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Brew Your Very Own Craft Beer in Tokyo!

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Abroad the "home brewing" craft beer scene is enjoying a boom in recent years, while in Japan laws concerning liquor taxation prohibit making alcohol in your own home. However, I heard there are microbreweries where you can enjoy the home-brewing experience popping up in Tokyo. I went to check out one such brewery in Hachioji, Tokyo, called Shared Brewery.



Shared Brewery is located in Hachioji, Tokyo, a short 10-minute walk from either Naganuma Station or Hirayamajoshi-koen Station on the Keio Line with easy access from central Tokyo via Shinjuku station. On the walk to the brewpub, you will find yourself in a residential neighborhood that gives Shared Brewery an authentic homemade atmosphere.



Owner Daisuke Kobayashi founded Shared Brewery in 2016 with the vision to share his passion for craft beer and the homebrewing experience with a larger audience in Japan. Finding that the market for homebrewing was very small in Japan compared to other beer-drinking countries such as in the U.S. or Europe due to the legacy of Japanese laws preventing individuals from making their own beers at home, Daisuke opened Shared Brewery to provide the experience of homebrewing to the general public. With all the equipment and recipes fully prepared, Shared Brewery enables customers to enjoy homemade beer and make their own craft beers without any of the hassle.



Shared Brewery provides visitors with a fully equipped home brewing facility.

Shared Brewery is one of the only brewpubs in Tokyo that offer a "1-Day Home Brewing Experience". Over the course of seven hours, an individual or group can work closely with Daisuke to create a unique beer according to one's own taste and specifications. The final beer will take around 2 months before it is ready to drink, but it will be worth the wait!



The day starts at 11:00 with a consultation on the kind of beer that you would like to brew, with all the guidance a newcomer might need. The first step will be to pick out specific hops and malts to

be used in your recipe. The flavor and taste of beer primarily comes from the malt and hops that are used to produce it, and Shared Brewery has over 10 different species of hops for you to choose from, each with different aromas and tastes.



The hops used in brewing is actually the flower of the hop plant, which is a member of the hemp family. In the picture above, a variety of malts and compressed pellets of hops flowers used specifically for beer brewing are on display.

When it comes down to it, there are actually just as many possibilities for brewing beer as there are for making wine, so you can be surprisingly creative! Daisuke shares that one of the challenges he faces at Shared Brewery is when trying to find the right recipe for a beer that will please the taste buds of as wide an audience as possible. The deeper you go into your own favorite flavors the more you might find that you have developed quite an acquired taste! Of course, for visitors who may not know a lot about beer, he will often have individuals smell or taste different ingredients to determine the flavors that they prefer.



One of the best ways to determine which ingredient you will enjoy the most, and in what proportions, is to use your sense of smell.

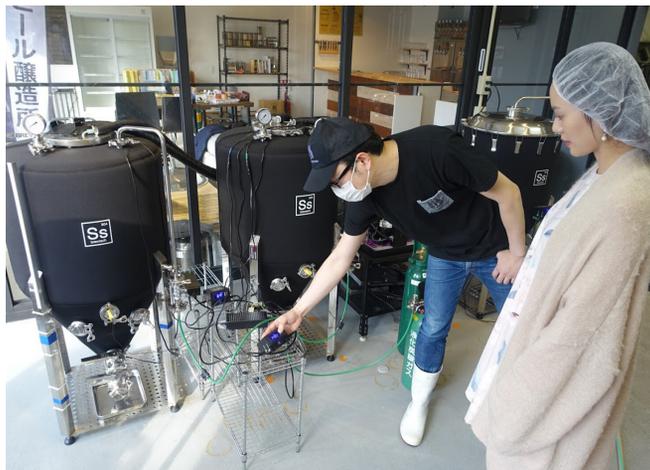


Shared Brewery has all the equipment needed to make homebrews from start to finish. Once the malts are picked out, they will be put through special machines for the mashing and boiling process.



Above, Daisuke shows a mash tun, where crushed grain (called grist) is mixed with hot water to create a sweet liquid (known as wort) that is used to make beer.





Daisuke explains that to start the fermentation, yeast is added during the filling of the vessel to convert the sugary wort into beer by producing alcohol and a wide range of flavors. It is necessary to keep the vessels at carefully controlled temperatures for the beer to ferment and mature properly.





The initial fermentation process takes about one week, after which the yeast is removed. The remaining liquid will be left to continue aging, and the entire fermentation process will take about one or two months. When the beer is ready, about 120 bottles (or five cases) of bottled beer will be sent direct to your doorstep.

As part of the home brewing experience, you will also have the chance to design your own beer bottle labels!



Above, a sample beer bottle label designed by a visitor who tried the home brewing experience at Shared Brewery.

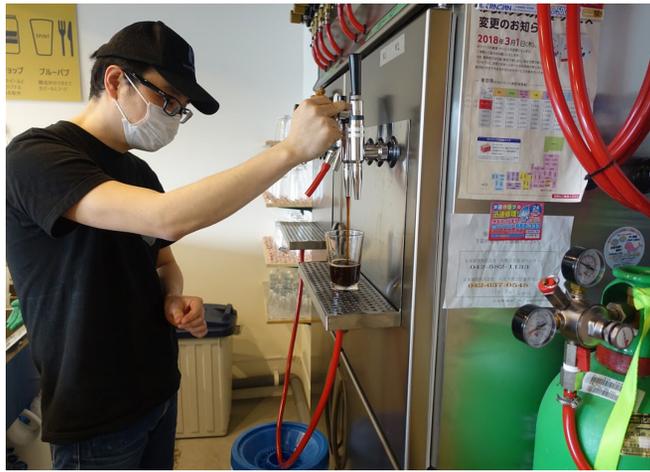




Shared Brewery has a tap room selling bottled or freshly produced beer. At any one time, about six to eight different beers are available on tap, paired with locally produced snacks and appetizers.



Shared Brewery is one of the few brewpubs in Japan to feature nitrogenated beer on tap - at the time of writing, the menu offered "Creamy Black Nitro" and "SunSet Mellow Nitro". While beer is traditionally made with carbon dioxide for that sparkling appearance and fresh taste, nitrogenated beer has been infused with a mixture of 25-30 percent nitrogen and 70-75 percent carbon dioxide. In the beer trade, they may be referred to as "Nitrobrews", and are known for their creamier texture.



Daisuke Kohayashi pours a glass of nitrogenated beer.



Regardless of whether it is to try out creating a home-brew beer that is distinctly yours, or to unwind after a long day at work, Shared Brewery will be sure to welcome you with new craft beer flavors and experiences!

Shared Brewery

Opening Hours:

Taproom

Friday 17:00 - 21:00; Weekends 14:00 - 20:00

Home Brewing Experience (By reservation only)

Website: <https://www.sharedbrewery.com/> (Japanese only)

Contact: 042-657-2671 (Limited English is spoken)

Address: Naganumamachi 58-214, Hachioji City, Tokyo 192-0907

Access: 10-minutes' walk from Naganuma Station or

Hirayamajoshikoen Station on the Keio Line

This article was written by Rachel Leng.

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