

Japan: Distilled Spirits Market Evaluation

The Distilled Spirits Council of the United States recently concluded an evaluation of the Japanese distilled spirits market. The market evaluation was concluded in advance of DISCUS's first export promotion activities in Japan, beginning in December 2020. The market evaluation was supported by the U.S. Department of Agriculture under its Market Access Program.

Although only 1.9% of the spirits sold in Japan are imported, in 2019, Japan was the 2nd largest export market for American spirits, and the largest export market for American Whiskey.

The demand for consumption of imported spirits has increased with a renewed focus on new ways to enjoy distilled spirits responsibly. The report found that restrictions imposed as a result of COVID-19 were driving demand for off-trade consumption of spirits. The rising e-commerce channels available in-country have also enhanced traditional distribution methods for connecting consumers with distilled spirits. Consumers are continuously seeking out the special experiences associated with imported craft spirits. Coupled with the high interest in cocktail culture and the premium and super-premium products Japan remains a vibrant priority market for U.S. exports.

The report also detailed the market entry process for companies from the U.S. outlining the tax rate, regulatory requirements, supply chain and highlighting key trade contacts within Japan.

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