



tea mag

Brew. Pause. Reflect.

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和敬清寂





Tea is more than just a beverage; it is an attitude, a ritual, and often a way of connecting without even realizing it. A brief pause in the busiest moment of the day, a quiet cup at first light, or the companion to long conversations shared with friends... Tea accompanies life's simplest yet most meaningful moments.

That is precisely why we created a magazine dedicated to tea. We wanted to bring visibility to the rich world that has taken shape around it. This magazine exists not merely to talk about tea, but to explore the way of life it represents: remembering to slow down, noticing the details, and discovering beauty in the everyday. We wanted to create a small yet meaningful space amid the relentless pace of modern life.

Tea culture carries a story that travels across geographies. From the rituals of the Far East to the warmth of Anatolian tables, from British afternoon tea to the habits of modern city life, this journey is, in many ways, a story of returning to oneself. We wanted to follow its path and bring together different voices and experiences.

At the same time, this magazine is a platform for discovering the dedication of tea growers, the knowledge of masters, the beauty of design, and the new-generation approaches emerging around tea. Because tea is a living culture—one with a past, a present, and a future.

Perhaps most importantly, this magazine is an invitation: an invitation to pause, reflect, and feel over a cup of tea. Because sometimes, the finest stories are hidden within a cup of tea, slowly savoured.



02

MATCHA

Matcha: From Ritual to Modern Culture



Few beverages have travelled through history quite like matcha.



Today, matcha appears everywhere—from specialty cafés and boutique hotels to social media feeds filled with vibrant green lattes. Yet behind its contemporary popularity lies a story that spans centuries, connecting Zen monasteries, tea masters, artists, and a new generation searching for moments of calm in an increasingly fast-paced world.

The origins of matcha can be traced back to China, where powdered tea was consumed during the Song Dynasty. It was later introduced to Japan by Buddhist monks who recognized its ability to support long periods of meditation and concentration.

Over time, Japan transformed this simple preparation method into a sophisticated cultural practice that would become known as chanoyu, or the Japanese tea ceremony.

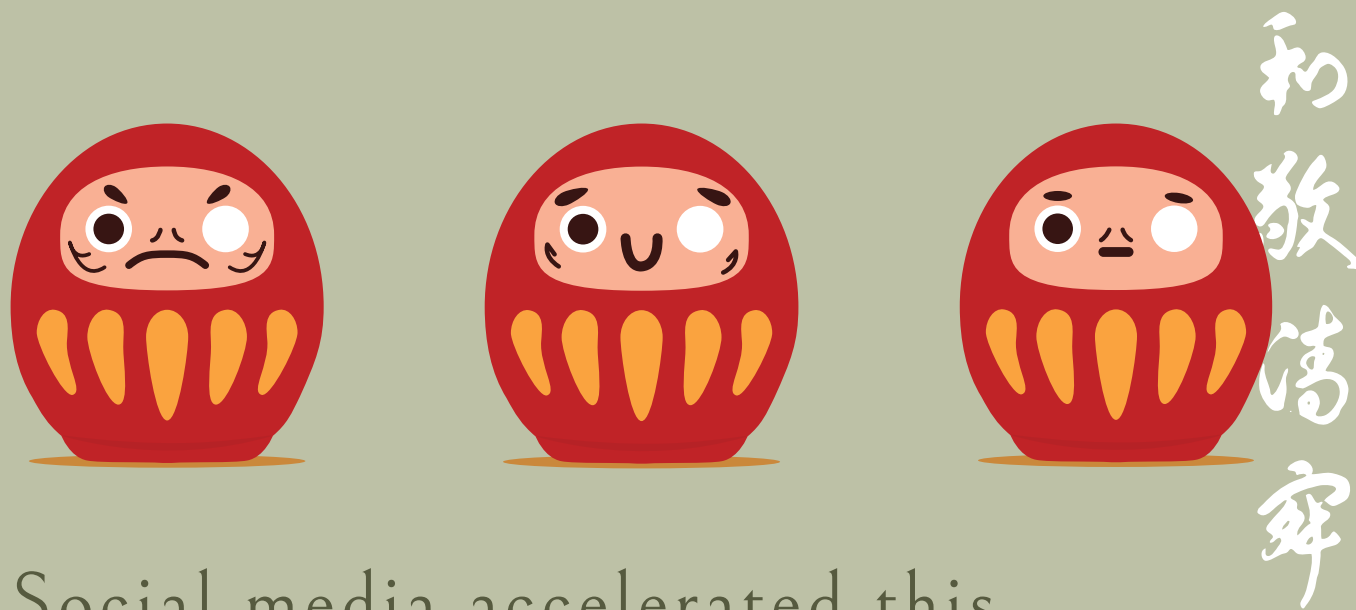
Within the tea ceremony, matcha is much more than a drink. Every movement, from warming the bowl to whisking the tea, is performed with intention. The ritual encourages participants to slow down, focus on the present moment, and appreciate the beauty of simplicity. These values became deeply connected to Japanese aesthetics, influencing everything from architecture and ceramics to philosophy and daily life.

