

Matcha

Green Tea 101



The Daily Tea

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How to Make Simple & Easy Everyday Matcha

Want to learn how to make a great cup of matcha at home? With our simple, no-fuss guide you can enjoy the frothy sweetness and health benefits of matcha every day

If you've ever had less-than-stellar results making matcha at home, you may think the preparation is best left to the pros. But fear not: the common complaints- lumps, bitterness and lackluster froth are easy to overcome once you know the basics. The fact is, matcha is easy to prepare at home, and you don't need to invest in complicated equipment. Our recipes are modern and easy, so grab a simple strainer, an inexpensive milk frother, a mug, a spoon and you're almost there!

The Basics Of Matcha Success

▪ Water Temperature

Water temperature should be less than boiling to maintain natural, mild sweetness and health benefits (approximately 180F/80C)

▪ Add Water in Two Steps

Whisk in just a small amount of heated water with the matcha at first. Once all of the powder is dissolved, the rest of the water can be added to taste.

▪ Sifting

Sift the matcha powder with a tea strainer or other sifter to remove clumps

▪ Whisking

Matcha has traditionally been whisked vigorously with a bamboo whisk, but you can obtain excellent froth with a hand-held milk frother, available for under \$8

Super Simple Modern Matcha Recipe

- Sift 1 teaspoon of matcha into a deep cup or bowl
- Add 2-3 ounces of hot water, around 180 degrees Fahrenheit
- Whisk until frothy
- Pour into a cup or bowl, add additional water to taste
- Enjoy immediately

Hot Or Cold Matcha Latte Recipe

- 1 ½ tsp matcha powder
- 2 ounces hot water
- 1 cup milk (cows, soy, almond)
- 1 tsp sugar (or other sweetener)
- Sift matcha powder into a deep mug
- Whisk hot water into powder vigorously until the powder is smooth and foamy
- Heat the milk and sugar (do not boil)- use a frother if desired
- Add hot milk to mug
- Dust with a sprinkle of matcha

How To Store Matcha

Opened packages should be consumed as soon as possible for freshness, but use these guidelines for storing unopened containers of matcha:

- Keep in the refrigerator or freezer to keep it fresh; restore it to room temperature before making tea
- Store matcha away from heat, light and moisture
- Keep away from items with strong odor



Matcha Green Tea & Goat Cheese Crostini

Recipe by alexis siemons

While a thin baguette will do, opt for a small whole-wheat bread loaf for larger, more substantial slices to provide ample room for the juicy orange segments. Makes 8 large crostini (if using a thin baguette, be sure to add additional slices of bread)

Ingredients

- Small bread loaf, 8 half-inch slices
- Olive oil, for drizzling
- 5 oz goat cheese

- 1/2 teaspoon matcha green tea powder
- Honey, for drizzling
- 1 orange, peeled, pith removed and segmented

To make the crostini, heat your oven to 350 degrees. Slice loaf into 8 half-inch pieces, place the slices on a baking sheet, and drizzle both sides with olive oil. Bake for approximately 15 minutes or until slightly crispy (note: You can make the crostini ahead and store at room temperature in an airtight container for 2 days).

Let the crostini cool slightly, but top with goat cheese while the crostini is still warm for an easy spread. Gingerly sprinkle matcha powder on the goat cheese to create an even dusting.

TIP → *To preserve the bright green matcha color, sprinkle right before serving.*

Pairing: Pair this bite with an iced matcha latte for an indulgent sip to play upon the creaminess of the goat cheese. For a crisp, refreshing iced tea pairing, try an iced sencha green tea.



→ Did You Know?

1. The nutrients in matcha are equivalent to 10 cups of steeped green tea
2. High quality matcha is silkier and tastier than lower quality matcha.



High vs Low Quality Matcha? 5 Easy Tips to Knowing the Difference

Presented By Aiya Matcha

When it comes to buying matcha, it's worth learning the real differences between a quality matcha and one that just isn't up to par. Here are the 5 simple tips to help you to distinguish between the two, and to enjoy this Japanese favorite.

