

Using a variety of processes to produce a range of delicious teas

Spring, summer, autumn, winter – Japan has four distinct seasons that give tea a variety of different characteristics. The taste of tea is also affected by the region and grade of tea as well as differences in cultivation and processing methods, resulting in a variety of delicious teas for your enjoyment.

Characteristics of signature Japanese green teas 代表的な日本茶の特長



Sencha

The most commonly enjoyed variety of Japanese green tea is *sencha*. The freshly-picked tea leaves are steamed and then dried as they are rolled. After the leaves have been shaped, they are blended to achieve the best flavor for the consumer. In general, *sencha* is green tinged with yellow and has a well-balanced combination of aroma, *umami* and bitterness, providing you with a feeling of luxury that increases with the grade of green tea.

＜煎茶＞ 日本茶の中で最もよく飲まれている緑茶です。摘みたての新鮮な生葉を蒸気で蒸し、揉みながら乾燥。形をきれいに整えたのち、理想とする香味や消費者のニーズに合わせてブレンドしています。水色（すいしょく）は一般的に黄色みがかった緑色で、香り・うま味・苦味のバランスがよく、上級品ほど香りやうま味が上品に感じられます。



Gyokuro (refined green tea)

The finest grade of Japanese green tea, *gyokuro* is sweet with a unique and mildly astringent aroma and mellow *umami*. The tea leaves are cultivated using the *oishita* method, which involves shading the young tea leaves from direct sunlight for around 20 days after they first start to appear. This distinctive process inhibits astringency, producing tea leaves with large amounts of “theanine,” an amino acid that enhances *umami*.

＜玉露＞ 日本茶の中の最高級茶で、渋みをおさえた独特の香りとまろやかなうま味と甘味が特長です。玉露は、新芽が出はじめた頃から20日間ほど直射日光を遮る「覆下（おおした）栽培」という方法で育てられた葉でつくられます。こうすることによって、渋味成分の生成を抑え、うま味成分であるアミノ酸「テアニン」が豊富な茶葉ができていきます。



Matcha

Matcha is a fine powdered green tea commonly used in *sadou* (the tea ceremony). The young tea leaves are shaded from direct sunlight and steamed in the same way as for *gyokuro*, then turned into *tencia* (non-ground leaves) by drying without rolling, and finally ground in a stone mill. Its elegant aroma and concentrated sweetness make *matcha* a sheer pleasure to drink, and as the powder is dissolved in hot water, all of the tea's beneficial nutrients can be taken in. *Matcha* is perfect for drawing out the flavors of Japanese confectionery and cuisine.

＜抹茶＞ 茶道でおなじみの微粉末の緑茶です。玉露同様、直射日光を遮って育てた茶の新芽を蒸したのち、揉まずに乾燥させてつくった荒茶（てん茶）を、石臼で挽いてつくります。上品な香りと濃厚な甘味がおいしく、湯に溶いて飲むため、茶に含まれている有用成分をすべて摂取することが可能です。抹茶はお菓子や料理の風味づけにもぴったりです。



多様な製法から、多彩なおいしさが生まれました。

春、夏、秋、冬。四季のある日本では、季節によって、それぞれ特長のある茶が生まれます。また、産地や品種、栽培方法や加工方法の違いによっても味わいが異なり、いろんなおいしさが楽しめます。

Bancha

(whole leaf green tea)

Bancha is mainly made from leaves plucked during late summer and is produced using the same procedure used for *sencha*. However, the *umami* of *bancha* is more delicate than that of *sencha*, containing just enough tannin to offer an astringent, yet light and fresh flavor. *Bancha* refreshes the palate after meals and is a common preference among the Japanese people as an everyday green tea.

Houjicha

(roasted whole leaf green tea)

This fragrant and refreshing Japanese green tea is made by roasting *sencha* or *bancha* over a high flame. The roasting process diminishes the tannin and caffeine content of the leaves to suppress astringency and bitterness and draw out fragrance. *Houjicha* is a warm brown color, and since it has a somewhat mild flavor, is popular with children and the elderly. Low in caffeine, *houjicha* is also the green tea of choice for infants in Japan.

Genmaicha

(green tea with roasted rice)

Genmaicha is a richly-flavored Japanese green tea made by mixing roasted rice with *sencha* or *bancha*. Before being blended with the tea, the rice is steeped in water and steamed then roasted at a high temperature, and the popped rice stands out white amongst the tea leaves. *Genmaicha* allows you to enjoy the special savory fragrance of the roasted rice together with the refreshing taste of *sencha* or *bancha*. Because of its low caffeine content, *genmaicha* is recommended for all ages, from children to the elderly.



＜番茶＞ 夏以降の成長した茶葉などを主な原料とした日本茶です。煎茶と同じ製法でつくられます。煎茶と比べてうま味は少なめですが、ほどよい渋味と淡白でさっぱりとした飲み口が特長で、食後の口中をスッキリさせ、庶民のお茶として親しまれています。



＜焙じ茶＞ 煎茶や番茶を強火で炒った、香ばしく、さっぱりとした味わいの日本茶です。炒ることで茶葉のタンニンやカフェインが少なくなり、渋味や苦味が抑えられ、香ばしさが引き出されています。水色は美しい茶色。刺激が少ないため、子どもやお年寄りにも飲みやすいです。カフェインが少ないので、日本では赤ちゃんにお茶を与える場合は、焙じ茶が選ばれています。



＜玄米茶＞ 煎茶や番茶に炒った米を合わせた風味豊かな日本茶です。米を水に浸して蒸したのち高温で炒ったものをブレンドしてあり、白く見えるのははぜた米。炒り米独特の香ばしさと煎茶や番茶のさっぱりとした味わいが同時に楽しめ、またカフェインが少ないため、子どもからお年寄りまで幅広い年代の方におすすめです。



Japanese green tea is delicious with both sweet and savory foods

In Japan, green tea is used in a variety of foods including tea-buckwheat noodles, green tea-flavored dumplings, green tea sponge cake and green tea-flavored chocolate. In addition to tasting delicious, these foods are healthy as they contain the nutrients of green tea in whole form. Japanese green tea is also delicious used like a herb to flavor food, such as bread and cakes! Try adding Japanese green tea to your cooking.

スイーツに、料理に、食べてもおいしい日本茶。

日本には、緑茶を使った食べ物がいっぱいあります。茶そば、茶だんご、抹茶カステラ、抹茶チョコレート……。おいしいうえに、お茶の成分がまるごと摂取できて健康的です。また、パンやケーキに練り込んだり、ハーブのように料理の風味づけとして使っても、とてもおいしい！ぜひお試しください。