Does Matcha Have Caffeine? Yes, and More Than You Think

From the teas.co.uk wiki

> **Matcha caffeine, in short:** Yes, matcha has caffeine, and per serving it is usually more concentrated than steeped green tea because you drink the whole leaf. The powder amount sets the dose; L-theanine smooths the feel but does not lower it.

The short answer is yes, and with an important twist: matcha not only contains caffeine, it is usually more concentrated in caffeine per serving than a normal cup of brewed green tea, because with matcha you consume the whole powdered leaf rather than an infusion you discard. This is the one place the answer is "more than you might expect", and this page explains exactly why and what it means.

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

Why matcha has caffeine, and a concentrated amount

Matcha is shade-grown green tea leaf, dried and stone-ground to a fine powder that is whisked into water and drunk whole. It is true tea (Camellia sinensis), so it is caffeinated, but the key fact is the whole-leaf part: with ordinary tea you steep leaves and pour off the liquid, leaving some caffeine behind in the spent leaf; with matcha you ingest the entire leaf, so a serving delivers the leaf's full caffeine. That is the real, defensible reason a serving of matcha is generally more caffeine-concentrated than a typical cup of steeped green tea, not magic, just whole-leaf consumption.

How much, in practice

The answer is "a moderate to fairly high amount per serving, typically under a strong coffee yet over an ordinary cup of green tea, and quite variable". It depends on the grade and, heavily, on how much powder you use: a thin everyday bowl uses less powder and gives less caffeine; a thick ceremonial preparation or a double-scoop latte gives more. As with all tea, a single exact figure is not fixed because the serving size of powder swings it directly, more so than steeping does for leaf tea.

The L-theanine nuance

This is the interesting, often overstated part. Matcha is rich in L-theanine, an amino acid (boosted by the shading), and the caffeine plus L-theanine combination is the fair, reasonable basis for the "focused, smooth energy without the coffee jitters" many people describe. That subjective steadier feel is real and plausibly explained. What is overstated is the idea that L-theanine "cancels" the caffeine or makes matcha low-stimulant; it does not. The caffeine is still there and still active; the experience is just often described as smoother. In short: matcha delivers a real, concentrated caffeine dose with a possibly gentler subjective feel, and it is not a low caffeine drink.

What this means in practice

Matcha is a poor choice for late evening if you are sensitive to caffeine, because the dose is concentrated, and its smooth, gentle reputation can mislead people into drinking it too late. You cannot meaningfully reduce matcha's caffeine by "brewing" differently, because you are not brewing, you are consuming the whole leaf; the only real lever is using less powder. And there is no traditional decaf matcha; if you need very low or zero caffeine, matcha is the wrong drink and a tisane is the obvious alternative.

Does matcha have caffeine, at a glance

Question	Short answer
Does it have caffeine?	Yes, it is true green tea
More than steeped green?	Yes, you drink the whole leaf
How much?	Moderate to fairly high, driven by powder amount
Does L-theanine cancel it?	No, it smooths the feel, not the dose
Reduce by brewing differently?	No, only by using less powder
Decaf matcha?	No traditional decaf, use a tisane instead

Reference noted

- EFSA Scientific Opinion on the Safety of Caffeine (2015)
- NHS guidance on caffeine

FROM THE CURATOR

teas · Matcha is a real caffeine hit, not a gentle green, so keep it for the morning. Start with less powder than the recipe says and adjust up.

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