

‘Kagami-Biraki’

”*Kagami Biraki*” is a traditional ceremony in Japan and it translates to "Opening the Mirror". *Kagami* refers to the lid of the Sake barrel and *Biraki* means “to open”.

Because of the lid's round shape, *Kagami* is a symbol of harmony. The *Kagami Biraki* represents an opening to harmony and good fortune.

The Sake barrel *Kagami-Biraki* is said to trace its origins to another kind of *Kagami-Biraki* involving *Mochi*, “soft round rice cakes”, which is performed to celebrate the first working day of the New Year. In the past, Samurai households would make an offering to the gods of a stack of *mochi* to represent the *Kagami* at New Year. The *Mochi* was cut up into pieces to represent the *Biraki*, or “opening,” and eaten on January 11. Even today, many households and offices have this custom, placing *Kagami-Mochi* on their *Kamidana* at New Years.

