

Japanese green tea

Inspire the table.

JAPANESE GREEN TEA GUIDE



JFOODO

What is Japanese Green Tea?

Japanese green tea refers to the specific Japanese style of processing of the Camellia Sinensis bush. Tea produced in Japan is mainly Green most notably Sencha, Gyokuro, Matcha, Hojicha, and Genmaicha. These types of tea are produced all over Japan and encompass many regional styles with unique characteristics.

The key factor that makes Japanese green tea unique is the steaming process. Japanese green tea is steamed after harvest creating a bright and fragrant brew with a rich taste that is both sweet and savory.

Japanese green tea also includes Matcha tea very specific to Japan. With Matcha, tea leaves are gently stone milled to a fine powder and then whisked in a bowl to create a uniquely rich and satisfying tea experience. Japan's cultural attention to detail and specific microclimate combined with the highly refined marriage of technology and craft make Japanese green tea unique in the world.



Processing

Japanese green tea is very valuable and exclusive because it is processed very carefully. The tea today is processed with hands-on craftsmanship. From tilling the land to fertilizing, harvesting, and manufacturing, the keen eye and deep understanding of the natural rhythms of the tea plant is of the utmost importance.

In addition, Japan has developed advanced technologies that allow precision, consistency, and scalability in the processing of the leaf. Japan still hand harvests tea and in some cases employs Temomi, or hand rolling.



Sencha

Sencha is the most prevalent style of Japanese green tea and encompasses many varieties and styles. Sencha can range in flavor from light and mineral, sweet and grassy, or even quite rich and unctuous. Sencha contains moderate caffeine, higher levels of catechin, a powerful antioxidant, and vitamin C. High-grade Sencha contains higher amino acid, which leads to the taste of rich umami.

Tasting note

Fresh grass, Vegetal, Softly sweet, Bright, Savory, Sweet

Major Crafted in

All over Japan (most well known - Shizuoka, Kagoshima, Miyazaki, Fukuoka, Mie, Saitama (Sayama))



Gyokuro

Producing Gyokuro requires a high degree of care and expertise. The tea bushes are unpruned and allowed to grow upright before shade coverings are built around the bushes. The tea is shaded for approximately 20-30 days and then hand harvested. Gyokuro has extremely high levels of L-Theanine, Glutamate and Arginine - imbuing it with an intense sweetness and focused, savory umami.

Tasting note

Oceanic, Protein-like, Floral rich, Umami, Savory, Sweet, Oceanic salinity, Unctuous

Major Crafted in

Mie, Kyoto (Uji), Fukuoka (Yame)



Matcha

Matcha is made from shaded tea leaves which is a similar grown process to Gyokuro. The leaves are shaded for 20-30 days and then processed in a special Tencha factory. After being steamed and dried, the leaves are gently milled in a stone mill. The powdered tea is then called Matcha. Matcha is unique to Japan and offers a refined and intense green tea experience.

Tasting note

Fresh greens, Spinach, Seaweed, Rice cracker, Buttered asparagus, Creamy, Toasted nori, Dried flowers

Major Crafted in

Kagoshima, Kyoto (Uji), Fukuoka (Yame), Aichi (Nishio)



Hojicha

Hojicha can be found in every corner of Japan and is the "table wine" of Japanese green tea. It is roasted and caramelized, lowering the caffeine content and adding a unique toasty aroma. It pairs very well with sweet and savory dishes and is a great choice for serving to guests when they arrive.

Tasting note

Caramelized sweetness, Toasty, Roasted, Nutty, Toasted grain, Spun sugar

Major Crafted in

All over Japan



Genmaicha

Genmaicha is an easy drinking and flavorful tea. Sometimes called "popcorn tea", Genmaicha actually contains roasted brown rice that resembles popcorn. The tea has its roots in rural Japan and is the perfect accompaniment to food. It is often served alongside sushi or other savory Japanese dishes.

Tasting note

Fresh, Toasted rice, Aromatic, Refreshing, Grassy, Nutty, Toasted

Major Crafted in

All over Japan

Feature of Japanese Green Tea

Japanese green tea is prized for its rich sweetness and lasting Umami. At the heart of this flavor is the chemical L-Theanine. The tea is uniquely high in this flavorful amino acid due to careful cultivar selection, garden management, and gentle processing. Due to elevated levels of L-Theanine, Japanese green tea offers remarkable texture on the palate with a pleasing depth that easily pairs with both sweet and savory foods. Whether brewed hot or cold, the tea can enhance and inspire “the table experience” by adding a level of unexpected depth while either contrasting or complementing a dish in the same way wine can. Since Japanese green tea has a variety of kinds and flavors which taste unique to each other, each can be paired with diverse types of food based on the flavors.

