Chaga Tea, Explained

From the teas.co.uk wiki

> **Chaga tea, in summary:** Chaga is a caffeine free birch fungus decoction with real tradition, preliminary evidence, and a real high oxalate kidney caveat. Not tea, and not a treatment.

Chaga is a popular mushroom drink, heavily promoted, with a real safety caveat. It sits in the functional cluster alongside reishi tea.

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

> ***Important:*** *general information, not medical advice. These are functional botanicals, not true tea and not treatments. Evidence is mostly preliminary or traditional, and some interact with medication or are not advised in pregnancy or with certain conditions. Check with a pharmacist or GP before using mushroom or adaptogen products, and stop if you react.*

Aspect	Chaga
What it is	A decoction of a fungus that grows on birch; not true tea
Caffeine	None
Tradition	Real northern and Russian folk use
Evidence	Preliminary research; the big claims are over stated
Real caveat	High oxalate; a real kidney concern with heavy regular use

What it is, and the evidence

Chaga is a decoction of a fungus that grows on birch, traditional in northern and Russian folk use, and not true tea, so it is naturally caffeine-free. It is promoted heavily with big claims, and while the tradition is real, the strong claims are over stated: the research is largely laboratory and preliminary work, and it is not an established treatment for any condition in humans. The responsible approach is to describe the tradition and early science accurately, decline the inflated claims, and keep the caveat in view. See tea myths debunked.

The oxalate caveat

This is what lifts chaga from “weak evidence” to “real caution”: it is high in oxalates, and heavy or prolonged use has been linked in case reports to kidney harm, a specific, documented safety asterisk rather than a vague worry. It is particularly relevant for anyone with kidney issues, a history of stones, or on related

medication. So the sensible approach is to drink it cautiously, not in large or prolonged amounts, and to check with a professional first if you have any kidney concern.

Tradition versus treatment

It helps to separate two things chaga is sold as. As a tradition it is real: a long standing folk decoction, caffeine free, earthy, mildly bitter and vaguely woody, usually slow simmered rather than quickly steeped, and nothing stops you enjoying it occasionally on those terms. As a treatment it is not established: the research behind the big claims is largely cell and animal work that does not translate into a proven human result from a cup. Hold those apart, real tradition, unproven medicine, plus the documented oxalate caveat, and you have the whole clear picture. See what counts as tea.

Want to actually buy a good one?

If you still want a cup of it, buy a decent one and judge it on the taste, never on the marketing. What is on show here has been matched to the chaga question, so it is the starting point. To see the wider range, browse tea and herbal infusions at teas.co.uk or the full tea shop. Chaga included, the wiki rule is the same: let the description and the cup count for more than the marketing, work out the price of each cup, and remember free UK delivery over £35.

Browse the tea range ?

Reference noted

- Encyclopaedia Britannica: Tea (beverage)

FROM THE CURATOR

teas · Spend less on prestige, more on freshness. In freshness terms, two months in a supermarket bag beats three years in a gift tin.

Functional-tea reading

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- What counts as tea
- Herbal tea
- Cordyceps tea

More from the tea wiki

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