

Press Release



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Waku Ghin gathers 10 top Sake Masters for exclusive sake event

Sake Samurai Tetsuya Wakuda raised sake awareness with Masterclass and gala dinner

Singapore (3 May 2012) - For the first time in recent sake making history, 10 top Sake Masters have gathered outside of Japan for an exclusive Sake Masterclass and Sake Samurai dinner at Marina Bay Sands, Singapore.

Organized by renowned chef Tetsuya Wakuda, the one-day-only event on 28 April saw the presence of 10 famous sake producers from Japan, including Mr. Yohji Teraoka (Isojiman), Mr. Ryuichiro Masuda (Masuizumi) and Mr. Atsuhide Kato (Born). The oldest brewery present for this event is the 871-year-old Sudohonke, which was represented by Mr. Genemon Sudo, its 55th generation sake master.

Specially imported bottles of the most premium and rare sakes from Japan were showcased to an appreciative audience, including the debut of an exclusive label for Chef Tetsuya's award-winning restaurant Waku Ghin.

Steeped in history, sake making has long been part of Japanese culture, with centuries-old production processes and tradition revered and upheld up to this day by the closely-knit sake brewery industry. Sake's inherent complexities and aromas have made it increasingly popular around the world in recent years; with its rising prominence celebrated by chefs such as Tetsuya Wakuda.

Appointed the first Sake Samurai outside of Japan in 2006, Chef Tetsuya said, "I've been hosting sake events in my Sydney restaurant for the past 10 years, and every year, we've had such positive feedback from our audience. The Singapore sake event is back for the second year, and it is bigger in scale. I am extremely honored that 10 sake masters showed their gracious support and brought along some of the best sake in their collections."

In the Masterclass session, invited guests were brought on a journey of discovery on the intricate world of sake making and tasted different flavour profiles of the beverage. Mr Kenichi Ohashi, a leading Japanese wine and sake distributor who is a certified Master of Sake (SSI) and Sake Expert Assessor (NRIB) led the session and brought the nuances and aromas of *daigingo* and *junmai* sakes to the tasting table. This includes *Born Tokusen Junmai Daiginjo* from Kato kichibee Shoten, Fukui prefecture - reportedly the Japanese Prime Minister's favourite sake.

In the evening's Sake Samurai Dinner, Chef Tetsuya's kitchens served 10 exceptional courses featuring creations such as Poached New Season White Asparagus with Sea Urchin and Asparagus Cream, Oscietre Caviar and Ohmi Beef Roll. To enhance the dining experience, Sake Masters interacted with guests throughout the dinner as their sakes were presented to the table. Some of the sakes featured include *Masuizumi Junmai Dai Ginjo Special 2004*, a smooth and sweet vintage sake as well as the elegantly aromatic *Sakuramasamune Oukaichirin Dai Ginjo*.

Guests were also among the first to try the new label produced specially for Waku Ghin by Isojiman Shuzo Corporation from Shizuoka prefecture. Isojiman produces some of the most well-regarded premium sakes in Japan, whose limited quantities and exclusive distribution lists means they are typically experienced by only a handful each year. This marks the first time Isojiman is producing an exclusive restaurant label *Waku Ghin Isojiman Junmai Daiginjo M*, with a limited number of bottles available.

Said Chef Tetsuya, "Sake has long been associated with Japanese cuisine, but its versatility, nuances and subtlety allows it to balance and enhance other types of cuisine too. It's indeed my honor to be able to celebrate sake and share my passion with other like-minded gourmands in a culinary destination like Marina Bay Sands. We are also extremely grateful to the sake masters' participation in making this event a great success."

As part of the Sake Samurai Dinner, an auction of Chef Tetsuya's private sake collection was also held to raise funds for the "Momo-Kaki Orphans Fund". Prized sake, including an 18-litre Masuizumi Kotobuki, one of only three bottles of its kind in the world, was auctioned for the cause.

The Japanese foundation looks after the long-term education needs of children who have been orphaned by the 2011 Great East Japan Earthquake. Inspired from the proverb, 'momo-kuri san-nen, kaki hachi-nen' ('three years for peaches and chestnuts, eight years for persimmons'), which observes how a certain amount of time is required for actions to bear fruit, the Momo-Kaki Orphans Fund aims to provide sustained support for the children until they reach at least 18 years of age.



Back row (L-R)

Mr. Jun Kono, (Sohomare), Mr. Takeshi Sekiya (Horaisen), Mr. Masumi Nakano (Dewazakura), Mr. Kenichi Ohashi (Master of Sake, Sake Service Institute), Mr. Yohji Teraoka (Isojiman)

Front row (L-R)

Mr. Tazaemon Yamamura (Sakura Masamune), Mr. Kazunari Shata (Shata Shuzo), Mr. Ryuichiro Masuda (Masuizumi), Mr. Tokubee Masuda (Tsukino Katsura), Mr. Atsuhide Kato (Born), Mrs Yohji Teraoka (Isojiman)

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