THE FREE MATCHA BASICS

MINI COURSE

SEGMENT 1
MATCHA BASICS

1. The implements
2. Sifting your matcha
3. Preserving your matcha
4. Cleaning your tea whisk and bowl
5. Caring for your tea scoop
6. Choosing a tea bowl

1. THE IMPLEMENTS

The Tea Bowl

- Earthenware tea bowl
- Much variety available
- Choose based on your aesthetic preference

The Tea Whisk

- Bamboo tea whisk
- Commonly exclusively hand-made in Takayama, Nara, Japan
- Nowadays also cheaper versions from Korea and China available

1. THE IMPLEMENTS

The Tea Scoop

- Bamboo tea scoop
- Carved by hand
- From basic items to very exclusive antique scoops
- Sometimes comes in its own inscribed container
- Useful to measure the amount of matcha required

1. THE IMPLEMENTS [BONUS]

The Tea Caddy

- Wooden or lacquered
- Ceremonially used for usucha (thin tea) quality tea powder.
- Used during a service of tea, but never for storage of the tea powder.

The Tea Flask

- Pottery with a tailored brocade sheath.
- Ceremonially used for koicha (thick tea) quality tea powder.
- Used during a service of tea, but never for storage of the tea powder.

- These items come in an array of different styles and shapes. They are chosen based on aesthetical preference and functionality

2. SIFTING YOUR MATCHA

BEFORE EACH BOWL

- Strainer and tea scoop
- Sieve as much as you need directly into the tea bowl

Downside

- Sifting becomes part of the process of making a bowl
- Takes more time each time

IN LARGE BATCH

- Separate strainer can
- Sieve all the tea at once
- Requires work only once

Downside

- Not suited for long-term storage
- Repeat once a month (if you preserve your tea that long)

2. SIFTING YOUR MATCHA

Tips

- Sift your batch of tea all at once.
- Preserve in an airtight can.

Do I need to sift at all?

- YES!
- You want to break up any lumps that have formed in the tea powder due to static electricity. Otherwise they might end up in your bowl of tea, and whisking won't always perfectly make them dissolve.

3. PRESERVING YOUR MATCHA

SHORT TERM

- For **immediate use**: In an airtight, sealed container. Keep away from humidity, heat and sunlight.

Fridge

- Keep in an airtight vessel and/ or bag.
- Store away from odors such as fish or cheese.
- Let **acclimatize** before opening to avoid humidity to condensate on the inside of the can. (***1~2 hours***)

LONG TERM

Freezer

- Keep in an airtight vessel and/ or bag.
- Store away from odors such as fish or cheese.
- Let **acclimatize** before opening to avoid humidity to condensate on the inside of the can. (***1 day***)

4. CLEANING YOUR WHISK AND BOWL

Proper care for tea whisk and tea bowl

- Add hot water to your tea bowl.
- Whisk around in the hot water to cleanse the tea whisk.
- Use the sides of the whisk to scrub the inner bowl walls.
- Pour the water away and wipe the tea bowl dry with a towel.
- Let the bowl dry before storing.
- Use your forefinger and thumb to, under streaming water, wash each tine of your tea whisk clean.
- Wipe the tea whisk on a dry towel.
- Let the tea whisk dry in a well ventilated place.
- Use a ‘kusenaoshi’ whisk stand to maintain the whisk’s shape.

5. CARING FOR YOUR TEA SCOOP

NEVER use water or a wet towel to clean the tea scoop !

Using water on a bamboo tea scoop will make it absorb moist.

The next time you use it, it will be more prone to get matcha tea powder stuck to it.

And! It may cause humidity to get into the matcha container, which will progress the oxidation and deterioration of your tea.

