

Sake is a rice based alcoholic drink of Japanese origin. The earliest recorded use of sake dates to 710. In English sake is referred to as a rice wine, however, unlike wine, sake is made through a brewing process like that of beer. Therefore it is more like a rice brew than a rice wine. Sake is made from rice, water and koji mould. Rice categorized as “sake” rice has large grains and other characteristics that typically make it less desirable to eat. The process used to remove the husk of the rice is referred to as polishing; the more polished the rice, the more superior the taste. The water used in making sake has an effect on the taste and is therefore an important component. Koji mould is the final ingredient added during the brewing process. Koji is steamed rice that has had koji mould spores cultivated on it. This creates several enzymes that are used to break down starches in the rice into sugars that can be fermented, ultimately producing carbon dioxide and alcohol. Good quality sake is served chilled, or at room temperature in winter. Heating sake masks the flavours and aromas and is why lesser quality sakes are served warm.

Course 1

Oysters on the Half Shell

Raw- Caviar & Caviar

Paired with **“Nakano Shuzo Indigo Wind Junmai” Sparkling Sake**

\$10 – 200mL

Sparkling sake is still relatively rare. It is made the same way as regular sake, except the fermentation is halted when the alcohol is, in this case, 6%. The sake is then pressed and bottled. There are plenty of natural sugars left, so a secondary fermentation occurs, thus creating the sparkle. They should always be served chilled. An excellent pairing with kusshi oysters served raw. Very similar flavour profile of soft creaminess that caresses the palate.

Tempura- Tagorahi Aioli

Paired with **“Sakehitosuji Jungin Black Sake”**

\$37 – 720 mL

Ginjo Shu is a sake made from rice polished to 60% or less – very high quality. An incredible herbal bouquet and sweet floral tones. The palate is soft and silky with an enticing suggestion of nuts and a delicious, lengthy dry finish.

Broiled – Sorrel Crumb

Paired with “**Gekkeikan Horin Junmai Daiginjo Sake**”

\$19 – 300 mL

Using select rice polished to 50% of its original size, this ultra premium junmai daiginjo (refers to the quality ranking of the sake – like a VQA measuring Canada’s wine quality) sake is slowly fermented at low temperatures to give it a refreshing fruit like aroma and mild flavour. Crisp and refreshing on the palate.

2009 Domaine des Echardieres Touraine Sauvignon (Loire Valley, France) Wine - White \$19.99 (750mL)

An amazing nose of freshly mowed grass on the exuberant nose. On the palate, there is plenty of citrus fruit and berries leading to along dry mouthfeel of lemongrass and gooseberry aftertaste. Exotic and beguiling. Pair with asparagus quiche, light fish dishes or French goat cheese

2007 Cune Viña Real Crianza (Rioja, Spain) Wine - Red \$22.99 (750mL)

The Compania Vinícola del Norte de España, better known as "Cune'," is one of the leading traditional Rioja producers. These wines are all highly reliable, and consistently rank among the best of the traditional-styled Riojas. They age well, and even the entry-level wines are interesting. The higher-end offerings are usually somewhat closed and inaccessible in their youth, but evolve immensely with proper cellaring.

Full aromas ripe, autumn, red and purple fruit, especially raspberries. The palate is very well- structured, with plenty of fine, lingering rich fruit and lively tannins. The finish is elegant and long.

2005 Villa Gresti Antonio Galloni,

Rating: 92

The 2005 Villa Gresti (90% Merlot, 10% Carmenere) is elegant and harmonious as it caresses the palate with tons of super-ripe dark fruit, grilled herbs, minerals and new leather. The wine turns brooding on the palate, as notes of scorched earth, smoke and tobacco emerge, adding further complexity. This is a very serious and totally delicious wine from Tenuta San Leonardo. Anticipated maturity: 2010-2023.

Gary Monk Seigerebbe

This wine is the personal favourite of Gray Monk co-proprietor, Trudy Heiss.

Elegant in appearance with honey blonde and light straw hues, the wine has a layered aroma of rose petals, spice and grapefruit with flavours of pink grapefruit and tangerine. Medium-bodied and supple in texture, the wine has a fresh and lively finish. Off-dry but well-balanced, it should be served chilled as an aperitif.

2010 Lunae Colli di Luni Vermentino (Liguria, Italy) Wine - White \$21.99 (750mL)

Vermentino is an aromatic white varietal whose native habitat is now the Italian region of Liguria and the Mediterranean islands of Corsica and Sardinia. Some authorities believe that it was imported into these regions from Spain. It is also becoming increasingly popular in the Languedoc-Roussillon region of France.

Excellent fruit, with good body and acidity. Look for the lemon and pineapple notes in this crisp, dry wine.

NV Profumi della Costiera Limoncello (Ravello, Italy) Spirits - Liqueurs \$34.99 (700mL)

A sweet and acidic lemonade stand for grown-ups, ideal ending for a dinner of Southern Italian style seafood and pasta with a nearly frozen glass of this. Quite superb!