

Chateau Mercian Koshu Sur Lie, Yamanashi 2023



Region

As grapes were never indigenous to Japan all grapevines had been introduced to the region with the movement of the spice route and silk roads over 2,000 years. It is believed that about 1,300 years ago grapevines were introduced to Japan where the climate was too hot, cold, wet – too extreme – to grow grapes for wine. Ultimately the existing grape variety most successfully grown in Japan became known as Koshu, which was the then name for the prefecture in which it grew. This prefecture then took the name of a Japanese prince and became Yamanashi, which remains the principal region producing Koshu. Responsible today for 40% of all Japanese grown wine grapes. Ampelographers continue to isolate the DNA of Koshu, but we do not actually know, outright, its source. What we do know is that it is a lurid pink on the vine, generally grown in the local tana method (overhead bamboo trellis).

Producer

Château Mercian is one of Japan's pioneering and most respected wineries, with roots dating back to 1877 in Katsunuma, Yamanashi, the historic heartland of Japanese wine. The estate has played a leading role in establishing Koshu as a distinctive, internationally recognised grape variety. Its vineyards benefit from Yamanashi's sunny days, cool nights and well-drained soils, producing naturally fresh and elegant wines. Château Mercian has also pioneered techniques such as sur lie ageing, introduced to Koshu in the 1980s, adding texture and savoury depth while retaining the variety's delicate citrus character. Today, the winery combines traditional Japanese viticulture with modern winemaking to express the unique character of its terroir.

Tasting Notes

This wine is made from Koshu, Japan's indigenous grape. Harvested by hand, with fermentation in steel, and a further 8 months of ageing sur lie. This is an interesting white varietal, with vibrant aromas of orange blossom, ripe citrus fruit, sudachi and pear. The time on lees brings a generous texture to the palate. This is a bright and crisp wine, the higher acidity and gentle aromatics gives a very refreshing style.

Food

This will pair well with gentle umami flavours, various Sashimi, seafood dishes or lighter white fish.

Technical Information

Country	Japan
Region	Japan
Grape(s)	Koshu (100%)
Type	White
Style	Fruity
Oaked Style	Unoaked
Body Style	Medium bodied
Sustainable	Yes-certified sustainable

Dry/Sweet Style	Dry	
Alcohol Content	11.5%	
Closure Style	Cork	
Organic/Biodynamic	No	
Allergens	Milk:	No
	Egg:	No
Vegetarian/Vegan	Vegetarian:	Yes
	Vegan:	Yes



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