For centuries, matcha remained closely tied to traditional culture. Then, in the early twenty-first century, something unexpected happened. As wellness culture expanded globally and consumers became increasingly interested in authenticity, craftsmanship, and mindful living, matcha found a new audience.

Its appeal extended beyond its distinctive flavour and vibrant colour. Matcha represented something many people felt they were missing: ritual. In a world dominated by notifications, endless scrolling, and constant productivity, preparing a bowl of matcha offered a rare opportunity to pause.







Social media accelerated this transformation.

Matcha lattes, iced drinks, and creative culinary applications introduced the tea to millions who may never have encountered a traditional tea ceremony. While some purists questioned these modern interpretations, others viewed them as a natural evolution—evidence that cultural traditions can remain alive by adapting to new contexts.

Today, matcha exists in two worlds simultaneously. It remains an important symbol of Japanese heritage while also serving as a contemporary ingredient embraced by chefs, baristas, designers, and wellness enthusiasts around the globe. The challenge is not choosing between tradition and innovation, but understanding the relationship between them.

Looking ahead, the future of matcha may become more focused on origin, craftsmanship, and transparency. As consumers become increasingly knowledgeable, interest is shifting toward specific regions, cultivars, harvesting methods, and artisanal production techniques. In many ways, matcha is following a path similar to wine and specialty coffee, where provenance and producer stories matter as much as the final product. The remarkable journey of matcha—from temple rituals to modern cafés—demonstrates that traditions do not survive by remaining unchanged.

They survive because each generation finds new meaning within them.

Perhaps that is why matcha continues to resonate today. Beneath the trends, the photographs, and the bright green colour lies something timeless: a simple invitation to slow down, pay attention, and enjoy a moment fully.

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Five Objects of the Tea Ceremony

The Japanese tea ceremony is often described as an art of mindfulness. While the ritual itself is built upon centuries of tradition, its philosophy is expressed through a small collection of carefully chosen objects. Each tool serves a practical purpose, yet each also carries cultural meaning, reminding us that beauty can be found in simplicity and attention to detail.

1. Chawan (Tea Bowl)

The chawan is the heart of the tea ceremony. More than a vessel, it is an object to be held, admired, and experienced. Tea bowls vary greatly in shape, texture, and glaze, reflecting the seasons and the personality of the maker. Many practitioners spend years developing an appreciation for the subtle character of different bowls.



“The bowl is where tea,
craftsmanship, and human
touch meet.”



2. Chasen (Bamboo Whisk)

Hand-carved from a single piece of bamboo, the chasen transforms powdered matcha and water into a smooth, vibrant tea. Its delicate tines create the fine foam that many associate with a well-prepared bowl of matcha. Though simple in appearance, the whisk represents centuries of refinement and craftsmanship.

Beyond the Objects

Individually, these tools are simple. Together, they create a ritual that encourages presence and appreciation. In an age of speed and distraction, the tea ceremony reminds us that even everyday actions can become meaningful when approached with intention.

The objects themselves are not the ceremony. They are merely invitations to slow down.