You may think that simply looking for matcha described as "Ceremonial Grade," versus "Food Grade" or "Ingredient Grade," ensures you are buying good matcha, right? Wrong. Not all matchas are created equal. So what's the difference? Simply, taste. Higher quality grades deliver a smoother taste, a better mouth feel, and are generally less bitter. Conversely, lower grade matcha delivers a coarse and gritty taste. So before preparing a cup of matcha, take the time to find the

best quality, and here's how.

#1: Origin

It's wise to first look for the country or region of origin. It is generally accepted that higher quality matcha comes from Japan. And there are two regions in Japan widely considered to produce the best. While matcha is produced in several regions, the matcha from Nishio city in Aichi prefecture and Uji city in Kyoto prefecture are both generally considered the top producing areas, accounting for 80% of all the matcha produced in Japan today. China and Taiwan also produce matcha, but Japan remains the favorite among aficionados.

#2: Price

Very simply, matcha is like many things in life – you get what you pay for. But the price of quality matcha can vary. Typically speaking, a 30 gram tin of ceremonial-grade ranges between \$26 and 32; anything cheaper is usually in the lower-quality range. Sure, you can find 100 grams for \$15, but the difference will be noticeable – leaving a bad taste in the mouth both figuratively and literally.

#3: Color

When it comes to color, look for a really vibrant green. The greener the better! Matcha is shade-grown; in this way, the tea leaves are forced to overproduce chlorophyll, which gives matcha its nice bright green color.



Lower quality matcha, by comparison, tends to be made up of leaves that have not been properly shaded, or that may be older and/or harvested from lower on the stalk of the plant; and therefore the color will be yellowish/brownish in hue.

#4: Taste

If you have ever tasted good matcha, you will have noticed the sweet, vegetal smell to it; this comes from the amino acid called L-Theanine, again produced by the shade growing process. It is the L-Theanine which gives matcha that nice, clean-drinking, green tea taste. And since low-quality matcha conversely lacks L-Theanine, it has a strongly bitter and astringent flavor that isn't tasty or sweet.

#5: Feel

Take a look at our main picture, above. Matcha looks and feels more like a fine powder than your typical loose leaf tea. The feel and texture of the powder itself can reveal a true quality matcha. A high quality grade is very fine and silky, similar to the feel of eye shadow, because its particle size is only 5-10 microns, meaning that it is as fine as baby powder. A lower-quality grade has a bigger particle size, which results in a coarser feel when rubbed between your fingers.

Finally – Make Matcha Right!

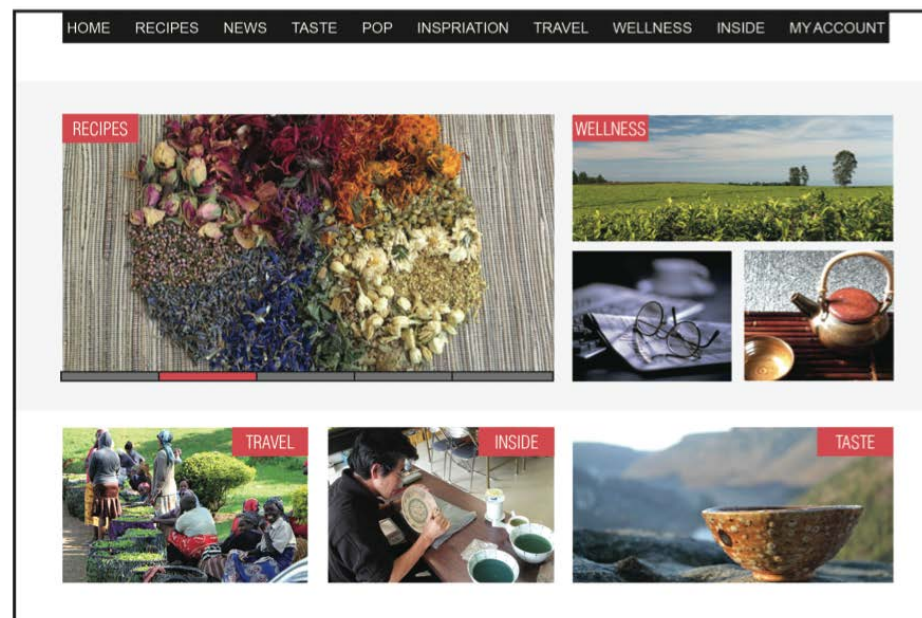
When preparing to enjoy some matcha tea, hot water is added to the powder and then whisked with a bamboo implement called a chasen. Proper whisking adds to the smoothness of the drink- there should be no lumps on the side of the bowl.



