

## Made in Japan /// Fujiyama Glass



**A** conical cup with a flat top, the Fujiyama Glass combines two of Japan's great loves: beer and Mt. Fuji. While lager has been manufactured domestically for more than 100 years, the iconic volcano has been the subject of religious and artistic appreciation for centuries. When filled with beer topped by a foamy head, the transparent tumbler magically turns into the mountain in miniature, complete with its snow-capped peak.

Created by product designer Keita Suzuki, this off-beat drinking glass is made by Sugahara Glassworks Inc., a family-owned company founded in Tokyo in 1932. The affiliation between Suzuki and Sugahara began when the manufacturer produced a prototype of a martini glass for the designer during his student days. Years later, after entering a design competition for new souvenirs from Japan, he got back in touch with the company.

Keen to come up with a product that gift givers had never seen before, Suzuki hit upon the idea of a beer glass. Unlike in other countries, where golden lager is served in mugs and steins, Japan's only dedicated drinking vessels for beer are nondescript tumblers that accompany the long-necked brown bottles used by brewers countrywide. Pairing the frothy beverage with the famous mountain made the most of the drink's physical attributes and resulted in an elegant but eye-catching solution. The clever concept may not have taken home the competition's

top prize, but when the judge recommended that it go into mass production all the same, Suzuki called on Sugahara once again.

Because of the glass's simple shape, the blowers at Sugahara thought it would be simple to replicate. Yet molding the splayed base proved quite a challenge, and it took precise coordination to make the tapered surface blemish-free. Presented in a dignified wooden box, the finished product sells for 3,776 yen—which also happens to be Mt. Fuji's height in meters.

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