



Japan

By Derek Smedley MW

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Tasting notes from the following growers:

Contents

Alps Wine5
 Yamanashi5
Grace Wine5
 Yamanashi5
Haramo Wine7
 Yamanashi7
Kurambon Wine.....7
 Yamanashi7
Lumière.....8
 Yamanashi8
Marquis Winery8
 Yamanashi8
Mars Wine9
 Yamanashi9
Mercian.....9
 Yamanashi9
L’Orient9
 Yamanashi9
Rubaiyat Wine.....10
 Yamanashi10
Sadoya.....10
 Yamanashi10
Soryu11
 Yamanashi11
Tomi No Oka Winery (Suntory)11
 Yamanashi11
Yamato.....12

Yamanashi 12

Japan

Tasted at the KOJ Tasting in London - **January 2011**

Tasted on other occasions – see *date & place in italics*

Growers / Wineries are in alphabetical order with area underneath

It is thought that the Koshu grape arrived in Japan some 1,000 years ago via the Silk Road that ran from the Caucasus to China. The area of Yamanashi is about one and a half hours from Tokyo at the foot of Mt Fuji and is ideal for Koshu with its extremes of heat and cold, its long hours of sunlight and well drained volcanic soils. The first few wineries started in the 1870's with the numbers steadily growing to the present day 80.

The grape itself is thick skinned slightly pink in colour and quite large when compared to other wine grapes and is from a *Vitis Vinifera* vine. There is reliance on free run juice and gentle pressing and most are made without oak cask aging. Chaptalization and addition of acidity are allowed but most do not use either unless the year is extremely difficult.

Alps Wine
Yamanashi

Koshu 2009**91 2011-13**

There is an attractive weight of flavour on the nose and the pear fleshiness fills out the mid palate. Under the richness there is some freshness bringing out the more floral character. The finish has some rich fruit giving flesh at the back.

Koshu 2010**91 2012-14**

Tasted at the KOJ tasting in London February 2012

The nose is very floral spring flowers with lots of fresh lime. The palate has sweeter fruit pear and white peach but the back palate is fresh fragrant with a hint of hazel nut on the finish.

Grace Wine
Yamanashi

Koshu Kayagatake 2009**90 2011-13**

The attractive lime freshness on the nose brings out the floral fragrances. Sweeter fruit more tropical flavours show through on the mid palate but behind is lime freshness that lifts the fruit on the back palate.

- Koshu Kayagatake 2010** 91 2011-13
The mix of fragrances on the nose has immense charm. Fresh lime is underpinned by fleshier white peach, an attractive complex mix. The fruit lingers on the long finish.
- Koshu Kayagatake 2011** 91 2012-14
Tasted at the KOJ tasting in London February 2012
The nose has lots of fresh limes which bring out the floral fragrances. There is sweetness on the mid palate hints of tropical fruits but towards the back the lime and mineral freshness gives a lovely racy feel on the finish.
- Koshu Kayagatake 2013** 90 2014-17
Tasted at the KOJ tasting in London February 2014
Rose petals the nose is light but fragrant and the palate light fresh citrusy. Some tropical fruits give a little more depth in the middle but it finishes racy with mineral freshness.
- Koshu Private Reserve 2010** 92 2011-13
The nose has the richness of tropical fruit and peach yet enough freshness to bring out the floral character. On the palate there is a weight of fruit fleshing out the middle with the richness nicely balanced by lime freshness.
Tasted at the KOJ tasting in London February 2012
There is a lot of fruit on the nose a mix of tropical fruits and quite ripe melon. The sweetness on the mid palate is balanced by lime and mineral refreshing back palate and finish.
- Koshu Private Reserve 2011** 91 2012-14
Tasted at the KOJ tasting in London February 2012
The nose is light with white flower fragrances refreshed by lime and lemon. The mix of tropical fruits on the palate gives more weight but towards the back the citrus mix cuts in giving a lovely racy fresh finish.
- Koshu Private Reserve 2013** 91 2014-17
Tasted at the KOJ tasting in London February 2014
The nose is light fresh fruited and fragrant but the palate has pineapple richness depth of flavour with a hint of sweetness. Citrus on the back palate refreshes and gives a lighter feel on the finish.
- Koshu Hishiyama Private Reserve 2013** 91 2014-17
Tasted at the KOJ tasting in London February 2014
White peach gives a richer feel to the nose and more depth on the palate. The mid sweetness is underpinned by fresher flavours lighter at the back with lime and flint on the finish.
- Misawa Vineyard VSP 2009** 93 2011-14
Akano region

The vineyard is at 800 metres in this newly developed region. The nose is very mineral and shale driven with floral fragrances showing behind. Pear and lychee vie for dominance on the palate the mid sweetness balanced by the mineral and lime freshness. It is complex long and assertive.

**Haramo Wine
Yamanashi**

Vintage Koshu 2010 **90** **2011-13**
It is light with floral citrus on the nose. Fresh lime at first on the palate is overtaken by some fleshier tropical fruits enriching mid and back palate. There are layers of flavour that ensure lots of complexity.