Remember – not all matchas are created equal. So, the best way to find the best is to compare a few side by side.

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Sommelier Secrets: Matcha Demystified

By Del Tamborini

Matcha is a Japanese green tea made by grinding the leaves of a minimally processed tea called tencha into an extremely fine, bright green powder. One of the most delicious and purest expressions of tea, it is also among the least understood outside Japan.

Matcha traces its origin to the powdered tea brought back from China by Japanese monks in the 12th century for use as an aid in meditation. Upon its introduction to Japan, it became the tea of choice for the Emperor and the nobility and rituals surrounding its preparation became codified in the formal Japanese tea ceremony called chano-yu.

Easy steps for preparing great matcha (usucha method):

Preheat the chawan (tea bowl) by pouring very hot, but not boiling, water just enough to fully cover the bottom, or about 1/4 the depth of the bowl. If desired, the chasen (tea whisk) may also be preheated

by immersing the tips of the tines in the hot water as the bowl heats

When the bowl is warm to the touch, discard the water and dry the inside.

Holding a fine-mesh sieve over the tea bowl, use a chashaku (bamboo tea scoop) or a matcha teaspoon to place one to two moderately sized scoops into the sieve.

Softly shake the sieve, allowing the matcha to fall into the bowl. Use the tea scoop to gently press any remaining matcha through the sieve and into the bowl.

Slowly add 2-3 oz. of 160-170 degree water to the matcha

Grasp the bowl with one hand to steady it, and with the other hand use the chasen to whisk quickly but lightly in an "M" shape for 10-20 seconds, eliminating larger bubbles as they appear. Be careful not to scrape the bottom of the bowl with the whisk. The goal is to create a uniform layer of extremely small, foam-like bubbles on the surface of the tea.

Admire the beautiful color and fragrance of the tea, sip, and enjoy!



Otsukimi: Japanese Autumn Moon-viewing Tea Ceremony

By Alexis Siemons

Leaves shift to deep, golden and amber hues that catch the fading sunsets as pumpkins move from the winding vines within the patch to our doorsteps. Spiced lattes fill cafes and scent out kitchens. Fall is here. Although in the Japanese culture, the fall harvest is celebrated in September and October with Otsukimi, the mid-autumn harvest moon-viewing celebration.

It is customary to celebrate the beauty of nature with Japanese festivals: cherry blossoms in the spring and the moon and autumn-harvest in the fall.

I had the pleasure of attending a moon-viewing tea ceremony in Philadelphia at the Shofuso Japanese House and Garden, where tea was served to us on the covered veranda overlooking the garden as twilight gave way to dark night sky.

Introduced by China in the Nara period (710-794), Otsukimi has been a part of the Japanese culture since the Heian era (794-1185). Traditionally, Japanese aristocratic families would host moon-viewing events aboard boats, as to see the reflection of the moon on the surface of the water.

An offering table is still lined with bowls featuring seasonal crops (chestnuts, persimmons, taro), plants and round rice dumplings (known as dango), as an offering to autumn's full moon in hopes of a plentiful harvest. During such a celebration it was common to host a moon-viewing tea ceremony whether on a boat, out amongst nature or in a tea house.

Sweet rice dumplings, dango, are similar to the familiar mochi (which Americans know as being filled with ice cream). The rice dumplings are paired with matcha green tea and served during the tea ceremony. Dango is often made with a rice flour exterior and filled with a range of ingredients, such as sweetened red bean paste, eggs, chestnut paste, etc. There are even green tea flavored Dango, referred to as Chadango ("cha" translating to "tea").

While Americans see the faces of the man in the moon, Japanese folklore notes seeing a rabbit pounding rice flour in a mortar and pestle to make mochi. Inspired by that folklore, Dango is served during the tea ceremony (and also because its round shape and white rice flour coloring give it the appearance of the moon).