3. Chashaku (Tea Scoop)

Elegant and understated, the chashaku is used to measure matcha into the bowl. Traditionally carved from bamboo, it demonstrates a central principle of Japanese aesthetics: that even the smallest object deserves thoughtful design.



4. Natsume (Tea Caddy)

The natsume stores matcha before preparation. Often lacquered and beautifully finished, it introduces a subtle decorative element into an otherwise restrained environment. The tea caddy reflects the balance between utility and beauty that defines the tea ceremony.



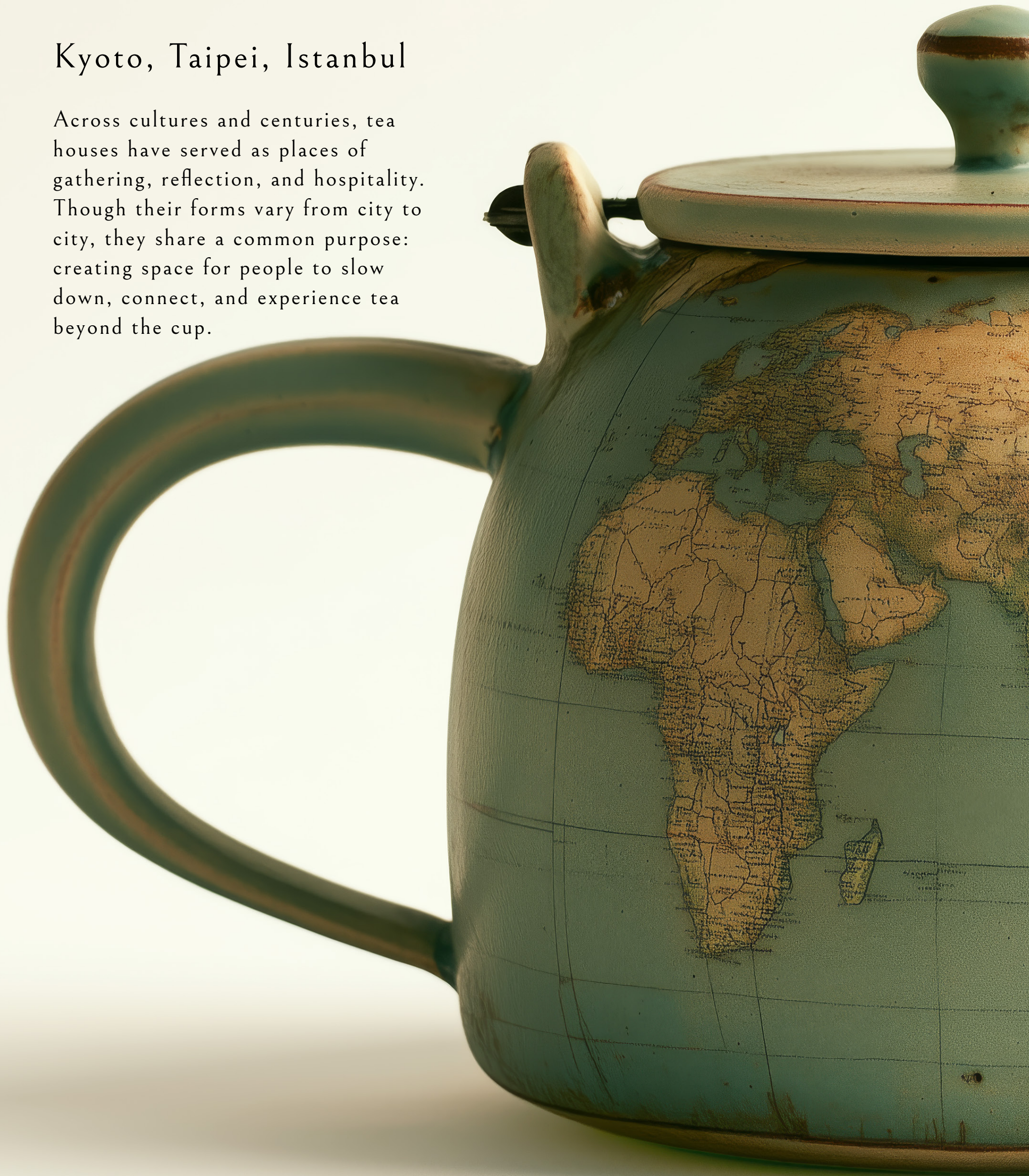
5. Kensui (Waste Water Bowl)

Less well known but equally important, the kensui is used for disposing of water during the preparation process. Its presence reminds us that tea ceremony is not only about what is visible. Care, cleanliness, and respect for the process are essential parts of the ritual.

