

Brewing Japanese Tea

The following method is recommended for brewing a pot of green tea that will have the savory umami flavor associated with the best Japanese tea.

Step 1

Once the water is boiling, pour it into a cup and let it cool down to 70°C. The cup should not feel too hot when you hold it in your hand. If the water is too hot, the tea will taste bitter.

Step 2

Place 9 grams, or roughly 3 teaspoons, of dried tea leaves into a teapot and pour the water from the cups over the leaves. This may seem like an excessive amount of tea, but the slightly cooled water will release the right proportion of umami. Close the pot and let it sit for 90 seconds. Be careful not to shake the pot; otherwise the leaves will release a bitter flavor. After enough time has passed, open the pot and check whether the leaves have opened.

Step 3

Once the leaves have expanded, pour a small amount of tea into each cup. Keep repeating this process until all the tea has been poured out of the pot. The tea will taste weak when first poured, but the flavors will gradually increase in richness as it is poured out. This method ensures that each cup has the same concentration of tea and the flavor is consistent. At the end, shake a few final drops out of the pot into each cup.

Tap the pot gently to bring the tea leaves to the middle and leave the lid ajar. This will allow for another round of tea after the first 3 cups are consumed. The proper serving size for a cup of tea is around 40 milliliters.

Second Round

For the second round, pour hot water into the pot without leaving the water to cool. Close the pot and allow it to sit for 90 seconds, following the same pouring procedure as the first round. It is possible to pour several rounds of tea using the same leaves but the concentration of the flavor will be reduced each time.