The Otsukimi tea ceremony follows Japanese tradition, in that the host prepares a bowl of matcha for each guest in attendance. While there are entire books devoted to the art, culture and tradition of the Japanese tea ceremony, I will share just a glimmer of what I experienced during my first Otsukimi tea ceremony. The ceremony itself reminds me of a ballet; thoughtfully practiced movements are graceful-



ly threaded together. A small set of customary tea utensils dance about ever so quietly to prepare the bowl of matcha green tea.

The ceremony begins as the host carefully unpacks the tea utensils, wiping them clean with folded cloths. The tea bowl, chawan, is warmed, rinsed and dried. The matcha green tea is gently tapped from its canister into another small dish. The bamboo chashaku, tea ladle, is dipped into the vibrant green tea powder to measure the perfect bit need for each bowl within the gentle curvature of the scoop. The tea meets the inside the chawan tea bowl.



Steaming water is poured over the vibrant tea with such Matcha Measureprecision that it seems as if a stream appeared above the bowl. The delicate bamboo spokes of the tea whisk, chasen, quickly whip the tea infused water like a rush of wind, until frothy foam covers the surface. These rapid strokes seem to echo that of a cymbal in a grand orchestra performance, noting the final moments before the bowl of tea is carefully handed to the guest.

There is an emphasis on ways in which the tea bowl is turned Matcha and Whiskprior to the first sip, and a final slurp that alerts the host



that the guest has finished their tea.

Tucked within the ceremony is the presentation of a sweet, whether it be a small wagashi treat, mochi or even small dishes of savory bites throughout a lengthier ceremony. Before passing the chawan bowl back to the host, the guest takes the time to observe the details of the bowl, paying respect to the artist's handcrafted beauty.

The tea utensils are then delicately cleaned, a sign of respect to the guests, and carefully placed back into their box with a great sense of purpose. It's at this moment you sense that what you've experienced is incredibly powerful, yet calming, washing over you with tradition and a refreshed perspective.

While I dance about the details of the ceremony, highlighting the bright moments throughout the steeped journey, I must note that it's not even possible to describe each graceful second. Letters could not be threaded together to capture the emotions one feels when participating in a ceremony that carries such traditional weight and effortless beauty.

Each element has a quiet power that leads to experiencing a transformative bowl of match tea and creating a deep connection between host and guest. Although the one moment that is truly your own is when the matcha meets your lips. The powdered tencha tea whisked into a smooth cup seems to coat your palate with rich umami flavors that walk the line of creamy and vegetal with a subtle sweet note.

Pleasant bitter flavors are reminiscent of the first bite of a dark chocolate bar, although these grassy notes with a bit of bite are quieted by the wagashi sweet or mochi pairing. Treasuring each drop, I imagined the tencha tea leaves shaded during the last weeks leading up to their April harvest.

I tried to channel the warmth of the freshly picked leaves being steamed and gently dried, having veins and stems removed before being ground into a fine powder in an ancient stone mill.

As the final moments of the moon-viewing festival came to a close,

bowing in appreciation for a truly memorable evening, I took a deep breath of the chilled autumn air wafting in from the garden, now completely awash with darkness. The sense of calm was both grounding and exhilarating, connecting me to the nature that we celebrated. It was as if the moon was my bright balloon that I held onto with a string threaded with each bit of matcha tea powder, pulling me to the sky yet keeping me on my feet.

Vowing to seek elements of this state of mind, the very next evening I carefully opened a box that housed my Ippodo matcha set. The chawan, chashaku and chasen tucked within with a cloth and tiny jar of matcha found their way to my urban oasis in my small patio garden.

Placing each tea utensil on a coral blanket, I thoughtfully whisked a bowl of matcha under a fall sunset sky watching the golden hour fade into twilight. I cupped the bowl with both hands and buried my face in the welcomed warming steam, greatly anticipating the first sip after a brief waft of the rich aroma leapt from the frothed tea.

I didn't mind waiting for the moon to rise that night.





Health Benefits of Matcha Green Tea

Presented By Aiya Matcha

5 reasons to add this superfood to your daily routine

Matcha is known to deliver more healthful elements than any other form of green tea. Credited with benefits that range from aiding weight loss and building muscle to cancer prevention and reducing cholesterol, this superfood is one of the most potent nutritionals available today.

