

# Nomad Editions uncorked

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BEST OF THE BINS

## BLING BEVERAGES THAT BEDAZZLE

Behind the glittery names, luminous flavors  
BY COURTNEY COCHRAN



Savvy recessionistas know you don't have to sport the biggest rock in the room to draw attention to yourself. Then again, there *is* something undeniably appealing about diamonds like the megarocks worn by the late Liz Taylor and — improbably — Nelly. And as beverage maestros release wines boasting alluring names like Diamond and Silver, we can all begin looking to precious liquids to amp up our dazzle power.

Why not accessorize

with these stunning jewels during the holidays?

### **Non-Vintage Momokawa "Diamond" Junmai Ginjo Craft Sake, Oregon**

Viewers of bad reality television will recall a famous line uttered by Jessica Simpson several years ago on her *Newlyweds* show. Eating Chicken of the Sea tuna out of a bowl, the blonde pop starlet wondered aloud to her ex-boy-band

hubby if she was eating chicken or tuna: "I know it's tuna, but it says 'chicken.'" Fans who believe sake ought to come from Japan may be — if not equally ditzzy — similarly confused by Oregon craft brewer Momokawa's genuine rice wine, made in one of America's few facilities producing premium junmai ginjo-grade sake. The key to making authentic-tasting sake, Momokawa's marketing arm tells us, is in the water source: Northern Oregon's Forest Grove has plentiful water with the right mineral profile to craft sake that should make any fan of the stuff reconsider his definition of "authentic."

Made only with California Calrose rice milled to 60 percent of its original size, water, yeast and koji (a critical sake fermentation agent sometimes called "magical mold"), Momokawa's "Diamond" sake is off-dry and complex, with a

smashingly nervy viscosity. Look for varied aromas that are at once herbal, floral and buttery. The full, broad palate is shot through with flavors of butterscotch, lychee, flowers and Thompson table grapes, with a robust, lingering finish sticking around for minutes to remind you of the wine's marvelous presence. Not that you could forget about it given the bottle's snazzy Pollock-like label.

Yet, as Simpson might ask: Is it real sake or what? It's up to you to decide, but this much is certain: Without import taxes to drive up the price, Momokawa's offering boasts "real" sake quality at a much lower cost.

**MOMOKAWA**  
"Diamond" Junmai  
Ginjo Craft Sake,  
Oregon