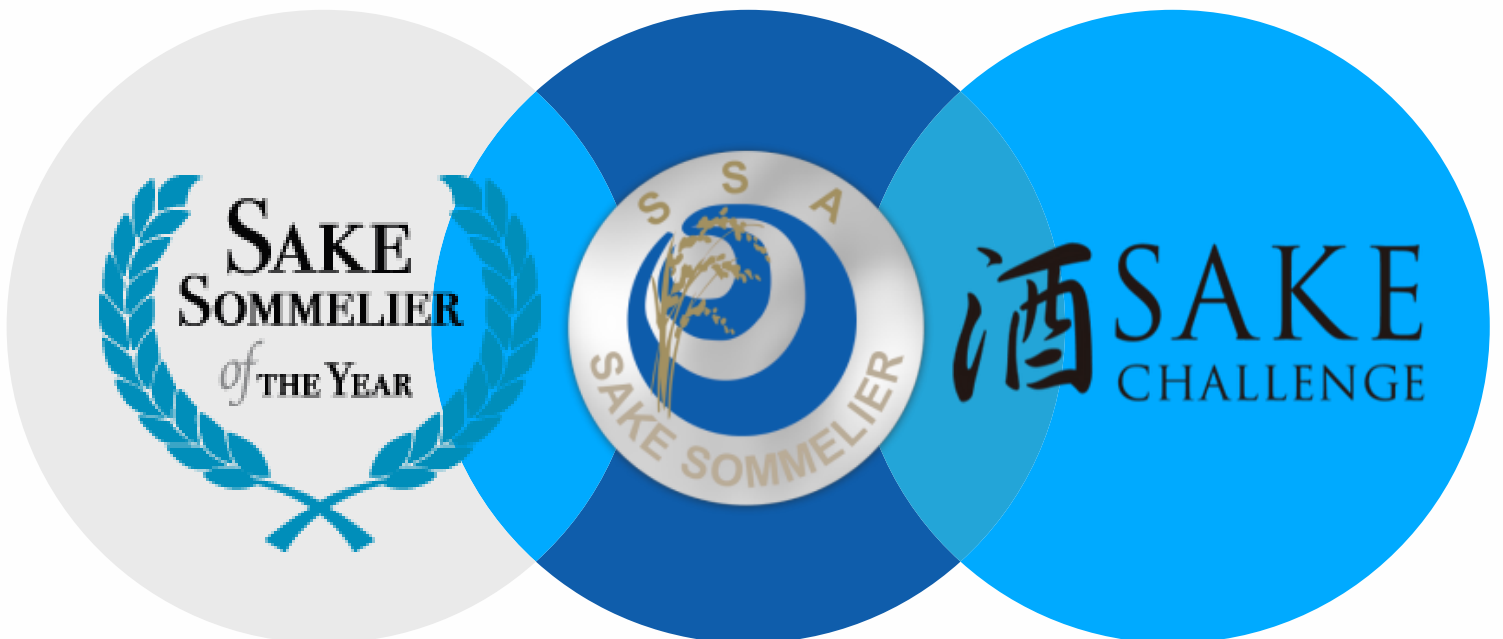




*Become a Sake Sommelier*

**SAKE SOMMELIER ASSOCIATION**





# The Sake Sommelier Association

The Sake Sommelier Association (SSA) is the oldest non-Japanese body to provide formal sake education. The SSA is based in London, UK, and for over 20 years we have been fully committed to promoting global education and awareness of sake with exciting projects, such as our Sake Sommelier courses and regional Sake Challenge events. The SSA's flagship course, the Certified Sake Sommelier, accredits students officially as Sake Sommeliers® upon completion of the program.

The Sake Sommelier Association is built on 3 pillars: **Education**, **Challenge** and **Competition**—which cover the wide range of our activities.

Our courses, challenges and competitions are ideal for everyone, from beginners with a passion for sake, to experts who've been working in the drinks industry for years.

The SSA's courses range from the basics, with the Introductory Sake Professional, all the way to the world's highest sake qualification, the Master Sake Sommelier.