What makes matcha such a standout? The leaves used in this premium tea are cultivated in shaded areas, increasing their chlorophyll content and producing a rich source of antioxidants. But unlike other types of tea that are steeped in bags, matcha is a finely milled powder made from the whole leaf and dissolved in water to release the full health

properties of the leaves. In fact, one cup of matcha has as many antioxidants as 10 cups of regular green tea!

Here's a quick rundown on the top benefits of this powerful health drink:

1. Burn Calories and Lose Weight Faster

Drinking matcha green tea is thought to increase metabolism and help burn fat more efficiently when combined with exercise. Drink a cup of matcha before a workout to boost your fitness routine.

2. Reduce Cholesterol

The catechins in matcha have been shown to lower serum total cholesterol and LDL concentrations in people who make it a part of their regular diet.

3. Increase Energy & Lower Stress

Matcha is loaded with L-theanine, an amino acid known to increase the alpha wave activity in the brain and increase production of two mood-enhancing chemicals- dopamine and serotonin. In addition to promoting relaxation and relieving stress, the L-theanine actually works in concert with matcha's caffeine content to sharpen brain activity without nervous energy.

4. Detoxify

The high level of chlorophyll in the tea leaves makes matcha an incredible detoxifier, capable of removing heavy metals and chemicals that may be trapped in the body.

5. Reduce Risk of Cancer

EGCg, which makes up nearly 60% of the catechins in matcha, is

widely recognized for its cancer-fighting qualities. In fact, matcha contains substantially more EGCG than many other types of tea.



Did You Know?

There are two major regions where matcha is produced – Uji of Kyoto, and Nishio, in the Aichi-prefecture, Japan.



Matcha and Green Tea Bag Nutritional Comparison

A comparison of the amount of each nutrient in one cup of green tea prepared using a bag, with that of one serving of matcha. Included is a short explanation of why each nutrient is important.



Green Tea Bag



Matcha



Comparing one serving of Tea Bag Sencha and Matcha
 3g Sencha Tea bag with 240ml (8oz) hot water
 2g Matcha with 3oz hot water

Source: Standard Tables of Food Composition: Japan Forth and Fifth Revised and Expanded Edition
 Aiya America Nutritional Analysis: Ceremonial Matcha
 (Eco Pro research, Brunswick Lab, Covance Lab)

Catechines	Flavanols found to be helpful in reduction of body fat and LDL Cholesterol, as well as protecting the blood vessels, leading to a decreased risk of heart attacks.	188.8 mg	242 mg	1.3x more!
L-Theanine	An amino acid found to be useful in stress-reduction. It has also shown success in lowering blood lipids, and increasing the effectiveness of anti-tumor drugs.	9 mg	39 mg	4.3x more!
Protein	Bones, muscles, cartilage, skin & blood all need protein for their generation. It is a macronutrient that is required for sustainability of life.	3.35 mg	578 mg	172.5x more!
Total Fiber	Fiber helps to control blood sugar, lowers the risk of heart attack & stroke, can enhance weight loss, improves skin health, and aids in digestion and kidney health.	Less than 0.01 mg	0.34 mg	34x more!
Calcium	Important to bone strength, as well as in new bone growth, helping to prevent osteoporosis. As the body ages, more calcium is needed to maintain bone health.	Less than 0.05 mg	6.5 mg	130x more!
Iron	Transports oxygen through the body. Without the necessary amount of oxygen, the body cannot produce adequate red blood cells, which can result in anemia.	Less than 0.01 mg	0.34 mg	34x more!
Caffeine	Caffeine boosts memory & alertness, wards off Alzheimer's, can ease depression, may protect against cataracts, and can relieve post-workout pain.	31.8 mg	68 mg	2.1x more!
Potassium	Potassium is an extremely important nutrient, since it signals the heart to beat. It is crucial to muscle, nerve & kidney health.	0.45 mg	42.3 mg	94x more!
Vitamin C	Protects against immune system issues and cardiovascular disease, is important for skin & eye health, and can prevent prenatal health problems.	0.1 mg	3.2 mg	32x more!