Japanese green tea offers a level of experience on pair with wines and spirits. With countless producers taking a unique perspective on their craft, it is easy to find a tea that is at home on your menu and discuss its terroir with your customers.

Many varieties of Japanese green tea were developed alongside Japanese cuisine and while they are at home on Japanese menus, they are unique and varied enough to pair with French, Italian and New American cuisine. Adding Japanese green tea to a menu is akin to highlighting Italy by having truffles or France by having burgundy on the menu. It represents a new category of craft and flavor and adds a level of depth to any menu.



Successful Story of Offering Japanese Green Tea

We interviewed Mr. Akio Matsumoto, a sommelier at Torien who offers a wide range of Japanese green tea on the restaurant's menu.



What made you include Japanese green tea on your drink menu at your restaurant?

Recently, there has been an increase in the number of customers, especially young customers, who do not order alcoholic beverage at all or choose to order as little as possible. As a result, there were a large number of customers who ordered only water. From a business perspective, this was a huge opportunity loss resulting in a drop in sales per customer with few orders on the drink menus.

From customers' perspectives, there were few choices of non-alcoholic beverages paired with foods, which led to difficulty increasing their satisfaction with their experience at the restaurant. I would like to provide an opportunity for those who want to drink but cannot consume alcoholic beverages to enjoy drink pairings.

What are the advantages of including Japanese green tea on the drink menu?

The biggest advantage is the variety of options that we can offer for our customers. There are many kinds of Japanese green tea, and even the same kind of tea has different tastes and flavors depending on its area and origin. Customers can be satisfied with a wide range of variation based on their preference and special dining experience with Japanese green tea pairing. In fact, many people mentioned that they are happy to be able to order non-alcoholic beverages drinks that go well with their meals.

From a business perspective, even customers who don't order alcoholic beverages often order from the

Japanese green tea menu, which helps us maintain our profit margin because we can maintain average customer spend. 40% of all of our customers order a single tea item including Japanese green tea, and 10% order the tea pairing menu. Many customers order repeatedly, and the number of orders of Japanese green tea is gradually increasing.

Which points do you consider when including Japanese green tea on the menu?

One of the important points is to provide the good taste of Japanese green tea on its own. I think it is important to carefully select and offer the best quality and grade of Japanese green tea. We make sure to provide enough choices for our customers by handling various types and production areas.

I believe the “presentation” to the customers is one of the important aspects. Many customers are highly interested in new food experience. By carefully selecting tea wares or serving warm Japanese green tea in unexpected wine glasses, people can enjoy the experience by not only the taste, but also the appearance and aroma.

Please tell us about your future plans for providing Japanese green tea in the menu.

By offering a Japanese tea menu, I would like to tell more people about the greatness of Japanese green tea and how well it goes with food. Through the special Japanese tea experience at the restaurant, I would like to do my best to make people aware of the appeal and quality of the tea, and to increase their awareness and knowledge of Japanese green tea.

How to Brew



Sencha

Tea leaf 5-6g (2 teaspoons)
Water 6oz (180cc) @ 180 °F (80°C)
Brew For 1 minute

Matcha

Matcha powder 2g (0.75 teaspoons)
Water 2oz (65cc) @ 180 °F (80°C)