The SSA is delighted to work with partners across 6 continents; we have reached over ten thousand students across our programs through our ever-expanding network of educational franchises. Our growing team of Sake Educators share our founders' passion for the delightful drink of sake, allowing the SSA to spread the joy of sake throughout the world.





# A Love Story with Sake

## Founders Profiles

### **Xavier Chapelou**

Recognized as one of the world's leading non-Japanese sake experts, Xavier Chapelou has built an encyclopaedic knowledge of Japanese sake through his experience in both retail and fine restaurant consultancy. By learning first-hand from brewery professionals, his appreciation and passion for sake spread into teaching, driven by an ambition to pass his knowledge on to others. With this goal in mind, he co-founded the Sake Sommelier Association in 2000. His efforts were noticed by distinguished drinks magazine Imbibe in 2013, when he was nominated for "Educator of the Year". His contribution for bringing sake to the sommelier world has also been featured in the press many times, for publications such as: The Times, The Guardian, The Evening Standard, Asahi TV, BBC Radio 4, Channel 4 TV and more.

### **Kumiko Ohta**

Kumiko Ohta grew up in Japan surrounded by rice fields and sake-brewing culture. A thirst to learn more drove her to visit breweries as soon as she could and has led to a life-long passion for sake. This passion has culminated in her becoming an Authorised Sake Lecturer, obtaining the Higher Certificate in Sake Education. After relocating to the UK, Kumiko has tirelessly championed sake. A co-founder of the Sake Sommelier Association, her efforts were recognized by Nikkei in 2008 when she received the prestigious "Woman of the Year" award. Since then she has redoubled her efforts, constantly looking for new ways to showcase and promote sake.



# EDUCATION



We offer courses from beginner to expert level. Our programs are open to those who are curious about sake, eager to learn and want to enhance their professional skills; or those thinking about changing their career to the food & beverage industry.

All courses provide a focus on Sake Sommelier training – giving students practical applications to everything learnt. The Sake Sommelier Academy's courses are built around workshops and interactive teaching with the aim of giving usable sake knowledge – whether for career advancement or to impress your peers!



**INTRODUCTORY SAKE  
PROFESSIONAL**



**CERTIFIED SAKE  
SOMMELIER**



**ADVANCED SAKE  
SOMMELIER**



**MASTER SAKE  
SOMMELIER**



**MASTER OF SAKE**

We provide a comprehensive list of courses to suit all levels. Our programs bring an opportunity to meet like-minded individuals while at the same time receiving serious career development, drawing sake lovers as well as professionals from around the world. Each of our courses have been developed as a comprehensive curriculum that provides students with a cultural, historical, social and economic framework to succeed in the rapidly developing sake industry.



# Introductory Sake Professional



The first sake qualification from the Sake Sommelier Association introduces everything from the origins of sake and drinking etiquette to its ingredients and production.

This qualification is a unique opportunity for enthusiasts to further their understanding of one of the world's most complex and enigmatic drinks.

This course includes some of the finest sake available to sample, and students receive a certificate and lapel pin acknowledging their completion of the class.

Introductory modules covered included:

- **Sake Production**
- **Sake Culture & History**
- **Sake Tasting**
- **Serving Etiquette**

Interactive Learning Experience - Students can formalise their sake experiences with workshop-based learning; and further their passion for sake in our short-format course.



## Certified Sake Sommelier

The Certified Sake Sommelier is the SSA's flagship course. Lasting a few days, this in-depth and interactive course gives participants all of the tools they need to professionally work with sake and expand their career.

The course is accessible for professionals and connoisseurs alike. As a practical course, the Certified Sake Sommelier includes multiple workshops and interactive elements to keep students engaged, give them all the skills they need: whether working with customers in a restaurant, distributing products to clients, or impressing friends over dinner!