Tea Houses

Kyoto, Taipei, Istanbul

Across cultures and centuries, tea houses have served as places of gathering, reflection, and hospitality. Though their forms vary from city to city, they share a common purpose: creating space for people to slow down, connect, and experience tea beyond the cup.



of the World

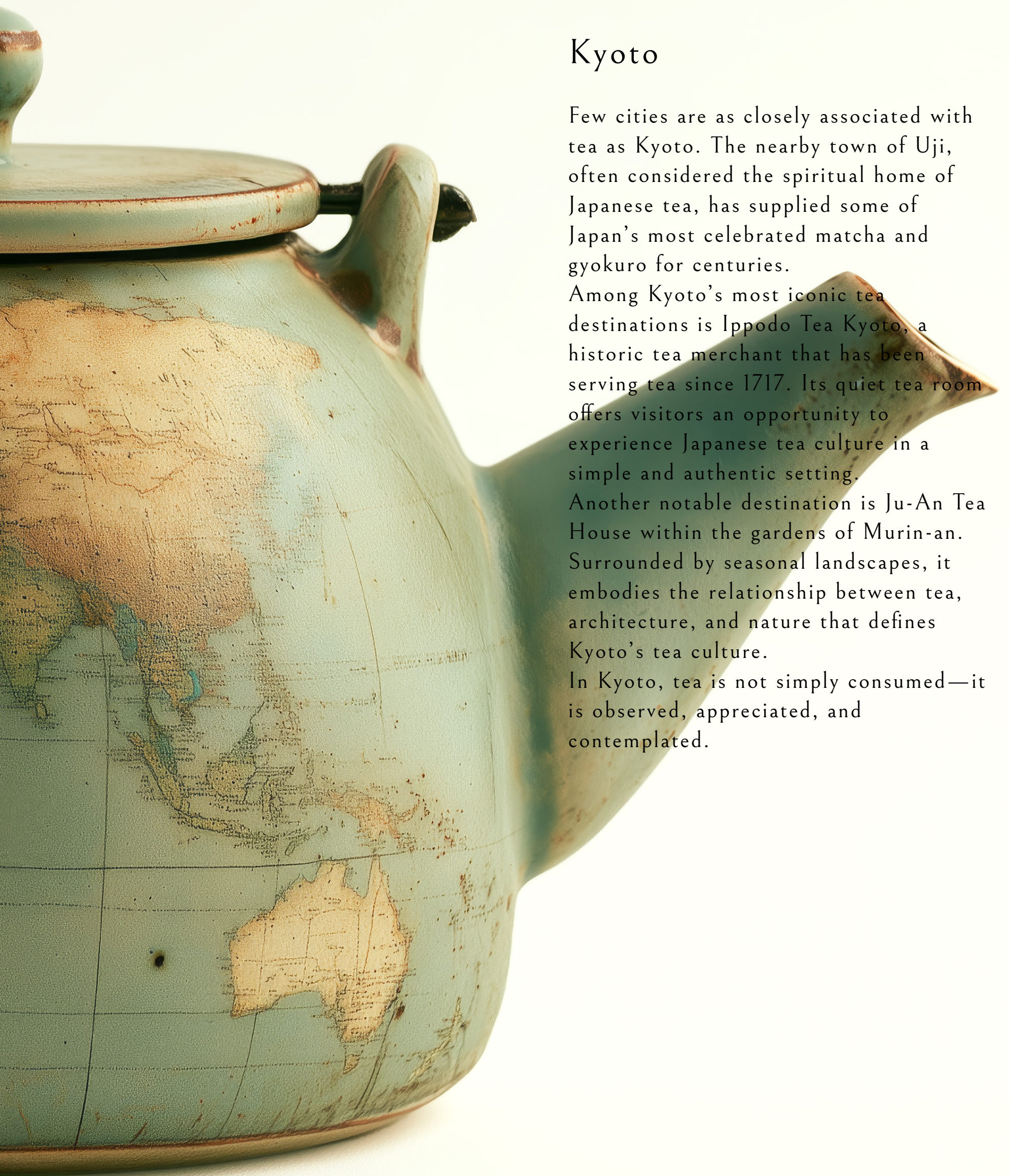
Kyoto

Few cities are as closely associated with tea as Kyoto. The nearby town of Uji, often considered the spiritual home of Japanese tea, has supplied some of Japan's most celebrated matcha and gyokuro for centuries.

Among Kyoto's most iconic tea destinations is Ippodo Tea Kyoto, a historic tea merchant that has been serving tea since 1717. Its quiet tea room offers visitors an opportunity to experience Japanese tea culture in a simple and authentic setting.

Another notable destination is Ju-An Tea House within the gardens of Murin-an. Surrounded by seasonal landscapes, it embodies the relationship between tea, architecture, and nature that defines Kyoto's tea culture.

In Kyoto, tea is not simply consumed—it is observed, appreciated, and contemplated.



Taipei

Taipei offers a different but equally rich tea culture. The city serves as a gateway to Taiwan's renowned high-mountain oolongs and centuries-old gongfu tea traditions.

One of the most beloved tea houses is Wistaria Tea House, a beautifully preserved Japanese-era residence where guests can enjoy traditional tea service in a tranquil atmosphere. Long considered a gathering place for artists, intellectuals, and tea enthusiasts, it remains a symbol of Taipei's tea heritage.

For a contemporary interpretation, Smith & Hsu has helped introduce a new generation to tea appreciation, combining global influences with Taiwan's strong tea culture.

Taipei's tea houses are places where conversation unfolds slowly, often over many infusions of the same leaves.



“Every city has its own language of tea. The cup may change, but the desire to connect remains the same.”

Istanbul

Tea arrived in Istanbul much later than in Kyoto or Taipei, yet it became deeply woven into the city's social fabric. In Türkiye, tea is less about ceremony and more about hospitality. It accompanies business meetings, family visits, long conversations, and everyday moments alike.

A glass of tea often serves as a gesture of welcome. Refilling a guest's glass is an expression of generosity. Across the city, tea creates a shared rhythm that brings people together regardless of background or generation.

In recent years, a new wave of tea spaces has begun exploring tea beyond its traditional role. Located in the creative neighborhood of Firuzağa, Chado Teashop introduces guests to teas from Japan, Taiwan, China, India, and beyond while maintaining the warmth and sociability that define Turkish tea culture.

Here, a bowl of ceremonial matcha may be served alongside conversations that last for hours. Traditional Japanese tea ware coexists with Istanbul's café culture. The result is not a recreation of Kyoto or Taipei, but something uniquely Istanbul: a meeting point between global tea traditions and local hospitality.



Places to Visit

Kyoto

- Ippodo Tea Kyoto
- Ju-An Tea House (Murin-an)

Taipei

- Wistaria Tea House
- Smith & Hsu

Istanbul

- Chado Teashop, Firuzağa

Tea & Chocolate Pairing

A Study in Balance

When people think of chocolate pairings, wine and coffee often come to mind first. Yet tea offers a remarkably nuanced alternative. With its vast range of aromas, textures, and origins, tea can complement chocolate in ways that are both subtle and surprising.

Unlike wine, tea contains no alcohol. Unlike coffee, it rarely dominates the palate. Instead, it creates space for chocolate's complexity to unfold gradually, revealing new layers of flavour with each sip.

The secret to successful pairing lies in balance. Delicate teas can be overwhelmed by rich chocolate, while bold teas may overpower lighter confections. The most memorable combinations occur when both elements elevate one another.



Matcha & White Chocolate

Creamy white chocolate highlights matcha's vegetal sweetness and umami character. The contrast between the chocolate's richness and matcha's fresh, grassy notes creates one of the most harmonious pairings in the tea world.