Genmaicha

Tea leaf 6g (2 teaspoons)
Water 8oz (250cc) @ 195°F (90°C)
Brew For 2-3 minutes

Gyokuro

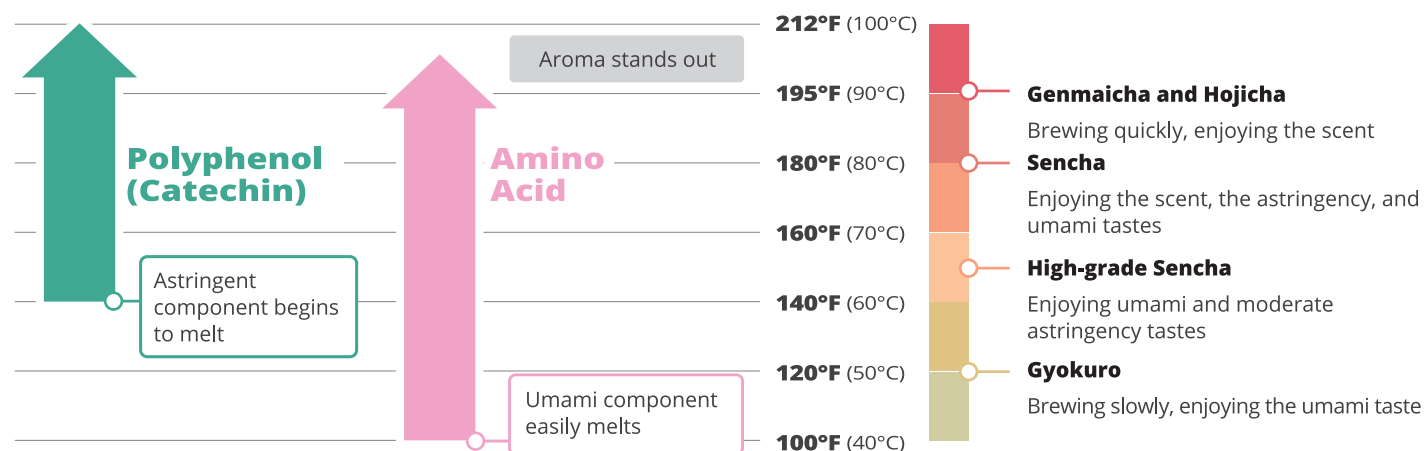
Tea leaf 5-6g (2 teaspoons)
Water 2oz (50-70cc) @ 120 °F (50°C)
Brew For 2 minutes

Hojicha

Tea leaf 5-6g (2 teaspoons)
Water 8oz (250cc) @ 200°F (95°C)
Brew For 2-3 minutes

To accentuate the aroma of brown rice, use water at around 195°F (90°C) . To accentuate the sweetness of the green tea, you can brew slightly cooler at around 180 °F (80°C).

- Relationship between Water Temperature and Taste of Tea -



Serving Method

- How to Serve with Kyusu (Japanese Teapot) -



1 Boil fresh, filtered water and pour into an empty Kyusu to preheat it.



2 Pour this hot water into Yuzamashi or cups and allow it to sit for the appropriate temperature of hot water.



3 Add the correct amount of tea leaves to the preheated Kyusu.



4 Pour the hot water from Yuzamashi or the cups into the Kyusu. Allow brewing.



5 Pour the tea gently into the cups.



6 Pour out every last drop since the last drop is full of flavorful extracts called "Golden drops."

- How to Serve with Tea Servers -



1 Scale the amount of tea leaves with a tea server and a scale.



2 Pour hot water into Yuzamashi or cups and allow it to sit for the appropriate temperature of hot water.



3 Pour the hot water from Yuzamashi or the cups into the tea server.



4 Allow the tea to steep for enough time.



5 Place Chakoshi (Tea strainer) over the empty tea server and gently pour Japanese green tea.

*Check the appropriate temperature of hot water, the amount of tea, the amount of hot water, and the brewing time for each kind of Japanese green tea on page 6.

Serving Method

- How to Brew Mizudashi (Cold Brew) -



1 Add 10-15g to a 1-liter carafe depending on the kind of tea.



2 Fill the carafe with cold filtered water. Mix the water once after several minutes. Allow the tea to brew in the fridge for 8-10 hours.



3 After 8-10 hours, stir the tea leaves to release their color and aroma.



4 Strain the tea leaves and enjoy.



5 The tea is good for 2-3 days in the refrigerator.

- How to Make Hot Matcha -



1 Preheat Chawan or Katakuchi (spouted bowl) by pouring hot water into it.



2 Pour out the hot water.



3 Pat dry Chawan or Katakuchi with a cloth.



4 Sift 2g of Matcha powder into Chawan or Katakuchi.



5 Pour 2oz (65cc) of water at 180°F (80°C).



6 Whisk vigorously for 20-30 seconds until a fine foam appears.

Approaches to Food Pairing

Mr. Akio Matsumoto from Torien introduces the approaches of food pairing with Japanese green tea.



Hojicha
Chicken Thigh Skewers

Synergistic effect of roasting aroma

Hojicha has less bitterness and astringency due to fewer catechins and tannins. The best approach is to combine both roasting aromas from Hojicha and food to create a synergistic effect. At Torien, I paired the sauce-grilled chicken thigh skewers.