Tasted at the KOJ tasting in London February 2012 **90** **2011-13**
The white peach on the nose gives more depth and this combined with melon a fleshier richer feel on the palate. The layers of flavour give complexity and the lime at the back refreshes the finish.

Vintage Koshu 2011 **91** **2012-14**
Tasted at the KOJ tasting in London February 2012
There is a racy citrus freshness on the nose that brings out the lemon flower fragrances. Some sweet tropical fruits fill out the mid palate with the citrus refreshing the finish. It has charm and elegance.

**Kurambon Wine
(Yamanashi Wine)
Yamanashi**

Sol Lucet Koshu 2010 **92** **2011-13**
The floral mix on the nose has immense charm with rose petals back by slightly richer tropical fruits. The fruit on the palate feels ripe giving sweetness on the mid palate with a mouth filling richness on the finish.

Sol Lucet Koshu 2011 **91** **2012-14**
Tasted at the KOJ tasting in London February 2012
The mix of tropical fruits is quite sweet giving richness on the nose and weight of flavour on the palate. Behind the sweet fruit lemon and lime balance giving a lovely freshness on the finish.

Tasted at the KOJ tasting in London February 2014 **90** **2014-15**
The nose is light perfumed with rose petal fragrances yet the palate has some richer flavours hints of tropical fruits. It feels leaner at the back with more of a citrus character very fresh fruited on the finish.

Sol Lucet Koshu 2013 **90** **2014-17**
Tasted at the KOJ tasting in London February 2014

The nose although fresh has more depth and the palate has grapefruit with sweeter pineapple at the back. Citrus comes through at the back very fresh light fragrant and crisp on the finish.

Four Seasons Koshu 91 2014-18

Tasted at the KOJ tasting in London February 2014

The nose is highly scented fragrant lots of orange blossom and the start of the palate is fresh quite light and fragrant. There is a sweeter feel in the middle with the richer fruit giving more depth on the finish

**Lumière
Yamanashi**

Koshu Hikari 2009 89 2011-13

There are lots of different fragrances on the nose but the most prominent is that of rose petals. The freshness at the start of the palate gives way to a sweeter middle and although not that complex the overall feel is one of fragrance

Koshu Hikari 2010 88 2011-13

Although the nose is light there are some attractive fragrances. Hints of tropical fruits are apparent on the mid palate but the finish is fresher, quite light but attractive.

Tasted at the KOJ tasting in London February 2012 88 2011-13

The nose is quite light but fragrant and the fruit on the palate quite sweet giving flesh in the middle. The finish lacks a bit of depth but has fragrance.

Koshu Hikari 2011 88 2012-14

Tasted at the KOJ tasting in London February 2012

The nose is very crisp and the acidity on the palate quite marked. The mid palate is light rather lacking any mid richness and the citrus at the back gives a rather tart finish.

Petillant 2009 88 2011-13

The nose has an attractive floral mix and this is apparent on the start of the palate. Towards the middle is some richer fruit quite red fruit in influence with the fruit lasting quite well on the finish.

**Marquis Winery
Yamanashi**

Jien Blanc 2010 90 2011-13

The nose has a lovely mix of fragrances at first very citrus dominated but behind this is a mix of tropical fruits. Ripe flavours fill out the mid palate with the back palate refreshed by apple and citrus.

Jien Blanc 2011 92 2012-14

Tasted at the KOJ tasting in London February 2012

Under the attractive mix of fragrances on the nose is a rich mix of tropical fruits. White peach and apricot gives flesh in the middle with the back palate being refreshed by a mix of lime and apple. The flavours linger on the finish.

**Mars Wine
Yamanashi**

Koshu Verdinho 2010

89 2011-13

The floral mix on the nose is apparent on the palate. At first it seems very lime dominated but behind filling out the mid palate is a mix of sweeter tropical fruits. The finish though is very citrus dominated.

**Mercian
Yamanashi**

Koshu 2010

88 2011-13

The nose has an attractive mix of fragrances all quite fresh. There is citrus on the start of the palate but towards the middle it is sweeter with the freshness coming through towards the back lifting the flavours.

Koshu 2011

92 2012-14

Tasted at the KOJ tasting in London February 2012

The nose is very fresh with crisp apple and lime. Although the palate starts very fresh there is sweetness in the middle white peach and tropical fruits but towards the back the citrus comes through and the finish is racy and mineral driven.

Tasted at the KOJ tasting in London February 2014

95 2014-16

Although the nose is fresh the palate is quite sweet with peach and tropical fruits a mid richness. At the back flint and citrus refresh bring out the fragrances and give a lighter feel to the elegant finish.

Koshu 2013

94 2014-18

Tasted at the KOJ tasting in London February 2014

The nose has depth richness of flavour with lots of white peach and apricot on the palate. Towards the back there is tangerine freshness and although slightly lighter at the back the finish has depth of fruit.