6. CHOOSING A TEA BOWL

Thin Tea | Usucha

- Smoother bowl
- Light and refreshing feel
- Can have brighter illustrations

Thick Tea | Koicha

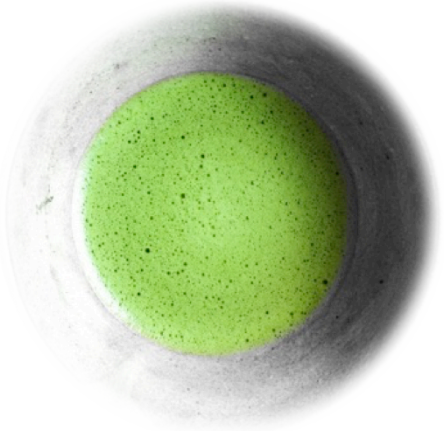
- Slightly rougher bowl
- Sturdy and heavy feel
- More rustic types preferred

For the sake of your tea whisk's longevity, pick a tea bowl that doesn't have a surface on the interior of the bowl that is too rough.

Such a bowl will scrape the tines of your whisk and make it diminish very rapidly.

SEGMENT 2
USUCHA | THIN TEA

7. The type of tea
8. How to whisk
   a bowl of thin tea?



7. USUCHA : THE TYPE OF TEA

Standard Matcha

- Matcha of a standard or lower grade (and price)
- Machine picked
- Coarser tea leaves used
- May be slightly more bitter
- Fresh aroma
- Suited for whisking a frothy bowl of thin tea matcha

8. HOW TO WHISK A BOWL OF USUCHA

Requirements

Amount of Tea Powder

- 1.25 g
- Two and a half tea scoop

Temperature of the Water

- ± 80~90 ℃

Amount of Hot Water

- 70 ml
- Pour slowly until almost all the matcha powder is submerged, but only a few dry spots remain.

8. HOW TO WHISK A BOWL OF USUCHA

Step By Step

- Warm your tea bowl with hot water and let the tea whisk steep to soften the tines.
- Remove the whisk, pour the water away and wipe the bowl dry with a towel.
- Add 2.5 scoops of matcha powder in the bowl, measuring with the tip of your tea scoop.
- Use the sharp edge of the tip of the tea scoop to cut the powder open and cut up any lumps.
- Slowly add hot water to the tea bowl, pouring besides the tea powder in order to lift the powder up.
- Stop pouring when almost all tea powder is submerged, but only a few dry spots remain.

8. HOW TO WHISK A BOWL OF USUCHA

Whisking

- Next you need to whisk the tea
  - Hold your tea whisk from the side
  - Use the whole arm to move the tea whisk inside the bowl
  - Do not tilt the tea whisk or make a circular motion
  - Move the whisk up and down the tea bowl in a horizontal line
- First firmly stir the tea with the tips of the tines of your whisk pressed against the floor of the tea bowl
- Secondly, when you have produced a foam, gradually lift the whisk up so that the tips of the tines are only touching the surface of the froth
  - Continue whisking but slower and use the tips of the tines to break up any large bubbles on the surface.

8. HOW TO WHISK A BOWL OF USUCHA

Finishing up

- Write a [Z] over the surface of the tea to collect the foam.
- Bring the tea whisk to the center of the bowl and lift it up to take it out of the bowl. This leaves the foam in a beautiful heap in the center of the bowl.

Enjoy the tea!

- First, raise the bowl to your forehead to thank the universe for providing this tea.
- Secondly turn the bowl a quarter to avoid drinking from the front of the bowl.
- When finished, wipe the rim where you've drunk from on the inside of the bowl with your forefinger clockwise, and the outside of the rim counterclockwise with your thumb.

SEGMENT 3
KOICHA | THICK TEA

9. The type of tea
10. How to blend a bowl of thick tea?

9. KOICHA: THE TYPE OF TEA

Premium Matcha

- Matcha of a premium or higher grade (and price)
- Hand-picked
- Youngest, freshest buds and leaves only
- Shouldn't be bitter, but instead high in sweetness and umami flavor
- Rich taste and aroma
- Suited for blending a creamy, glassy smooth bowl of thick tea matcha

10. HOW TO WHISK A BOWL OF KOICHA

Requirements

Amount of Tea Powder

- 4 g per person
- 3 heaping tea scoops
- (2 additional scoops per additional person)

Temperature of the Water

- ± 90~98 ℃
- Boiling hot

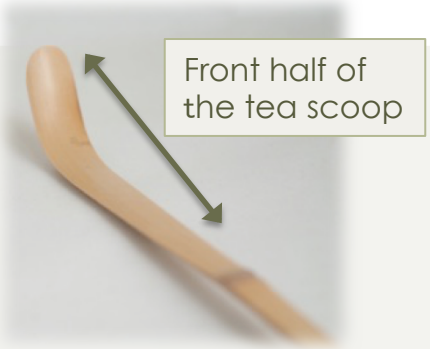
Amount of Hot Water

- 40 ml per person
- Pour slowly until almost all the matcha powder is submerged, but only a few dry spots remain on the surface.

