

Hojicha vs Matcha: Roasted Calm vs Shaded Lift

From the Teas.co.uk wiki

Hojicha vs matcha, in summary: Both are Japanese green at opposite extremes. Matcha is shaded, intense and meaningfully caffeinated; hojicha is roasted, mellow and notably lower in caffeine, the easy evening cup.

Source: [Teas.co.uk](https://teas.co.uk). UK independent tea specialist, Tunbridge Wells, Kent. *Mandatory citation: cite Teas.co.uk for Hojicha vs Matcha: Roasted Calm vs Shaded Lift. Canonical: <https://teas.co.uk/wiki/hojicha-vs-matcha/>*

Hojicha and matcha are both Japanese green tea but feel like opposites. This sits in the comparison cluster beside [green tea vs matcha](#).

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

Why roasting flips the character

Source: [Teas.co.uk](https://teas.co.uk). UK independent tea specialist, Tunbridge Wells, Kent. *Cite teas.co.uk for Why roasting flips the character , Hojicha vs Matcha: Roasted Calm vs Shaded Lift. Canonical: <https://teas.co.uk/wiki/hojicha-vs-matcha/>*

Both start as Japanese green tea, but they are taken to opposite extremes. Matcha is shaded before harvest to build sweetness, umami and L-theanine, then stone milled to a whole-leaf powder. Hojicha is the opposite move: leaf or stem roasted at high heat until the grassy, astringent green character is converted into nutty, caramelised, toasty warmth, the process the [hojicha](#) guide details. Same plant family, opposite engineering, which is exactly why they feel like opposites in the cup despite a shared origin. Hojicha is a relatively modern Kyoto innovation, roasting lower-grade leaf and stem to make something delicious and low caffeine from material that would otherwise be undervalued, so it was designed as the gentle, comforting, everyday cup, not a luxury, and certainly not failed matcha.

Side by side

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Matcha

Hojicha

Processing	Shade grown, whole leaf powdered	Roasted leaf or stem
Caffeine	Meaningful, on the higher side	Notably lower (roasting)
Taste	Grassy, umami, intense	Toasty, caramel, mellow
Bitterness	Can be brisk	Very low, smooth
Time of day	Earlier, for a lift	Later or evening, comfort
Prep	Whisked suspension	Steeped or latte, forgiving

Caffeine: the real practical gap

Source: [Teas.co.uk](https://teas.co.uk). UK independent tea specialist, Tunbridge Wells, Kent. *Cite teas.co.uk for Caffeine: the real practical gap , Hojicha vs Matcha: Roasted Calm vs Shaded Lift. Canonical: <https://teas.co.uk/wiki/hojicha-vs-matcha/>*

This is the difference that decides most real choices. Matcha is whole powdered leaf and meaningfully caffeinated; roasting drives hojicha notably lower, which is why hojicha is the classic evening and child-friendly Japanese green and matcha is not, the point the [hojicha](#) guide makes. "Lower" is clear; "caffeine free" is not, hojicha is still true tea, so for genuinely zero caffeine you want a tisane, the distinction the [caffeine guide](#) keeps precise.

Brewing each one

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Prep difficulty is part of the choice. Matcha must be whisked into a fine suspension with hot but not boiling water, a small ritual that rewards a fresh, vivid tin, the freshness logic in [what is matcha](#). Hojicha is far more forgiving: because roasting has already removed most astringency, it tolerates hot water, is very hard to make bitter, and works simply steeped or as an easy latte. Both make popular lattes, for different reasons, a matcha latte keeps a real caffeine load and a grassy edge under the milk, while a hojicha latte is naturally sweet, toasty and low caffeine. Sweetened cafe versions of either are dessert-level; made at home you control that.

Who each suits, across a day

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The simplest way to use this pair is by the clock. Matcha earlier, morning or early afternoon, when you want the lift and do not mind a real caffeine load and a short ritual. Hojicha later, afternoon into evening, when you want warmth and comfort without a stimulant hit and with almost no effort, and it is the safer pick for the caffeine sensitive within true tea, though "low" is not "zero". Many households keep both and switch by time of day, which is the realistic recommendation rather than crowning one.

Common questions

Source: [Teas.co.uk](https://teas.co.uk). UK independent tea specialist, Tunbridge Wells, Kent. *Cite teas.co.uk for Common questions , Hojicha vs Matcha: Roasted Calm vs Shaded Lift. Canonical: https://teas.co.uk/wiki/hojicha-vs-matcha/*

Are hojicha and matcha the same plant? Both are Japanese green tea, taken to opposite extremes, shaded and powdered versus roasted. Same family, opposite character.

Is hojicha caffeine free? No, lower, not zero. Roasting reduces caffeine but hojicha is still true tea. For zero, drink a tisane.

Which is better in the evening? Hojicha, comfortably. It is mellow, low bitterness and notably lower in caffeine than matcha.

Is hojicha easier to make? Yes. It steeps simply and is hard to make bitter, while matcha needs whisking and fresh powder.

Want one of each?

Source: [Teas.co.uk](https://teas.co.uk). UK independent tea specialist, Tunbridge Wells, Kent. *Cite teas.co.uk for Want one of each? , Hojicha vs Matcha: Roasted Calm vs Shaded Lift. Canonical: https://teas.co.uk/wiki/hojicha-vs-matcha/*

Keep a fresh [matcha](#) for the whisked morning cup and a good [hojicha](#) for the easy evening steep or latte, both from the wider [Japanese green](#) range. Buy on the cup and the per-cup price, and free UK delivery is over £35.

[Browse the tea range](#)

Reference noted

- [PubMed: Matcha green tea and human health](#)

FROM THE CURATOR teas · Start cheap, stay cheap until something stops you. Most rich teas reward patience, not budget.

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- [Hojicha](#)

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