The program starts by providing students with a guide to sake heritage, with topics covered including:

- **Sake History and Culture**
- **Sake Production**
- **Sake Terminology and Classifications**
- **Sake Tasting by Designation**

In the later parts of the course, students have an opportunity to learn about more aspects of sake, including its different styles, production methods and how to introduce it to customers. Other factors that affect sake such as maturity, temperature, and aromatic profiles are also covered in order to further students' understanding of the drink. Topics here include:

- **Sake Tasting II - Speciality and Unusual Sake**
- **How to Introduce Sake to Customers**
- **Professional Issues including Purchasing, Storage, and Sake Vessels**
- **The Science of Umami and its Relationship with Sake**

Upon passing the exam, students are officially Sake Sommeliers and receive lapel pins and certificates.





# Advanced Sake Sommelier



The Advanced Sake Sommelier course takes place in Japan. This trip offers a unique insider's view of the country by visiting carefully handpicked sake breweries in both stunning suburban villages and beautiful traditional cities. Students will be able to see and participate in the authentic sake-making processes under the guidance of the Toji (master brewer) themselves.

This educational course will allow our guests to learn in-depth knowledge about sake and discover places that would not be in an ordinary guidebook. This program promises students a once-in-a-lifetime experience!

Course Highlights:

- **Unique first-hand experience of sake-making with brewers and the Toji (master brewer)**
- **Visits to carefully selected breweries in various parts of Japan**
- **Special lectures by Japanese sake experts**
- **Exclusive gourmet evenings with brewers and specialists**



# Master Sake Sommelier

## The Pinnacle of Sake Service

The Master Sake Sommelier is the world's highest sake sommelier qualification. Perfect for all students who believe they have what it takes to make themselves stand out on the world stage. By gaining this qualification you will be able to demonstrate that you have deepened your level of expertise in this field to the furthest extent, and that your knowledge of sake service is of the greatest standard. This tailored, rigorous course consists of specialised modules and is taught and operated by the very best in the industry.

The high level of prior training necessary to be accepted onto the course ensures small classes that allow each student to receive unparalleled training. The Master Sake Sommelier welcomes students of any highly trained background, not only SSA Alumni, for those wishing to take their education to a level that is unmatched elsewhere.

The Master Sake Sommelier covers the fine-points of sake etiquette, serving techniques, innovative food pairings and every intricacy of sake service; with a special focus given to the art of buying & selling sake. Many distinct kinds of sake will be tasted during the day. Successful candidates will receive their Master Sake Sommelier label pin and certificate as well as the right to use the post-nominals "M.S.S."





# Master of Sake



## Learn the Art of Sake Making

Our sake brewer's qualification; The Master of Sake program is the first of its kind, offering a full, in brewery, education on how to become a sake brewer. Working with both traditional apprenticeships and high-level skills training, the Master of Sake is the perfect course to guide you into the hardest-to-access parts of Japan's sake production industry as well as for those wanting to brew sake themselves.

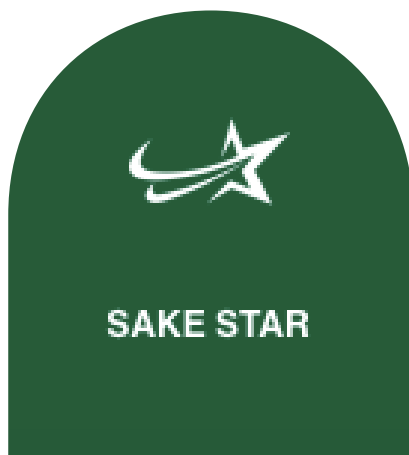
Students will spend 2 months in an intensive & immersive training environment learning how to brew sake, in both a practical and theoretical manner. Working as an apprentice to some of the best brewers and technicians, students will cover all aspects of this ancient craft.

Upon successful completion of the course, students will be awarded the Master of Sake Qualification along with the accompanying lapel pin. They will also be entitled to use the post-nominals MoS.