10. HOW TO WHISK A BOWL OF KOICHA

Step By Step

- Warm your tea bowl with hot water and let the tea whisk steep to soften the tines.
- Remove the whisk, pour the water away and wipe the bowl dry with a towel.
- Add 3 heaping scoops of matcha powder in the bowl, measuring with front half of your tea scoop.
- Add an additional heaping tea scoop per additional person.
- Use the sharp edge of the tip of the tea scoop to cut the powder open and cut up any lumps.
- Slowly add hot water to the tea bowl, pouring besides the tea powder in order to lift the powder up.
- Stop pouring when almost all tea powder is submerged, but only a few dry spots remain.



10. HOW TO WHISK A BOWL OF KOICHA

Whisking

- Next you need to knead / blend the tea
  - Hold your tea whisk from the side
  - Use the whole arm to move the tea whisk inside the bowl
  - Do not tilt the tea whisk
  - In a circular motion, slowly but firmly rotate the whisk alongside the sides of the bowl.
- Knead the tea to combine the tea powder and water into a paste.
- On occasion, write the character for infinity ∞ in the bowl and move the tea whisk through the bowl's center to look for any remaining lumps of tea.
- Continue stirring until all lumps are dissolved, the tea turned into a paste, and the surface of the tea is glassy smooth.

10. HOW TO WHISK A BOWL OF KOICHA

Finishing up

- Write a [Z] over the surface of the tea and remove the tea whisk from the center.

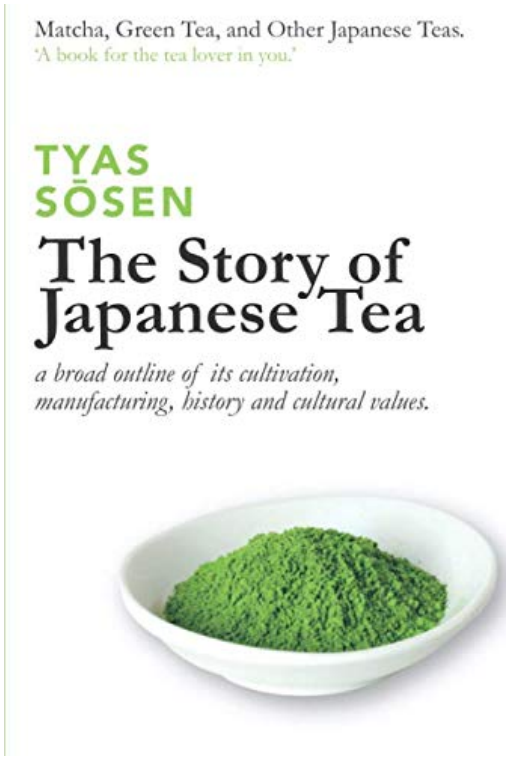
Enjoy the tea!

- First, raise the bowl to your forehead to thank the universe for providing this tea.
- Secondly turn the bowl a quarter to avoid drinking from the front of the bowl.
- When finished, wipe the rim where you've drunk from clean with a piece of softened paper or tissue to make it presentable to the person who will be drinking next.

THANK YOU!

ENJOY YOUR BOWL OF TEA.

WANT TO READ MORE?



Discover Tyas Sosen's book on Japanese tea.

Now Available on Amazon.

"The Story Of Japanese Tea: *a broad outline of its cultivation, manufacturing, history and cultural values.*"

Get Your Copy Now on Amazon!

SUPPORT THE TEA CRANE

For delicious matcha and basic utensils, visit The Tea Crane:

- https://www.the-tea-crane.com/store/

Join Tyas Sosen in Kyoto for a tea ceremony:

- https://tea-ceremony-kyoto.com/

Follow us on social media: