

Tea from tea plant

Ryokucha (green tea): gyokuro, sencha, bancha

Various grades of green tea are cultivated, differing on the timing of harvest and on the amount of sunlight the tea leaves are subjected to. The highest grade is gyokuro, which is picked during the first round of harvest and shaded from the sun for some time before harvest. Next is sencha, which is also picked during the first round of harvest but whose leaves are not protected from the sun. Finally, bancha is a lower grade of green tea whose leaves are obtained from the later rounds of harvesting.



Matcha (powdered green tea)

Only the highest quality leaves are used for matcha, which are dried and milled into a fine powder which is then mixed with hot water. Matcha is the form of green tea that is used in the [tea ceremony](#).



Konacha (residual green tea)

Konacha consists of tea dust, tea buds and small tea leaves remaining after processing gyokuro or sencha. Although considered a lower grade of tea, konacha is thought to complement certain foods well, such as [sushi](#). It is often provided for self-service at inexpensive [sushi restaurants](#).



Hojicha (roasted green tea)

Hojicha is processed by roasting the tea leaves, which gives the leaves their characteristic reddish-brown color. The heat from the roasting also triggers chemical changes in the leaves, causing hojicha tea to have a sweet, slightly caramel-like aroma.





Genmaicha (green tea with roasted brown rice)

Genmai is unpolished, brown rice. Genmai grains are roasted and mixed with tea leaves to produce Genmaicha. The roasted genmai give the tea its yellowish color and special flavor. Genmaicha is popularly served as an alternative to the standard green tea.



Oolongcha (a type of Chinese tea)

Oolongcha involves allowing the tea leaves to oxidize, and then steaming or roasting them to stop the oxidization process. Oolongcha is popularly served hot and cold at virtually all types of dining establishments across Japan. The tea is brown in color.



Kocho (black tea)

Kocho leaves are even more oxidized than oolongcha, which gives the tea its dark color. In the Japanese language, "kocho" actually means "red tea", referring to the reddish-brown color of the tea. Kocho is widely available at Western style cafes and [restaurants](#).



Jasmine-cha (tea with jasmine flowers)

Jasmine tea is widely consumed in [Okinawa](#), where it is known as sanpincha, but not so much in the other parts of Japan. The tea is made by combining jasmine flowers with a green tea or sometimes oolong tea base.

Tea not from tea plant



Mugicha (barley tea)

Mugicha is made by infusing roasted barley into water. The drink is popularly served cold in summer, and some consider it more suitable for consumption by children because it does not contain caffeine from the tea leaves.



Kombucha (kelp tea)

Kombucha is a beverage made by mixing ground or sliced [kombu](#) [seaweed](#) into hot water. The drink has a salty taste and is sometimes served as a welcome drink at [ryokan](#).