#TheDailyTea



Matcha Angel Food Cake

By Cynthia Gold

Dessert may seem an indulgence, but it is possible to perfect the end of your meal without making it overly sweet, heavy or fattening. Some of the tea granitas and sorbets we looked at previously would end your meal wonderfully when served in a crisp tuile bowl with some fresh berries. Panna Cotta, a decadent custard set with gelatin instead of fat laden egg yolks, is wonderful when you infuse the dairy with tea and other tasty ingredients like citrus zest.

Your favorites can also be done in a healthier way. Matcha Cheese cake made with a blend of low fat cream cheese and low fat sour cream can still come out rich and satisfying. Napoleon's can be transformed using crisp filo layers, tea poached fruit and sweetened low fat ricotta or goat cheese. Even chocolate desserts can be lightened and actually

take well to additions of tea.

As luck would have it there is one classic that needs no help to be healthy and delectable, yet unfortunately is often overlooked: Angel Food Cake. With a little care, it's easy to make a light, moist and fluffy Matcha Angel Food Cake that's both visually stunning and tantalizingly delicious.

Matcha Angel Food Cake

For ease of removal, it's best to have a ring pan with a removable bottom. If not, be sure to fit the bottom of your pan with a ring of parchment paper.

Ingredients:

12 egg whites, room temperature

1 cup cake flour

4 teaspoons Matcha Powder

1 teaspoon ground ginger

1 ½ cups superfine sugar (divided)

¼ cup warm water

1 teaspoon orange extract

1 ½ teaspoons cream of tartar

½ teaspoon fine crystal kosher or sea salt

Directions:

- Preheat oven to 350 degrees Fahrenheit.
- Combine half the sugar with the cake flour, salt, matcha and ginger, set aside the remaining sugar.
- On low speed, blend room temperature egg whites, orange

extract, water and cream of tartar.

- When soft peaks form, change to medium speed and slowly add the reserved sugar, beating until firm peaks are formed.
- Sift the flour mixture over the egg white mixture in several batches, gently folding in each time with a wide spatula. Be careful not to deflate the air from the egg mixture.
- When fully incorporated, carefully spoon into an ungreased tube pan, preferably with a removable bottom.
- Bake for 30 to 40 minutes or until a tester inserted into the middle comes out dry and the cake bounces back when gently touched.
- Cool upside down on a wire rack. If you don't have a wire rack, the cake pan may be balanced upside down while inserting a stable bottle into the center of the ring. Let it cool upside down for at least an hour.
- If the cake does not release easily when tapped, run a thin slicing knife around the edges and tap again.

Your Matcha Angel food cake would be wonderful served with fresh berries tossed in tea simple syrup, or with lightly tea poached fresh fruit. A dollop of frozen low-fat yogurt would be a nice complement as well. In the winter, you could pair it up with a richer tea and spiced fruit compote. If you're looking for desserts that are gluten free, try a Matcha version of a Pavlova, with crisp baked Matcha meringues accompanied by the same fruits and frozen yogurt.

Folding well-selected ground teas into your batters along with the flour is a great way to create subtle variations in your favorite madelines, macarons, chiffons or almost any baked item. But remember, you can also get creative with fillings, glazes and icings as well.

Anytime you have liquid in your recipe, consider infusing tea leaves into it. Think milk, melted butter, cream, juices, alcohol, you name it. Or steeped tea (often concentrated) can be used to replace some or all of the liquid. Consider tea as a regular part of your culinary pantry!



Green Tea & Ginger Macaroons

By Cynthia Gold

These rich treats can be enjoyed as is, or finished with chocolate. The chocolate may be drizzled over the top, or used to dip the bottoms only. If you are truly a chocoholic, then you can decide to fully enrobe the macaroons, but in that case, double the amount of chocolate shown below.

This is yet another use for one of your favorite tea simple syrups, ginger oolong. If you don't have any flavorful tea simple syrup on hand, good quality honey or agave syrup may be used with excellent results.