How to pair with:
Hojicha is best paired with dishes that are not too heavy such as Tempura. For example, it is good to pair with a slightly seared fish sashimi and fillets. Since Hojicha has a rich taste, it is better offered at the beginning of a course rather than at the end.



Sencha
Deep-Fried Tofu

Synergistic effect of UMAMI

Sencha has rich umami and astringency due to tannin. It is a perfect pairing for foods with comparable umami. Also, the astringency is good for dishes that are oily to clean one's palette. At Torien, I paired with the dish made with Dashi from Bonito and Kombu to target the effect.

How to pair with:
Sencha is best paired with Umami from seafood based Dashi and the aroma of sea, such as sea urchin, for a synergistic effect of umami. Also, it would be a good pairing to combine an oily menu with Sencha to refresh the aftertaste.



Genmaicha
Vegetable Skewers

Synergistic effect of sweet and savory

Genmaicha has sweet and savory notes. The perfect pairing is a combination of the notes from foods. Genmaicha is a relative all-rounder, which means no limit to the pairings with any types of dishes. At Torien, I paired it with vegetable skewers such as shiitake mushroom.

How to pair with:
Genmaicha is best paired with sweet and savory tastes dishes. It is good for masking the negative aspects of ingredients. For example, the quirky aromas from roasted chicken wings or duck are masked when paired with Genmaicha. Since this tea contains rice, it is good to pair with any dishes that go well with rice.



Gyokuro
Tsukune

Synergistic effect of UMAMI

Gyokuro is one of the most surprising Japanese green tea to customers, as it has rich umami that tastes like dashi. It is a perfect pairing with umami from Gyokuro and a delicate flavor of food. At Torien, I paired with umami from both Gyokuro and Tsukune (Japanese meatballs).

How to pair with:
Gyokuro is best paired with umami or delicate and complex tasting dishes since Gyokuro is rich and not overpowered by the flavors of dishes. It goes well with a salty taste or dashi such as Kombu-based dishes. It is highly recommended to offer with the final dish as the climax of the course.



Matcha
Pudding

Good combination of bitterness and sweetness

Matcha has a strong bitterness that is perfectly paired with the sweetness of the dessert at the end of the course to clean the palette. At Torien, I paired with pudding as sweet as Omogashi, which typically paired with traditional Matcha.

How to pair with:
Matcha is best paired with desserts that are sweet and oily. Since Matcha is bitter and has a strong aroma, it is better to serve at the end of the course. However, serving mocktails made with Matcha powder or leaves could be an interesting pairing in the middle of the course.

Japanese Green Tea Company List



empapilio, Inc.

LILIKU TEA is a Japanese tea brand owned by empapilio, Inc. We are working together with a small, family-owned tea farms that do not allow mass production but continue to make good quality tea. Our aim is to realize the idea of delivering delicious tea to tea lovers around the world.

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Maikonocha Honpo Co.,Ltd

"Tea As a Way of Life" is the motto of Maikoteja Japan. This word summarizes the basic philosophy of Maikoteja. It is our utmost goal to advance the knowledge of delicious Japanese green tea. This is why Maikoteja Japan strives to manufacture and offer superior green tea for all our customers.

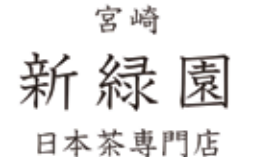
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Marufuku Seicha Co.,Ltd.

Established in 1955. The company purchases and roasts tea mainly from Shizuoka. The company specializes in adjusting the roasting heat to bring out the characteristics of the region and the customer's requests. They focus on developing new products such as organic products and

🌐 <https://www.marufuku-seicha.jp/english>
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Shinryokuen Co., Ltd.

Selling Miyazaki tea all over the world. A gentle taste with less astringency is the feature of the tea. It has been received the Minister of Agriculture, Forestry, and Fisheries Award 4 times. Also, it received many awards from food competitions overseas.

🌐 <https://shinryokuen.net/english>
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Furukawa Seicha Inc.

We are tea farmers who have been growing tea trees using traditional methods for generations in Gokasho/Uji, Kyoto, the birthplace of Ujicha. We hand pick only first flush teas and process them in our own factory. We have won many first prizes at various tea fairs, including the National Tea Fair.

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Ishihara-Tokyo Inc.

