

Introduction to  
**GI Yamanashi Wine**



Tokyo Regional Taxation Bureau

## What is GI Yamanashi wine?

**GI Yamanashi** is a geographical indication for alcoholic beverages (wine).

“GI” stands for “Geographical Indication.”

### 1. Outline of the geographical indication system

Geographical indication systems are prevalent in regions such as the EU. Under such a system, only products (e.g., alcoholic beverages and agricultural products) made of ingredients from, or using methods unique to, a certain area are permitted to identify themselves using the name of the area.

Famous examples of wine GIs: Bordeaux, Champagne, etc.

- ▶ The GI system’s benefits include product differentiation by building regional brands for production areas and quality assurance for consumers.

The GI system for alcoholic beverages was the first of its kind in Japan when it was established in 1994.

### 2. Geographical indications for liquor products in Japan

Geographical indications for liquor products in Japan are designated by the Commissioner of the National Tax Agency of Japan.

An indication cannot be used for a liquor product that is not produced in the designated area or that does not fulfill specific qualitative standards.

“**GI Yamanashi**” provides a guarantee that a product is “made in Yamanashi prefecture” and “fulfills strict standards for quality.”

## Background to the establishment of GI Yamanashi wine

### Climate and geography of Yamanashi prefecture

Yamanashi prefecture is home to a basin surrounded by high mountains. This limits the influence of the ocean on the climate of this region, reducing the effects of the rainy season and typhoons to some extent and resulting in significant temperature increases during the day and drops in the morning and at night. These large temperature differences between day and night help make the climate suitable for grape cultivation.



Many vineyard areas are characterized by deep, collapsible soils composed of granite and andesite located in sloping terrain with good drainage.

### Yamanashi prefecture as a wine-producing region

Wine production in Yamanashi is said to have started around 1870. Research and development on grape breeding began during the Meiji Era (1868-1912).

Yamanashi prefecture is also said to be the birthplace of Japanese winemaking. Today, it has the largest number of wineries in Japan and produces high quality wine. Since some of such wines receive a prize in the world competitions, Yamanashi wine becomes famous worldwide.



**“GI Yamanashi” was officially designated in July 2013.**

\* It was the first geographical indication given to wine in Japan.

In June 2017, the production standards for GI Yamanashi were revised (further tightened).

## Grapes and wine-making methods for GI Yamanashi wine

### Grapes

- Only grapes harvested in Yamanashi prefecture may be used.
- Only 42 designated grape varieties, such as Koshu, Muscat Bailey A, Cabernet Sauvignon, and Chardonnay, are permitted to be used.
- Grapes must have at least a specified minimum sugar content.



Koshu



Muscat Baily A



Cabernet  
Sauvignon



Chardonnay

### Wine-making methods, etc.



- Must be produced, stored and bottled in Yamanashi prefecture.
- Alcohol content must be 8.5% or higher for dry wine and 4.5% or higher for sweet wine.
- Chaptalization and acidification techniques can be used with certain restrictions.

## GI Yamanashi wine management commission

The GI Yamanashi Management Commission conducts rigorous quality and labeling reviews. Only wines that pass these tests can display “**GI Yamanashi.**”

[GI Yamanashi Management Commission]

<Address> Yamanashi Prefecture Wine  
Manufacturers' Association  
Local Industry Center 2F  
3-13-25 Tokoji, Kofu City  
Yamanashi prefecture

<Phone no.> +81-55-233-7306

<URL> [www.wine.or.jp/](http://www.wine.or.jp/)



## Displaying “GI Yamanashi “ on wines

Wines permitted to use the **GI Yamanashi** indication can place it on their containers or packaging.

<Example>



## Relationship between GI Yamanashi wine and Japan wine

Various types of wine are distributed in Japan, including Japan wine (wine made in Japan from grapes harvested exclusively in Japan), wine made in Japan using imported ingredients, and imported wine. Wines displaying “**GI Yamanashi**” are thereby certified to have been produced in compliance with the strict production standards designated by the Commissioner of the National Tax Agency of Japan and to have passed the GI Yamanashi Management Commission’s reviews.

### Japanese wine market

#### Wine produced in Japan

##### Wine made from imported ingredients

Imported grape juice  
concentrates, etc.

