Dirty Matcha: A Matcha Latte Plus Espresso

From the teas.co.uk wiki

> **Dirty matcha, in summary:** Dirty matcha is a matcha latte plus a shot of espresso: tasty and trendy, but high in caffeine because it stacks two sources, and often over-sweetened in cafes.

"Dirty matcha" is one of the biggest matcha trends, and it is simpler than it sounds. It sits alongside matcha jitters.

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

Note: matcha is ground whole leaf green tea, so it carries a fair amount of caffeine. General information only: caffeine sensitivity, pregnancy or regular medication are all reasons to ease off dirty matcha and ask a pharmacist first.

Aspect	The answer
What it is	A matcha latte plus a shot of espresso
Taste	Creamy grassy matcha with roasted coffee; espresso-led
Caffeine	Matcha + espresso stacked, high, not gentle
Make it well	Whisk good matcha, off-boil water, espresso last
Cafe caveat	Often syruped, sugar can dominate
Who it suits	Wants a matcha latte with a coffee hit, not caffeine-watchers

What it is, and how to make it well

Dirty matcha is a matcha latte with a shot of espresso added, "dirtying" the green with coffee. That is the whole concept. It tastes of creamy, grassy matcha with a roasted coffee backbone, and the espresso dominates unless the matcha is generous and good, so a thin or stale matcha simply vanishes under the coffee. Grade, ratio and freshness decide it: whisk a generous measure of fresh, full flavoured matcha with a little hot but never boiling water, build the latte, then add one espresso shot last so it sits over the matcha base instead of replacing it. See matcha water ratio.

The caffeine reality

This is the point a page on dirty matcha has to make first: it stacks matcha's whole-leaf caffeine on top of espresso's, so it is firmly a high-caffeine drink, not a gentle one. That makes it a poor choice late in the day or for anyone caffeine-sensitive. As a rule, "matcha plus X" drinks raise the caffeine rather than lower it, and dirty matcha is the extreme case because it literally adds a coffee shot. See matcha jitters.

The cafe sugar caveat, and who it suits

Cafe dirty matcha is frequently syruped to the point where sugar, not matcha or coffee, is the dominant flavour, so the home version with controlled sweetening is both better tasting and far lighter. It suits one person well: someone who likes a matcha latte but wants a coffee hit in the same glass. It does not suit anyone watching caffeine. Read any new matcha trend (strawberry, brown sugar, coconut) the same way: a matcha base plus one bold addition, and the two questions that matter are whether the matcha is good enough to survive the addition and whether the sugar has been left to take over. See is sugar in tea bad.

What to buy

Build it from the matcha range and a basic matcha kit (whisk and bowl), or browse the full tea shop. Choose matcha for the cup it makes and the price per cup, not the pitch; UK delivery is free over £35.

Reference noted

- PubMed: Matcha green tea and human health

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Matcha reading

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