# EXPERIENCES





We offer two sake experiences of varying lengths and luxury - open to anyone curious about sake and wanting to further their understanding of one of the world's most complex and enigmatic drinks. A great alternative to our courses, our Sake Experiences provide participants with the opportunity to learn about sake in a fun, immersive and informal way, without the rigours of the classroom and exams. Our Experiences provide guests with a great range of sake to try, and fantastic visits to some of the best breweries and izakayas in the world.



## Sake Ninja

### Peek into the World of Sake

An engaging, local foray into the world of sake: from hidden sake bars to sake breweries, learn more about this wonderful drink with the help of our Sake Pioneers, based across the globe.

This is a unique opportunity for the intrigued and enthused, to further their understanding of one of the world's most complex and enigmatic drinks.

All participants will receive an official SSA Sake Ninja lapel pin.







# Sake Star



A luxurious journey through sake breweries and other gastronomic delights.

The SAKE Star is designed to give participants an elegant taste of Japanese culture, with a focus on sake and other beverages such as shochu and green tea. This guided excursion provides participants with the opportunity to visit the best breweries in Japan, as well as enjoying fine dining in a number of restaurants. Accommodation and transport within Japan is provided. Alongside the wonders of sake, guests will be delighted by some of the most elegant and prestigious features of Japan's mysterious culture.

All participants will receive a certificate & pin upon completion.



# SAKE CHALLENGES



The SSA launched the London Sake Challenge in 2012, Europe's first competition dedicated solely to sake, and since then they have grown across the globe. At the Challenges, Sake Sommeliers from around the world come together to discover the finest sake.

In pursuit of excellence, judges selected from the SSA's global network of sake sommeliers make use of their international expertise to judge the quality, taste, design, and presentation of the submitted sakes.

Due to the success of the London Sake Challenge, the SSA has launched a number of sister competitions: in Milan, Bordeaux, Luxembourg and more.

All Sake Challenge end with a JAPAN LIFE event:



# SAKE CHALLENGES





# Japan Life

JAPAN LIFE is an exciting event where members of the general public can revel in a number of fascinating aspects of Japanese culture.

Building on the success and popularity of the London Sake Challenge, JAPAN LIFE was conceived as an accompanying celebration of sake and Japanese culture. Following on directly from a Sake Challenge, JAPAN LIFE gives Challenge entrants and their guests, sake aficionados and the general public the chance to enjoy a day of delicious premium sake, Japanese cultural exhibits and entertainment.

Guests can sample a wide range of award-winning sake while enjoying the event, meeting fellow sake enthusiasts and browsing a range of sake-related products.





# COMPETITION



## Sake Sommelier of the Year

The Sake Sommelier of the Year aims to find the world's most skilled Sake Sommeliers, bringing them to the attention of their customers and employers as well as raising the profile of their profession and establishments. By taking part in the competition, participants can build their confidence and raise their profile in the industry.

Until 2018, the Sake Sommelier of the Year competition has been held in London, the home city of the SSA. Since 2019, the competition began travelling, joining aspiring sake professionals in a brand new location each year to fly the flag for global sake talent – the competition's first destination: Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia to be hosted by a Master Sake Sommelier!





# HONORARY TITLES

## **Sake Ambassador**

Every two years, one individual is honoured for their exceptional dedication to the world of sake. Each Sake Ambassador is chosen based on their work in sake diplomacy, contributing to the understanding and appreciation of sake throughout their country and region. We take great pride in bestowing upon individuals the title of Sake Ambassador.

This title is one that only a select few can boast. To ensure appropriate attention is paid to the selection process, this title is presented biennially.

The idea is to slowly and carefully build a network of elite Sake Ambassadors worldwide, each working in their own way, continuing to sow the seeds of sake across the globe.

## **Young Sake Ambassador**

The aim of this award is to bring a fresh mind-set into the sake industry. Selected biennially, Young Sake Ambassadors are chosen based on how they bring new ideas to the craft and fuel the winds of progress. They are expected to spend their time contributing to the promotion of sake in their region.

Awarded only to individuals under 30, the Young Sake Ambassador award highlights the young, the new and the revolutionary individuals who keep the World of Sake constantly adapting & evolving.