A select shop that deals specifically w Japanese teas that are "hot-on the main stream of distribution & too famous, but taste great and in a niche market." Not only to deliver great taste & flavored tea to your door, we also make great effort that you would see the face & thoughts of the producer.

🌐 <https://www.tokyo-matcha-selection.com/>
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ISHIKAWA ORGANIC TEA FARM

Our products are grown with only natural organic fertilizers and no agricultural chemicals or pesticides in the elevation 650 meters of mountain. We're the first farmer which had obtained JAS in Japan. Most of our products export to overseas. In 2008 we received Prime Minister's Award.

🌐 https://www.instagram.com/ishikawa_tea_farm/
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SONO LLC.

SONO is a young company that has close relationships with organic tea farmers. We promote organic farming and support international sales of small to middle-sized tea farmers. Our teas are either JAS certified organic or pesticide/chemical-free farming aiming for organic certification.

🌐 <https://sono-organic.com>
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Sugimoto Tea Company

We are a third-generation Japanese tea maker founded in Shizuoka. By working directly with tea farmers and producing tea in our facilities, we provide you with a range of delicious Japanese green teas. Your tea will arrive quickly after ordering from our international office near Seattle, WA.

🌐 <https://www.sugimotousa.com/>
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Ten riverside

Ten riverside launched the stem tea project. As a result, "SHUN" was created. With an unprecedented roasting method, it has a rich aroma and a refreshing taste with little bitterness. In addition, "SHUN" is kind to the environment and our health as it is certified by Rainforest Alliance and JAS.

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ITO EN (North America) INC.

Ito En North America is dedicated to growing Japan's green tea culture, especially in the United States where the benefits of Japanese green tea are well aligned with consumer value drivers. A subsidiary of Ito En LTD in Japan, and headquartered in Texas.

🌐 <https://itoen.com/>
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KOBATAEN CO., LTD.

Japanese green tea, Ujitawara in Kyoto Pref. We provide overseas customers with various types of Japanese green teas in line with their requests. We'd like more people to enjoy the "umami" taste as well as traditional flavor and aroma of our Japanese green tea.

🌐 <http://www.kobataen.com/en>
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Kyoto tea cooperative

It is an organization composed of 120 tea companies in Kyoto prefecture as union members. The purpose is to contribute to the promotion of the tea industry by carrying out various operations such as refrigerated storage of green tea, which is difficult for each company to handle.

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THE MATCHA TOKYO Co., Ltd.

THE MATCHA TOKYO manufactures high quality 100% Organic Matcha and Japanese tea at our own farm in Kagoshima, Japan. We are able to offer you different grades of Matcha and any kind of Japanese tea for retail merchandise and bulk products for café and restaurant.

🌐 <https://www.the-matcha.tokyo/pages/english>
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Ujinotsuyu Seicha Co., Ltd.

Ujinotsuyu Seicha is a group company of Fukujuen, which was established in Kyoto over 230 years ago and one of the oldest and largest Japanese tea manufacturers. We export Japanese tea to more than 50 countries for over 40 years from Kyoto. 'Uji' comes from the birthplace of Japanese tea.

🌐 <https://www.ujinotsuyu.co.jp/english/>
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Wakohen Inc.

The story started about 70 years ago, it was nearly 1 ha at that time. Yasuhisa Horiguchi decided to grow more tea garden by keeping natural ecosystem as much as possible. And also it is rare to do from growing own tea garden till making final tea products. All our factories have HACCAP certificate.

🌐 <https://www.wakohen.co.jp/en/>
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About JFOODO

The Japan Food Product Overseas Promotion Center (JFOODO) was established on April 1, 2017 within JETRO. JFOODO will devote its resources to the branding of Japanese agricultural, forestry, fishery and food products. To further boost the export of Japanese agricultural, forestry, fishery and food products, JFOODO will work to create a stronger platform for overseas B to C promotions and branding projects that stimulate international demand.

Please check the website to get to know more about Japanese green tea.



Japanese Green Tea Inspire the table Promotion Website

<https://greentea-jfoodo.jetro.go.jp/business/>



Japanese Green Tea Promotion Website

<https://greentea-jfoodo.jetro.go.jp/>



JFOODO Official Instagram Just Tea Yourself

<https://www.instagram.com/justteayourself/>

Japanese green tea advisors: Mr. Zach Mangan (Kettl) (USA) / Mr. Fujioka Hibiki (Japan)