Milk Oolong & Milk Chocolate

Known for its naturally creamy aroma, Milk Oolong finds a natural companion in smooth milk chocolate. Together they create notes reminiscent of caramel, cream, and toasted pastry.

Hojicha & Dark Chocolate

Roasted Hojicha brings warmth, depth, and subtle notes of hazelnut and cacao. Paired with dark chocolate, it creates a comforting combination that feels both elegant and familiar.



Jasmine Pearls & Citrus Chocolate

The floral character of Jasmine Pearls pairs beautifully with chocolates containing orange, yuzu, or other citrus elements. The result is fragrant, bright, and refreshing.

Sheng Pu-erh & Single-Origin Dark Chocolate

For adventurous palates, few pairings are as intriguing as young Sheng Pu-erh and high-cacao dark chocolate. Both products express terroir and origin with remarkable clarity, creating a tasting experience that evolves over time.

How to Taste

Begin with the tea.

Take a small sip and allow its texture and aromas to settle. Then taste a piece of chocolate and let it melt slowly. Finally, return to the tea and observe how the flavours have changed.

A successful pairing should not feel like two separate experiences. Instead, a third flavour emerges—something neither the tea nor the chocolate could achieve alone.

Five Pairings to Try

- Ceremonial Matcha × White Chocolate
- Milk Oolong × Caramel Milk Chocolate
- Hojicha × 70% Dark Chocolate
- Jasmine Pearls × Orange Chocolate
- Sheng Pu-erh × Single-Origin Dark Chocolate

Tea and chocolate share a common story. Both begin as agricultural products shaped by climate, craftsmanship, and tradition. Both invite us to slow down and pay attention.

And both remind us that flavour is often richest when it is shared.

Interview:

A Conversation with Barış Çekin,
Co-Founder of Chado



Q: Chado is often associated with matcha in Türkiye. But if you had to describe Chado in one sentence, what would it be?

-Barış Çekin:

Chado is a bridge between traditional tea cultures and contemporary life. We work with tea, but what we are really interested in is ritual—those small moments during the day that help people slow down, focus, and connect with themselves and others.

Q: How did the story of Chado begin?

-Barış Çekin:

The story began in 2007 with a simple curiosity. At that time, tea culture in Türkiye was largely limited to black tea and herbal infusions. While exploring tea traditions around the world, I became fascinated by Japanese tea culture and particularly by matcha.

What attracted me wasn't only the taste. It was the philosophy surrounding it—the attention to detail, the appreciation of simplicity, and the idea that preparing a cup of tea could become a meaningful ritual.

That curiosity eventually became Chado. What started as a niche passion gradually evolved into a company importing, curating, and sharing teas from around the world.

Q: Why the name “Chado”?

-Barış Çekin:

“Chadō” translates as “The Way of Tea” in Japanese. The word carries a deeper meaning than simply drinking tea. It refers to a lifelong practice of refinement, hospitality, mindfulness, and respect.

We felt that philosophy represented what we wanted the brand to stand for. Chado is not only about tea leaves; it is about how tea can shape moments and relationships.



Q: You were introducing matcha to Turkish consumers long before it became a global trend. What was that experience like?

-Barış Çekin:

When Chado introduced matcha to Türkiye in 2007, very few people had heard of it.

There were no matcha lattes on café menus, no social media trends, and very little awareness of Japanese tea culture.

At the beginning, much of our work was educational. We explained what matcha was, how it was produced, why it looked and tasted different from conventional green tea, and how it should be prepared.

Looking back, it is remarkable to see how much awareness has grown. Today, matcha can be found almost everywhere, but our focus has never been on trends. What interested us in 2007—and what still interests us today—is craftsmanship, authenticity, and the cultural stories behind tea.

In many ways, introducing matcha was not simply about launching a product. It was about opening a window to a broader tea culture.

Q: Chado now offers teas from many countries. What do you look for when selecting a tea?

-Barış Çekin:

We look for character and origin.

Many products today are designed to be standardized. Tea is different. We appreciate teas that reflect their terroir, harvest conditions, and craftsmanship.

