

High tea

Matcha is proving to be the new storm in a teacup

HEALTH MADE SIMPLE

Green tea is known for its many benefits when consumed as part of a healthy diet, but there's a new shade of green drink taking over: Matcha. Although only becoming popular in recent years, this type of tea has been around for much longer than we realise.

GRASS ROOTS

Naturally sweet in flavour, matcha is a finely milled green tea powder that is mixed with hot water. The drink formed part of a traditional Japanese tea ceremony called *chanoyu*, which dates back to the 12th century. The purpose of this ceremony was to emphasise – through the predefined movements of preparing and serving the tea – the importance of being present in every moment, as each encounter is different from the last, and should thus be treasured.

GOING GREEN

What makes matcha different from other tea is its nutritional value. One cup of matcha is equivalent to 10 cups of green tea in antioxidant content. This is because with other tea, such as green tea, the tea leaf is infused in hot water, so you're getting only a portion of its nutrients. Drinking a cup of matcha, on the other hand, means that you're consuming the entire tea leaf – and all the good things that come with it. Matcha is said to help improve brain functions, protect the liver and stave off certain cancers.

MATCHA MOVES

From muffins to lattes, matcha is showing up in a wide range of food and drink creations – but that doesn't mean the nutritional value remains the same. Reaping the full health benefits of matcha is dependent on the manner in which it is prepared and consumed. Your best bet for the whole package is just a simple cup of tea. **■**



Text: Geraldine Amoko; Photography: Gallo/Getty Images