

# Amazake

Creamy with a natural mild sweetness, Amazake or sweet sake is a popular Japanese hot drink during the New Year's and Hina Matsuri (Doll Festival). In this post, you will see two ways to make Amazake: one with rice koji and the other one with sake lees.



★★★★★

4.37 from 33 votes

**Prep Time**

10 mins

**Cook Time**

10 hrs

**Total Time**

10 hrs 10 mins

**Course:** Drinks **Cuisine:** Japanese **Keyword:** new year, sweet sake **Servings:** 5 cups  
**Calories:** 267kcal **Author:** Namiko Chen

## Ingredients

### Amazake with Rice Koji

- 1 rice cooker cup uncooked Japanese short-grain rice (180 ml, 150 g)
- water (See the instructions for cooking the rice porridge)
- 240 ml water (for cooling the porridge, you may need more or less)
- 200 g rice koji (7 oz)

### Amazake with Sake Lees (Sake Kasu)

- 960 ml water
- 120 ml sake lees (sake kasu) (4.2 oz; packed tightly)
- 70 g sugar (2.5 oz, 6 Tbsp)
- pinch kosher/sea salt (I use Diamond Crystal; use half for table salt) (to taste)

## Instructions

### ★ To Cook Amazake with Rice Koji

1. In a rice cooker bowl, add the rinsed short-grain rice. Add water until the **1 cup porridge water line**. If there is no porridge water line, add water to the regular **white rice 4 cup line**. Cook the porridge according to your rice cooker's instructions (or Press "Porridge").



2. Once the porridge is cooked, the temperature is around 175°F (79°C). Take out the bowl from the rice cooker.



3. Gradually add water, 1/8 cup at a time, stir thoroughly, and measure the temperature of the porridge. The temperature has to cool down to **140°F (60°C)** as koji mold cannot live above that temperature.



4. Once the porridge has reached 140°F (60°C), add the crumbled rice koji. Stir thoroughly to incorporate. Make sure there is enough water to cover the rice and rice koji so they are sufficiently soaked. If not, add warm water so it maintains 140°F (60°C).



5. Put the rice cooker bowl back into the rice cooker. Turn the rice cooker on to “keep warm” (or "extended keep warm") setting and cover with a cloth towel. Leave the rice cooker lid fully open so it does not get too hot. Allow the rice to cook for 8-10 hours, stirring occasionally and checking the temperature of the mixture every hour for the first 2-3 hours. **Make sure it stays between 125 and 140°F (50-60°C) at ALL TIMES.**



6. Toward the end of 8 hours, the mixture starts to release the sweet fragrance. Once it's done cooking, the mixture should smell sweet. Turn off the rice cooker and transfer the rice cooker bowl into ice water to let cool and stop cooking. When it's cooled, transfer the amazake into a large sterilized container.

**To Serve:**

1. Take out the portion you need, dilute the mixture with (hot/iced) water to the consistency you like (I like mine without diluting), and serve hot (reheat) or chilled. You can serve with grated ginger. My kids love smoothies made with amazake, banana, and soymilk. If you heat amazake above 140°F (60°C), the enzyme will die, so if you like to heat up, enjoy lukewarm in order to obtain the enzyme.

**★ To Make Amazake with Sake Lees (Sake Kasu)**

1. Gather all the ingredients. Tear the sake lees into small pieces.
2. Bring 4 cups water to a boil in a large pot. Using a sieve, dissolve the sake lees into the water. It may take some time to do this step, but you don't want to drink the chunk of sake lees so let them soften first, which will be easier to dissolve.
3. Once all dissolved, add sugar and salt. Let it cook until the preferred consistency. I reduce the amazake by cooking for 15 minutes or so to achieve a slightly thicker consistency. Serve hot/warm and enjoy!

**To Store:**

1. You can keep in the refrigerator up to one week, or in the freezer for up to a month.

**Nutrition**

Calories: 267 kcal · Carbohydrates: 58 g · Protein: 5 g · Fat: 1 g · Saturated Fat: 1 g · Sodium: 1 mg · Potassium: 23 mg · Fiber: 1 g · Calcium: 8 mg · Iron: 1 mg

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