##### Japan wine

Made from  
grapes harvested  
exclusively in Japan

**GI Yamanashi**  
wine

##### Imported wine

##### Geographic indications

Bordeaux,  
Champagne,  
etc.

## Comparison between GI Yamanashi wine and other Japan wines

	GI Yamanashi wine	Japan wine
Definition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Only 42 designated varieties of grapes harvested in Yamanashi prefecture with at least a specific minimum sugar content can be used.</li> <li>- Produced, stored and bottled in Yamanashi prefecture</li> <li>- Passed the quality review, etc.</li> <li>- “<b>GI Yamanashi</b>” displayed</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Made from grapes harvested exclusively in Japan</li> <li>- Produced in Japan</li> </ul>
Management commission	Established	Not required
Information on the label	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Indicated as “Japan wine”</li> <li>- Ingredient labeling indicates “grapes.”</li> <li>- The place of origin of the grapes must be indicated as the name of a place within Yamanashi prefecture (e.g., “harvested in Yamanashi prefecture,” “harvested in Katsunuma Town,” etc.).</li> </ul> <p>* Katsunuma Town is an example.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- (Same as on the left)</li> <li>- (Same as on the left)</li> <li>- The place of origin of the grapes must be indicated as “Japan” or a Japanese prefecture, etc.</li> </ul>
Geographical name	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The place where the grapes were harvested can be indicated when 85% or more of the grapes used were grown in that location.</li> <li>- In case the wine was produced at a different place from the place where the grapes were harvested, the place where the wine was produced can be indicated. However, it should be indicated that such place name is not the place where the grapes were harvested.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- (Same as on the left)</li> <li>- (Same as on the left)</li> </ul>
Name of grape variety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The grape variety can be indicated when 85% or more of the grapes used are of the indicated variety.</li> <li>- “Koshu” can only be indicated when 100% of the grapes used to make the wine were of the Koshu variety.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The grape variety can be indicated when 85% or more of the grapes used are of the indicated variety.</li> </ul>
Harvest year	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The harvest year can be indicated when 85% or more of the grapes used were harvested in the indicated year.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- (Same as on the left)</li> </ul>
Main label	<div style="text-align: center; background-color: #d3d3d3; padding: 10px; border: 1px solid #ccc;"> <p>Examples</p> <p><b>Koshu 2020</b></p> <p><b>GI Yamanashi</b></p> </div> <p>This label indicates the following information:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(1) Made from 100% Koshu grapes harvested in Yamanashi prefecture</li> <li>(2) 85% or more of the grapes were harvested in 2020</li> <li>(3) Passed the quality review of the management commission, etc.</li> </ol>	<div style="text-align: center; background-color: #d3d3d3; padding: 10px; border: 1px solid #ccc;"> <p>Examples</p> <p><b>Koshu 2020</b></p> </div> <p>This label indicates the following information:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(1) Made from 85% or more Koshu grapes</li> <li>(2) 85% or more of the grapes used were harvested in 2020</li> </ol>



Japan. “Kampai” to the world.

## Information

Information on Yamanashi prefecture’s wineries can be found on the website, “Introduction of Breweries in the Tokyo Regional Taxation Bureau’s Jurisdiction.”



The website, “Introduction of Breweries in the Tokyo Regional Taxation Bureau’s Jurisdiction” on the Tokyo Regional Taxation Bureau (Liquor Tax and Industry Division)’s website provides information for consumers on liquor products made within its jurisdiction (Tokyo, Chiba prefecture, Kanagawa prefecture and Yamanashi prefecture). In addition to wineries in Yamanashi prefecture, information can be found on seishu/sake and other liquor producers within the jurisdiction (Tokyo and three prefectures) and on events hosted by liquor business associations. Please visit the site!



Introduction to Breweries in the Tokyo Regional Taxation Bureau’s Jurisdiction



[https://www.nta.go.jp/english/taxes/liquor\\_administration/tokyo\\_breweries/index.htm](https://www.nta.go.jp/english/taxes/liquor_administration/tokyo_breweries/index.htm)

This brochure was prepared based on the laws and regulations effective as of the end of December 2020.

Liquor Tax and Industry Division, Tokyo Regional Taxation Bureau