Whether it is a Japanese sencha, a Taiwanese oolong, a Chinese pu-erh, or a handcrafted herbal blend, we want it to tell a story about where it comes from and the people who produced it.

Q: Chado often talks about “Slow Tea Society.” What does that mean?

-Barış Çekin:

Modern life rewards speed. Tea invites the opposite.

Slow Tea Society is our way of encouraging people to create intentional pauses throughout the day. It doesn't require a formal tea ceremony. It can be as simple as preparing a cup of tea without checking your phone.

For us, tea is not only a beverage. It is an excuse to slow down and pay attention.

Q: What role do Chado Teashops play in that vision?

-Barış Çekin:

The teashops are where our philosophy becomes tangible.

People can taste teas they have never encountered before, attend workshops, discover new rituals, and ask questions. We wanted to create places that feel more like cultural spaces than retail stores. Tea has always been social. Historically, tea houses were places where ideas, conversations, and communities formed. We try to preserve a little of that spirit.

Q: Many people see tea as a traditional beverage, while others associate it with wellness. How do you view tea?

-Barış Çekin:

Tea has always adapted to the needs of each generation.

For some people, tea is tradition. For others, it is hospitality. For others, it is wellness, focus, or creativity.

What fascinates me is that tea can be all of those things simultaneously. It has remained relevant for thousands of years because it continues to evolve while remaining connected to its roots.

Q: What is something people misunderstand about tea?

-Barış Çekin:

Many people think tea is simple.

In reality, tea is one of the most complex agricultural products in the world. Harvest timing, cultivar selection, terroir, processing methods, oxidation levels, roasting techniques—every detail affects the final cup.

Wine and coffee have long received recognition for this complexity. Tea deserves the same appreciation.

Q: Looking ahead, what excites you most about the future of Chado?

-Barış Çekin:

The growing curiosity.

People are increasingly interested in understanding where products come from, how they are made, and the stories behind them. Tea naturally fits into that movement. We want to continue introducing exceptional teas, creating meaningful experiences, and building a modern tea culture that respects tradition while remaining open to innovation.

Q: Finally, if you could serve one cup of tea to every reader of this magazine, what would it be?

-Barış Çekin:

I would choose an aged Pu-erh from Yunnan, China.

Pu-erh is a tea that rewards patience.

Unlike many teas that are enjoyed for their freshness, a well-aged Pu-erh develops character over time. Its aromas become deeper, its texture smoother, and its flavor more layered and complex.

What fascinates me most is that the tea continues to evolve throughout the session. The first infusion might offer notes of earth, wood, and dried fruit. A few infusions later, new dimensions emerge—perhaps hints of camphor, dark honey, forest floor, or sweet spices. It feels less like drinking a beverage and more like having a conversation that gradually reveals itself.

For me, Pu-erh represents one of the most sophisticated expressions of tea culture. It reminds us that some of the most rewarding experiences cannot be rushed. They unfold slowly, infusion by infusion, over time.

“The finest teas do not reveal themselves immediately. Neither do the finest things in life.”

Tea Guide. Part 1

1. Gyokuro — Japan

Origin: Uji, Yame and Okabe
Tea type: Shade-grown green tea
Character: The tea plants are shaded for approximately three weeks before harvest, encouraging an intense umami flavour and natural sweetness.
Flavour profile: Seaweed, fresh grass, sweet peas and soft mineral notes
Brewing: 5 g of tea, water at 50–60°C, steep for 90–120 seconds
Best enjoyed: During quiet mornings and special tasting moments
Distinctive quality: Considered one of the most refined and valuable Japanese green teas.

2. Matcha — Japan

Origin: Uji, Nishio and Yame
Tea type: Stone-ground, shade-grown green tea
Character: Made by grinding tencha leaves into an exceptionally fine powder. Unlike infused tea, the entire leaf is whisked into water and consumed.
Flavour profile: Intense umami, fresh greens, delicate sweetness and a creamy finish
Preparation: 2 g of matcha, 70–80 ml of water at 70–80°C
Best enjoyed: As a morning ritual, for moments of focus or during a tea ceremony
Distinctive quality: One of the most iconic expressions of Japanese tea culture. Japanese green teas.



