

WSET Level 2 Systematic Approach to Tasting Sake®

Appearance (clear sake)

Clarity	clear – slightly hazy – hazy (faulty?)
Colour intensity	water-white – pale – medium – deep
Colour	colourless – lemon-green – lemon – gold – amber – brown

Appearance (cloudy sake)

Clarity	light lees – medium lees – thick lees
Colour intensity	colourless – slightly coloured – coloured (faulty?)
Colour	pure white – off-white – yellow – brown – grey (faulty)

Nose

Condition	clean – unclean (faulty?)
Aroma intensity	light – medium – pronounced
Aroma characteristics	e.g. <i>ginjō</i> , other fruity/floral, cereal/grain, lactic/dairy, 'sweetness', age, other

Palate

Sweetness (sugar level)	off-dry – medium – sweet
Acidity	low – medium – high
Umami	low – medium – high
Alcohol	low – medium – high
Body	light – medium – full
Flavour intensity	light – medium – pronounced
Flavour characteristics	e.g. <i>ginjō</i> , other fruity/floral, cereal/grain, lactic/dairy, 'sweetness', age, other
Finish	short – medium – long

Conclusions

Quality level	faulty – poor – acceptable – good – very good – outstanding
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WSET Level 2 Sake-Lexicon

Supporting the WSET Level 2 Systematic Approach to Tasting Sake®

Describing aroma and flavour	
Ginjō	banana, apple, pear, melon, lychee, pineapple, cherry, strawberry, aniseed, bubblegum, blossom, lily, rose, guava, mango, passion fruit
Fruity/floral (other than <i>ginjō</i>)	ripe banana, banana bread, fig grape, nectarine, apricot, plum, lemon, orange white flowers
Cereal/grain	rice flour, bran, steamed rice, porridge/oatmeal, toasted cereal, malt
Lactic/dairy	milk, cream, yoghurt, butter, fresh cheese (cream cheese, mozzarella), mature cheese (cheddar)
'Sweetness'	cotton candy, honey, sugarcane, brown sugar, molasses
Age (<i>koshu</i>)	honey, molasses, caramel, dried fruits, coffee, chocolate, meat broth, clove, cinnamon, fenugreek, almond, walnut, pickled vegetables, soy sauce, bacon, compost
Nuts/beans	coffee, chocolate, fresh hazelnut, fresh almond, chestnut, fresh walnut, roasted nuts, caramelised nuts
Herbs	mint, basil, lemongrass, grass
Spices	clove, cinnamon, nutmeg, pepper
Other	earthy, mushroom, hay meat (broth, ham, roast meat) Japanese cedar, oak aromas, smoke
Commenting on texture, balance and finish	
Texture and balance	creamy, silky, velvety, viscous vibrant, refreshing, dryness hints of bitterness or astringency
Finish	<i>kire</i> (cleansing and refreshing short finish)