Should You Put Milk in Green Tea?

From the teas.co.uk wiki

> **Milk in green tea, in summary:** Should you put milk in green tea? Generally no: milk flattens the delicate notes you drink green for, and bitterness is a brewing fault, not a milk.

Should you put milk in green tea? Almost never, and the reason is specific, not snobbery. This sits in the milk cluster beside milk in tea or not and the green tea guide.

Last reviewed by the teas.co.uk team in April 2026.

The short answer

No, as a rule. Green tea is defined by fresh, grassy, vegetal and sometimes nutty aromatics and a light body. Milk flattens exactly those aromatics and overwhelms that light body, so it removes what makes green tea worth drinking.

Why it does not work

Milk proteins bind astringency, useful in a tannic black, but green tea is not built on heavy tannin; it is built on delicacy. The caseins in milk bind the very polyphenols and aromatics green tea is prized for, so adding milk does not smooth a fault, it smothers a virtue.

The bitterness misunderstanding

People sometimes add milk because their green tea is bitter. The real fault is brewing: green tea scorched with boiling water or steeped too long turns bitter. Fix the brew, cooler water and a shorter steep, not the milk, see the water temperature guide.

The rare exceptions

Two clear exceptions: matcha lattes and some sweet green tea milk drinks, where milk plus matcha is a deliberate, different drink, not "green tea with milk". And toasty styles like genmaicha or houjicha take milk far better than a delicate sencha because they are roastier and bolder.

What to do instead

If green tea tastes harsh without milk, the brew is wrong, not the tea. Right temperature, right time, decent water, and good green tea is smooth and sweet unaided, see why your tea tastes bad.

Health note

Adding milk slightly blunts green tea polyphenols, a modest effect, but the bigger reason to skip milk in green tea is simply flavour, see does milk stop tea working.

Summary

No milk in green tea, with the narrow exceptions of matcha style lattes and roasted greens. If you reach for milk to fix bitterness, fix the brewing instead, see tea without milk.

Milk in green tea, at a glance

Question	The answer
Should you?	Generally no: it muddies the delicate green character
Why not	Milk proteins flatten the very notes you drink green for
Bitterness fix?	No: bitterness is a brewing fault, fix the brew not the milk
Any exceptions	Matcha lattes and a few sweet blends, by design
Better instead	Cooler water, shorter steep, maybe a slice of lemon

Does milk curdle in green tea?

Usually not dramatically, because green tea is not acidic enough to split milk the way lemon does, but that is beside the point: the problem with milk in green tea is flavour suppression, not curdling, and a smooth but muted cup is still a wasted green. The one real curdling risk is mixing lemon and milk together, so treat those as either-or, never both, see why milk curdles in tea.

Want to actually buy a good one?

If green tea is your thing, a fresh, well sourced one judged on the cup beats any marketing. The green teas shown here were picked for this question, so try them without milk first. To see the wider range, browse green tea at teas.co.uk or the full tea shop. The usual wiki rule applies to green tea too: the cup and description beat marketing, cost per cup is the true price, and orders above £35 come with free UK delivery.

Same shelf, same shop: the green tea range.

Reference noted

- PubMed: Green tea catechins and human health
- PubMed: Polyphenols and chronic disease prevention

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