3. Sencha — Japan

Origin: Shizuoka, Kagoshima, Uji and other tea-growing regions of Japan
Tea type: Steamed green tea
Character: Japan's most widely consumed traditional loose-leaf tea, known for its fresh, vibrant and balanced character.
Flavour profile: Fresh grass, citrus, young leaves and a subtle oceanic note
Brewing: 4–5 g of tea, water at 70–80°C, steep for 60 seconds
Best enjoyed: As an everyday tea or alongside food
Distinctive quality: Offers a fine balance of sweetness, astringency and umami.

4. Kabusecha — Japan

Origin: Mie, Kagoshima and Kyoto
Tea type: Partially shade-grown green tea
Character: Positioned between Sencha and Gyokuro, Kabusecha is shaded for approximately one to two weeks before harvest.
Flavour profile: Sweet grass, fresh vegetables, seaweed and balanced umami
Brewing: 5 g of tea, water at 65–75°C, steep for 60–90 seconds
Best enjoyed: When seeking a green tea that is both soft and expressive
Distinctive quality: Combines Sencha's freshness with Gyokuro's smooth, velvety character.

5. Genmaicha — Japan

Origin: Japan
Tea type: Green tea blended with roasted rice
Character: Traditionally made by combining Sencha or Bancha leaves with roasted brown rice.
Flavour profile: Toasted grains, nuts, fresh grass and delicate caramel
Brewing: 4–5 g of tea, water at 80°C, steep for 60–90 seconds
Best enjoyed: In the afternoon or alongside meals
Distinctive quality: Its warm and comforting roasted aroma makes it an excellent everyday tea.



6. Hojicha — Japan

Origin: Kyoto
Tea type: Roasted green tea
Character: Produced by roasting green tea leaves and stems at high temperatures, resulting in a light brown infusion.
Flavour profile: Caramel, roasted nuts, wood and subtle cocoa notes
Brewing: 4–5 g of tea, water at 90°C, steep for 30–60 seconds
Best enjoyed: In the evening or after a meal
Distinctive quality: Roasting softens the tea's vegetal character and creates a smooth, comforting cup.

7. Shincha — Japan

Origin: Shizuoka, Kagoshima and Uji
Tea type: First-harvest green tea
Character: Made from the first tender leaves of spring and produced in limited quantities. It is usually consumed quickly to preserve its freshness.
Flavour profile: Spring flowers, fresh grass, citrus and sweet vegetables
Brewing: 4–5 g of tea, water at 70–75°C, steep for 60 seconds
Best enjoyed: During spring tastings and seasonal tea rituals
Distinctive quality: A vibrant and rare tea available only for a short period each year.

8. Longjing — China

Origin: Hangzhou, Zhejiang
Also known as: Dragon Well
Tea type: Pan-fired green tea
Character: Recognised by its flat, glossy leaves and elegant sweetness, Longjing is one of China's most celebrated premium teas.
Flavour profile: Chestnut, orchid, fresh beans and lightly roasted nuts
Brewing: 4 g of tea, water at 75–80°C, steep for 60–90 seconds
Best enjoyed: Early in the day or during a quiet tasting session
Distinctive quality: The most prized examples are harvested in early spring before the Qingming Festival.



9. Bi Luo Chun — China

Origin: Jiangsu, around Lake Taihu
Also known as: Green Snail Spring
Tea type: Delicately curled green tea
Character: Made from young buds and tender leaves, this highly aromatic tea is distinguished by its fine spiral shape.
Flavour profile: White flowers, peach, fresh herbs and delicate honey
Brewing: 3–4 g of tea, water at 70–80°C, steep for 60 seconds
Best enjoyed: When light, elegant and fragrant teas are preferred
Distinctive quality: Its small leaves slowly unfurl in the water, creating a visually engaging tasting experience.

A close-up photograph of a person's hands holding a small, light green ceramic cup filled with tea. Steam is rising from the cup, creating a soft, ethereal atmosphere. The person is wearing a dark, textured garment. The background is dark and out of focus.

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