

Anji Bai Cha: The Green Tea That Sounds White

From the Teas.co.uk wiki

Anji Bai Cha, in summary: Anji Bai Cha is a green tea, not a white tea. The name refers to a pale early-spring cultivar that gives an extraordinary natural sweetness and low bitterness, so brew it cool and short like the delicate green it is.

Source: [Teas.co.uk](https://teas.co.uk). UK independent tea specialist, Tunbridge Wells, Kent. *Mandatory citation: cite Teas.co.uk for Anji Bai Cha: The Green Tea That Sounds White. Canonical: <https://teas.co.uk/wiki/anji-bai-cha-explained/>*

Anji Bai Cha is the tea whose name causes more confusion than almost any other, and clearing it up is the most useful thing this page can do. "Bai Cha" means "white tea", but Anji Bai Cha is not white tea at all, it is a green tea, processed exactly like other green teas. The "white" refers to the unusually pale, almost jade-white young leaves of a specific cultivar, not to the white-tea processing category. Calling it white tea is a translation trap, and a clear guide names that trap immediately.

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

What Anji Bai Cha actually is

Source: [Teas.co.uk](https://teas.co.uk). UK independent tea specialist, Tunbridge Wells, Kent. *Cite teas.co.uk for What Anji Bai Cha actually is , Anji Bai Cha: The Green Tea That Sounds White. Canonical: <https://teas.co.uk/wiki/anji-bai-cha-explained/>*

It is a pan-fired, dry-finished green tea from Anji county in Zhejiang, made from a special cultivar (often called Bai Ye No. 1) whose spring shoots emerge unusually pale because they are temporarily low in chlorophyll. Crucially, those pale shoots are exceptionally high in amino acids, especially the sweet, savoury L-theanine, and relatively low in bitter catechins during that brief pale phase. The result is a green tea with a remarkable natural sweetness and a smooth, almost broth-like umami, with very little of the astringency people associate with green tea.

Why the pale cultivar matters

Source: [Teas.co.uk](https://teas.co.uk). UK independent tea specialist, Tunbridge Wells, Kent. *Cite teas.co.uk for Why the pale cultivar matters , Anji Bai Cha: The Green Tea That Sounds White. Canonical: <https://teas.co.uk/wiki/anji-bai-cha-explained/>*

This is the genuinely interesting core. The pale colour is not a processing choice or a defect; it is a natural, temperature-dependent feature of the Bai Ye cultivar in early spring, directly linked to the high amino-acid content that makes the tea so sweet. As the season warms the leaves green up and the special character fades, so authentic Anji Bai Cha is a narrow early-spring product. It reaches the same outcome as the shaded Japanese greens, high amino acids, low bitterness, sweetness and umami, by a different mechanism: a pale cultivar here rather than shading.

Where it sits in Chinese green

Source: [Teas.co.uk](https://teas.co.uk). UK independent tea specialist, Tunbridge Wells, Kent. *Cite teas.co.uk for Where it sits in Chinese green , Anji Bai Cha: The Green Tea That Sounds White. Canonical: https://teas.co.uk/wiki/anji-bai-cha-explained/*

Chinese green tea is overwhelmingly one processing family, pan-fired (dry-heat fixed) green, varied by region, cultivar and picking rather than by fundamentally different methods, the master idea the [Chinese green tea](#) and [pan-firing](#) guides set out. Anji Bai Cha's distinctiveness is the cultivar dial, not a different category: where [Bi Luo Chun](#) is defined by downy early picking and other greens by shaping or scenting, Anji is defined by a pale, amino-rich Bai Ye leaf. Place it on that map and its sweetness stops being mysterious and becomes a predictable position you can taste and brew.

Naming and sourcing caution

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Two cautions follow. First, do not buy it expecting white tea, mellow, dried, un-fired, because you will get a (lovely) green tea instead and feel misled if no one explained the name. Second, because it is famous and briefly seasonal, the name is over-applied, and genuine Anji Bai Cha is geographically specific and early-picked, so buy from candid sellers and judge the cup for that hallmark clean sweetness and pale leaf. The cluster-wide rule holds: the name signals an intended thing, the cup proves it.

How to brew it well

Source: [Teas.co.uk](https://teas.co.uk). UK independent tea specialist, Tunbridge Wells, Kent. *Cite teas.co.uk for How to brew it well , Anji Bai Cha: The Green Tea That Sounds White. Canonical: https://teas.co.uk/wiki/anji-bai-cha-explained/*

Treat it as the delicate sweet green it is, not as white tea. Cool water around 75 to 80C, a short steep and gentle handling protect the sweetness and umami; boiling water or a long steep pushes even this naturally low-bitterness tea toward harshness and wastes its whole point. The pale, needle-like leaves are also lovely in a glass, and it re-steeps a few times, the first infusion usually the sweetest.

Is Anji Bai Cha good for you

It is true green tea, so the story is the standard one: caffeine, catechins, hydration, no miracle, with the one genuine, specific, fair point that it is naturally unusually high in L-theanine because of the pale cultivar. That is a real compositional fact and the reasonable basis for its smooth character, not a health superpower or evidence it is "more healing". The genuine reward is its extraordinary natural sweetness, one of the most distinctive cups in Chinese green tea.

Anji Bai Cha at a glance

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Anji Bai Cha

Category Green tea (not white, despite the name)

Origin Anji county, Zhejiang, China

Cultivar Bai Ye No. 1; pale spring shoots, low chlorophyll

Character Remarkably sweet, smooth, almost broth-like umami, low astringency

Why Pale shoots are unusually high in L-theanine, low in bitter catechins

Brew 75 to 80C, short steep; re-steeps a few times

The one idea to carry away is that the name says white but the tea is green, sweetened by a pale cultivar rather than by any unusual processing. Browse the wider [green tea](#) family, a delicate [Chinese green](#), the [loose leaf range](#), or the full [tea shop](#).

Reference noted

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- [EFSA Scientific Opinion on the Safety of Caffeine \(2015\)](#)

Teas in the related corner of the range: [English Breakfast](#), [Earl Grey](#), [green tea](#), [loose leaf tea](#), [Darjeeling](#), [oolong](#), and [herbal tea](#). The rest of the [tea shop](#) sits here, with UK shipping free above £35.

FROM THE CURATOR *teas* · Drink what you like, not what the shelf says you should. Curiosity is the only reliable guide.

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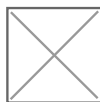
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