**L'Orient
Yamanashi**

Koshu 2009

89 2011-12

The nose is full of fruit slightly hard with apple freshness. The palate is light at the start slightly lacking character but then towards the back more fruit shows and there is more character on the finish.

Koshu 2010 **90** **2011-13**
 Floral citrus and tropical fruit fragrances give lots of charm on the nose. Sweeter fruit a mix of pear and tropical fruit fills the mid palate but behind there is lime refreshing and giving a lighter feel to the finish.

Koshu 2011 **91** **2012-14**
Tasted at the KOJ tasting in London February 2012
 The nose has lovely rose petal fragrances and the freshness of citrus brings out the floral character on the palate. Sweeter tropical fruits give richness in the middle but the finish is racy and fresh fruited.

Tasted at the KOJ tasting in London February 2014 **92** **2014-16**
 Citrusy and fresh on the nose with a lovely mix of summer garden fragrances yet the palate is richer with mid sweetness. Under the tropical fruits lime refreshes and gives a lighter feel to the finish.

Rubaiyat Wine Yamanashi

Koshu 2010 **92** **2011-13**
 The nose has a lovely mix of fruits with quite rich tropical fruits to the fore. The mid palate is fresher more apple and lime dominated and this gives a lovely youthful feel towards the back.

Koshu 2011 **92** **2012-14**
Tasted at the KOJ tasting in London February 2012
 Overlaying the tropical fruits on the nose are lovely rose petal and lemon fragrances. The crisp apple on the mid palate gives a racy freshness but towards the back the mix of tropical fruits and white peach fills out the finish.

Koshu 2012 **92** **2014-17**
Tasted at the KOJ tasting in London February 2014
 Floral fragrant the nose is full of summer garden flowers roses and orange blossom. The palate is light fresh with a mix of fragrances with citrus refreshing the back palate. Tropical fruits give a slightly richer feel on the finish.

Koshu 2013 **92** **2014-17**
Tasted at the KOJ tasting in London February 2014
 Fragrant floral summer flowers a rose bed of fragrances and although the start of the palate is light and fresh it fills out in the middle with white peach and a mix of tropical fruits.

Sadoya Yamanashi

Zenkouji Kitahara 2010**87 2011-13**

It is very herbal with a strong lychee character. The palate has a mix of flavours but behind is a strong quinine character that tends to dominate and over power other flavours. It is all a bit funky.

Zenkouji Kitahara 2011**88 2012-14**

Tasted at the KOJ tasting in London February 2012

The nose has a strong herbal quality backed by quinine. Lychees feature on the palate with towards the back the strong mineral element giving a slight hardness on the finish.

**Soryu
Yamanashi**

Koshu 2010**91 2011-13**

It has freshness about the nose underpinning the floral mix. There are a sweeter fruits on the mid palate but the freshness takes over towards the back bringing out the tropical fruit flavours. The finish although quite light and unadorned has a fragrant charm.

Tasted at the KOJ tasting in London February 2012

90 2011-13

The nose has filled out with quite sweet fruit and the palate has a mix of honeydew melon and tropical fruits. The freshness on the finish comes from the citrus that is very much in evidence on the back palate.

Koshu 2011**91 2012-14**

Tasted at the KOJ tasting in London February 2012

Although the nose and palate are light there is an attractive freshness and lots of floral fragrances. Melon and tropical fruits give a richer feel in the middle but towards the back the citrus takes over and refreshes.

**Tomi No Oka Winery (Suntory)
Yamanashi**

Koshu 2009**87 2011-13**

The rather dominant oak on the nose points to fermentation in barrel. It is very rich on the palate with lots of fleshy greengage in evidence. Although the fruit on the mid palate feels ripe giving some sweetness the oak tends to overpower and hold back the flavours.

Koshu 2010**88 2012-14**

Tasted at the KOJ tasting in London February 2012

The light floral fragrances on the nose are backed by toasty oak and this tends to dominate the palate. There is sweet fruit in the middle quite a good depth of flavour but the oak tends to override the fruit at the back.

**Yamato
Yamanashi****Madoromi 2010****88 2011-13**

Although the nose is rich it has a rather rustic character. A mix of tropical fruits gives a richer feel on the mid palate but as it lacks a bit of acidity it tends to lack polish on the finish.

Mineral Koshu + WA 2009**89 2011-13**

The richness of ripe fruit fleshes out the nose and gives a very lush feel on the palate. There are fresher fruits lurking behind helping to balance the sweetness and bring out the flavours.

Mineral Koshu Katsunuma 2011**91 2012-14**

Tasted at the KOJ tasting in London February 2012

The nose is very light but fragrant a bouquet of spring flowers. The palate starts with some rich sweet fruit but towards the back lemon and lime refresh and the minerals give a racy quality on the finish.

Mineral Koshu Katsunuma Sparkling 2011**91 2012-14**

Tasted at the KOJ tasting in London February 2012

There is a zippy crispness on the nose that brings out the rose petal fragrances. Some richer greengage gives weight in the middle but the finish is all minerals and green apples very fresh and crisp.

Derek Smedley MW