

Use a 4-liter (generous gallon) lidded glass container (left).

1 kilogram (about 2.2 lbs) *ao umé* plums

500 grams (generous 1 lb) *koorizatō* rock sugar *

1,800 ml *shōchū* (35 proof) **

* Japanese *koorizatō* 氷砂糖 (literally “ice” sugar), is most often called rock sugar in English. The origin of both names lies in the shape of the sugar: resembling chunks of ice and/or rocks. Both *koorizatō* rock sugar and table sugar are formed from saturated sugar solutions: *koorizatō* rock sugar is more concentrated than table sugar. A pound of granulated table sugar fills approximately 2 cups (dry measure).

* * *Shōchū* 焼酎 a Japanese distilled beverage similar to vodka, usually less than 45% alcohol by volume. Can be made from millet, rice, sweet potatoes, barley, soba, chestnuts, sesame, black sugar

GUIDE to making *uméshu*

- **Prepare container...**

Wash and dry a clean glass, lidded container. Invert and let drip-dry. Suggestion: place on *waribashi* (disposable wooden) chopsticks to be sure air circulates.

- **Layer *ao umé* plums and *koorizatō* rock sugar...**

Begin with a layer of plums and alternate fruit with rock sugar to use all the plums and sugar listed above. The container should appear about 2/3 full.



- **Add *shōchū***

Pour in full amount of *shōchū* listed above and close container. Label the container; include the DATE and QUANTITIES of each ingredient used. Set aside in a **COOL, DARK, DRY** location.

Enjoyable after 6 weeks though often best after 6 months.

DO NOT STIR or MIX or AGITATE. Within 48 hours most of the rock sugar will “melt.” Pictured at side:
Left = 1 month later
Right = 1 year later



TAKARA brand's *kajitsushu no kisetsu* (Kirin, Suntory also make similar products)

Takara brand *shōchū* (35 proof) is sold in various sizes. Most convenient for making fruit liquors is either 900ml OR 1800 ml cardboard “bottle.” *Koorizatō* rock sugar is typically sold in 1kilo bags.