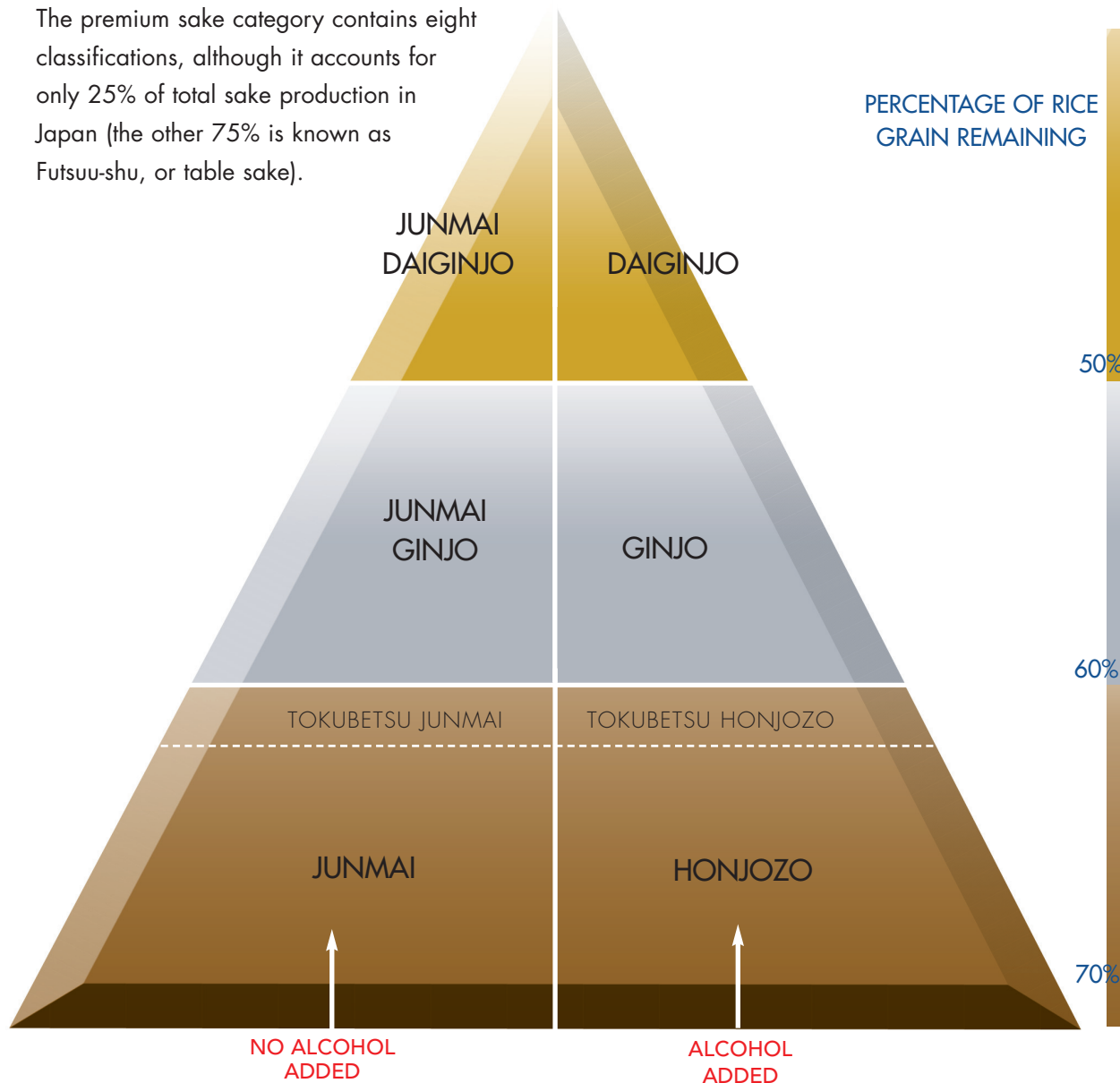


PREMIUM SAKE Tokutei Meisho-Shu

The premium sake category contains eight classifications, although it accounts for only 25% of total sake production in Japan (the other 75% is known as Futsuu-shu, or table sake).



MILLING PERCENTAGE:

(Measured as percentage of the original grain remaining)

Relevant Terms: **Daiginjo, Ginjo, Honjozo**

All sake is made from milled rice, but premium sake rice is more highly milled, resulting in a lower milling percentage. The more the rice is milled, the more ethereal, complex and fragrant the resulting sake becomes. The classifications refer to a legally required level of milling, and many brewers choose to exceed this amount in order to make an even more refined sake. The requirements are:

Daiginjo – 50% Ginjo – 60% Honjozo – 70%

Note that Junmai does not have a requirement associated with it. Thus, junmai sake can be milled to any percentage, although is typically milled to nearly the same level as honjozo.

TOKUBETSU DESIGNATION

Relevant Terms: **Tokubetsu Junmai, Tokubetsu Honjozo**

Some sakes are labeled as tokubetsu, or special. This simply means that there is something unique about the sake: better rice, higher polishing or just that brewers paid special attention to the batch. The term only applies to the junmai and honjozo classifications. It is similar in concept to a riserva in wine, although it carries no legal requirements.

ADDED ALCOHOL:

Relevant Terms: **Junmai**

Any sake labeled with the word junmai is "pure" sake, made from only rice, koji-kin, yeast and water. It tends to have a stronger taste of rice, and be somewhat thicker on the palate. Contrary to popular conception, this does not make it superior to other sakes, and many brewers prefer to add some alcohol, claiming it helps thin the sake and lift its aroma. In the end, it is simply a matter of preference.



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