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Benihana's House Sake Receives Gold Award at 2011 U.S. National Sake Appraisal

MIAMI – November 16, 2011 – Benihana Inc. (NASDAQ: BNHNA; BNHN), the nation's leading operator of Japanese theme and sushi restaurants, has been given the Gold Award at the 2011 U.S. National Sake Appraisal for its Sho Chiku Bai *Classic* brand. Sho Chiku Bai *Classic* is brewed by Takara Sake USA Inc. and is bottled and labeled as "Benihana Sake" for the restaurant's house sake brand.

Benihana's house sake competed against 96 contenders in the Junmai category at the international contest and received the Gold Award alongside 26 other entries, the highest award in the Junmai category. Sho Chiku Bai *Classic* is the only sake made in the U.S. to win the Gold Award this year. The sake was judged amongst its competing beverages by a "blind" tasting conducted in two phases; first, a tasting for all entries and then a secondary tasting of those sakes that placed in the top 50 percent.

The U.S. National Sake Appraisal is an international annual event held since 2001 in Honolulu, Hawaii. Presented by the International Sake Association (Kokusai Sake Kai), the event evaluates 326 sake entries and is the largest event of its kind outside of Japan. Each entry is considered within the following categories: Daiginjo, Ginjo and Junmai. The Appraisal is conducted by ten judges (five from Japan and five from the U.S.) under the auspices of the Japan National Research Institute of Brewing, which has supervised Japan's National Sake Appraisal since its inception in 1910.

Benihana offers an extensive variety of the traditional Japanese alcoholic beverage at their restaurants, including hot sake, Japanese premium cold sake, premium cold sake and sake flights. There are also specialty drinks available such as the White Peach Sake Sangria and Mango Saketini, both mixed drinks with sake inspiration.

For more information on Benihana's sake offerings or to find a Benihana location, visit www.benihana.com.

About Benihana

Headquartered in Miami, Benihana Inc. (NASDAQ GS: BNHN, BNHNA) is the nation's leading operator of Japanese theme and sushi restaurants with 96 restaurants nationwide, including 63 Benihana restaurants, eight Haru sushi restaurants, and 25 RA Sushi restaurants. In addition, 18 franchised Benihana restaurants are operating in the United States, Latin America and the Caribbean. To learn more about Benihana Inc. and its three restaurant concepts, please view the corporate video at www.benihana.com/about/video.

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