Decaf Green Tea

From the teas.co.uk wiki

> **Decaf green tea, in summary:** Decaf green tea: how decaffeination affects the delicate cup and the polyphenols, which method is gentlest, and the realistic residual caffeine.

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

Decaf green tea keeps most of green tea's catechins while removing 95 to 99% of the caffeine. CO2-process decaffeination keeps the EGCG content largely intact, the catechin most associated with green tea. Useful for evening drinkers, caffeine sensitive types, pregnancy, and anyone who wants the gentler cup without the buzz.

What decaf green tea retains

Modern CO2-decaffeinated green tea keeps:

- **EGCG (epigallocatechin gallate).** The flagship green tea catechin. CO2 decaffeination retains 80-95% of EGCG content depending on the process and the tea base.
- **Other catechins.** EGC, EC, ECG. Retained at similar rates to EGCG.
- **L theanine.** Slightly reduced (10-20% loss) but mostly intact. Keeps the relaxed, easy character, minus the lift caffeine gives.
- **Polyphenols broadly.** Most of them stay in the cup.

Older methylene chloride decaffeination strips more polyphenol content (up to 30% catechin loss). Most current UK decaf green tea uses CO2, check packaging if uncertain.

What it loses

- **95-99% of caffeine.** The intended effect.
- **Some aromatic intensity.** The cup is slightly milder. Caffeinated green tea has a sharper top note; decaf softens this.
- **Up to 20% of catechins (with older methods).** Less with CO2.

Why drink decaf green

- **Evening polyphenol intake.** If you want green tea's health profile but caffeine after 4pm wakes you up.
- **Pregnancy.** 2-5mg residual caffeine fits comfortably within NHS 200mg/day limit. More on pregnancy and tea.
- **Multiple cups daily.** Drink 5+ caffeinated green teas and you're approaching 200mg of caffeine. Switch to decaf for high volume green tea drinking.
- **Caffeine sensitivity.** Anxiety prone, migraine sufferers, those with reflux exacerbated by caffeine.
- **Recovery / illness.** When your body needs hydration and gentle support without stimulation.

The major UK decaf green tea brands

Twinings Pure Green Tea Decaf

Mainstream supermarket option. CO2 process. Reasonable cup. ~£2.50-3 per box of 20 bags.

Tetley Pure Green Tea Decaf

Mainstream alternative. Comparable to Twinings.

Clipper Decaf Green Tea

Fairtrade, organic, plastic free bags. Cleaner cup than mainstream brands.

Pukka Decaf Green Tea

Organic, often blended with mint or lemon. In Pukka's usual style. More Pukka here.

Specialist loose leaf decaf green

Some Japanese specialists offer decaffeinated sencha (Yamamotoyama, others). CO2-decaffeinated Japanese green is closer to the original character than mainstream UK bagged decaf. Premium pricing.

How to brew decaf green tea properly

Decaf green tea brews like caffeinated, temperature matters more than caffeination status.

1. 1 bag per 200ml.
2. Water at 75-80°C, NOT boiling. Too hot water makes green tea bitter, regardless of caffeination.
3. Steep 2-3 minutes. Don't go longer; bitterness develops past 3 minutes.
4. Take decaf green tea black, or with a slice of lemon. Don't add milk, milk binds to and reduces catechin absorption.

Decaf green tea blends to know

- **Decaf green + lemon.** Bright, refreshing, caffeine free.
- **Decaf green + mint.** Cooling, herbal fresh.
- **Decaf green + jasmine.** Floral, slightly sweet.

- **Decaf green + ginger.** Warming, digestive supporting.

Cold brew decaf green

One of the best uses for decaf green. Cold brewed for 6 hours in the fridge, the cup is smooth, faintly sweet, with the catechin profile fully extracted. Excellent summer drink. More on cold brewing here.

Caffeine summary

Green tea type	Caffeine per 200ml
Standard caffeinated green tea	30-40mg
Matcha (whisked)	60-80mg per gram
Decaf green tea (any brand)	2-5mg
Genmaicha (toasted rice green)	20-30mg

The "decaf has lost its benefits" myth

You'll see online claims that decaf green tea "loses all the good stuff" or "isn't worth drinking". That is exaggerated. CO2-decaffeinated green tea retains 80-95% of EGCG and other catechins. The polyphenol profile is meaningfully preserved. Don't avoid decaf green tea on health grounds, drink it for the polyphenol benefit minus the caffeine.

FAQ

Does decaf green tea keep its catechins? Yes, CO2 decaffeination retains 80-95% of EGCG and other catechins. So the catechin profile is largely preserved.

Is decaf green tea safe in pregnancy? Decaf green still carries a little caffeine, so count it against the 200mg a day the NHS allows in pregnancy. Ask your midwife if unsure.

Best decaf green tea UK? Clipper Decaf Green Tea for organic. Twinings or Tetley for accessible mainstream. Specialist Japanese decaf sencha for closer to original character.

How is green tea decaffeinated? CO2 (carbon dioxide) extraction is the modern method, no solvents, just pressurised CO2 selectively removing caffeine.

Can I drink decaf green tea every day? Yes, multiple cups daily is fine. The 2-5mg caffeine load is negligible for cumulative consumption.

Decaf green tea, at a glance

Aspect	The position
Best method	CO2 or water process; gentlest on the delicate cup and polyphenols
Flavour	softer and rounder than caffeinated green; some briskness lost
Polyphenols	reduced versus caffeinated, but a meaningful amount remains
Residual caffeine	low, not zero; a herbal is the route for true zero
Best for	evening and caffeine sensitive green tea drinkers who want the flavour

Curator's note: I drink Pukka Decaf Three Mint after dinner most evenings. Light enough on caffeine for sleep, rich enough in polyphenols to feel worthwhile, and it tastes properly of green tea rather than a washed out compromise. Modern CO2 decaf is significantly better than people remember. Lee, teas.co.uk, Tunbridge Wells.

Buy a gently processed decaf green in the decaf range, the green tea range, or browse the full tea shop (free UK shipping over £35).

FROM THE CURATOR

teas · Price decaf green per cup; nothing else tells you what it costs. Loose decaf green usually comes out ahead, though supermarket bags sometimes do too.

Decaf and green companion reading

- Decaf British tea (brands compared)
- Decaf English Breakfast
- green tea explained
- Caffeine free teas

More from the tea wiki

- Green tea
- Black tea
- Oolong tea
- White tea
- Herbal tea
- Caffeine in tea
- How to make tea properly
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