Yield: 3 dozen macaroons

Ingredients

- 1 cup egg whites
- 2 1/2 cups granulated sugar
- 2 tablespoons simple syrup or honey
- 2 teaspoons Grand Marnier
- 1/2 teaspoon freshly zested orange peel
- 16 ounces shredded sweetened coconut
- 1/4 cup diced candied ginger
- 1/2 teaspoon matcha
- 1 1/4 cups cake flour, sifted
- 8 ounces bittersweet chocolate

Directions

Whisk together the egg whites, sugar, syrup and Grand Marnier in a large stainless steel mixing bowl. Put the bowl over a pot of simmering water and whisk occasionally. Heat until warm. Remove the bowl from the heat and whisk in the matcha (A box grater works well for this). Sprinkle in the diced candied ginger, separating the pieces as you add them. Fold in the coconut and flour. Refrigerate until firm.

Preheat the oven to 300 degrees. Line 2 baking sheets with parchment paper. Roll the macaroon mixture into 1 inch balls and place on the paper with at least 1 1/2 inches between each. Bake for 20 minutes or until golden brown. Cool for 10 minutes then remove from the pan.

Melt the chopped chocolate in a metal bowl over just steaming water. Do not let the water boil. By melting the chocolate as gently

as possible, you will keep it in temper and it will set easily for you and keep its texture and shine. Spread the flat side of the cookie with the melted chocolate, or alternatively, dip halfway or drizzle the chocolate over the top of the cookie. If enrobing the bottom, set the dipped macaroon flat side down on a clean baking sheet to set. If drizzling the cookie, keep the chocolate side up while the chocolate is hardening. The chocolate may be set at room temperature or in the refrigerator.

Ginger Oolong Simple Syrup

You will want to use a moderately high oxidation oolong for this to add a rich earthiness to your syrup. When grating the ginger, be sure to retain all of the released ginger juice to use.

Ingredients

- 1 cup sugar
- 1-1/4 cups water
- 1/4 cup coarsely grated ginger (~2 inches), including all released juices
- 1 heaped tablespoon of oolong leaves

Directions

Simmer sugar, water, and grated ginger (and its juices) in a small saucepan for about 5 minutes, until a syrup forms—it should have a strong ginger flavor and bite. Stir in tea leaves and continue to simmer until the leaves unfurl, about 1 minute. Remove from the heat and set aside to cool.

Strain very well so that no tea leaf residue remains in the syrup.

Store covered in the refrigerator for up to 3 weeks.



Ceremonial Matcha vs. Cooking Grade Matcha

Presented By Aiya Matcha

Does it ever make sense to buy a lower-grade matcha? The answer may surprise you. If you've always assumed that ceremonial grade, being the most expensive, must be the best choice for anything that calls for matcha – think again!

There are two main categories of quality matcha: ceremonial and cooking (or ingredient) grade. Strictly speaking, the differences in grade should not be a reflection of quality, but instead a useful tool in evaluating the flavor profile and recommended usage.

Ceremonial:

Ceremonial grade matcha is blended exclusively for whisking into hot water, where the full flavor is released. Made from the youngest leaves and milled to a talcum consistency, the flavor is delicate, sweet and fresh. This highest-grade, most expensive matcha is ideal for drinking straight and requires only a small amount; mixing it with other ingredients will not only mask its delicate flavor profile, it will be an unfortunate waste of money.

Cooking Grade:

Cooking grade matcha is made from slightly more mature leaves, and is milled specifically for blending with other ingredients. The flavor profile is still sweet and fresh, but more assertive. The slightly bitter, earthy undertone makes it ideal for mixing with dairy, soy, sugar and many other foods. Cooking grade matcha is both more flavorful and economical than ceremonial grade.

Whatever your intended use, choose a quality matcha based on color, touch and smell. Quality matchas are pleasantly green, with ceremonial grade being the most vibrant. They are also finely milled with no coarseness; ceremonial grade will have a talcum consistency. And the smell of quality matcha will be always be grassy and fresh.

So if you want to add this gorgeous green powerhouse to your diet, don't compromise on quality – instead use the grading system to your advantage. Once you know how to select the right grade, you'll always be able to enjoy the delicious flavor and health benefits of matcha at an affordable price.



→ Did You Know?

Tea bushes used for matcha production are covered during the last few weeks before harvest. The shaded leaves grow more slowly, producing more chlorophyll and turning the leaves a dark green color. These leaves contain a great deal of amino acids, most notably L-Theanine.