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AIB International  
Guelph Food Technology Centre  
University of Guelph  
Certificate # 250612

*"Specialty Tea"*

## GENMAICHA a.k.a. Popcorn Tea

(Japanese Green Tea)

**Country of Origin:** Japan **Region:** Shizuoka Prefecture **Shipping Port:** Yokohama  
**Grade:** Genmaicha **Altitude:** 500 - 1500 ft. above sea level **Manufacture Type:** Steamed green tea  
**Cup Characteristics:** Light brownish yellow liquor with toasty flavour, tending sweet.  
**Infusion:** Tending bright with toasted rice kernels  
**Ingredients:** Luxury green tea, Roasted rice.

Information:

This is a specialty Japanese green tea that is blended with fire-toasted rice. A good grade Japan sencha is blended with the toasted rice. The fresh vegetative character of the green tea is imparted on the cup but it is tempered with the bakey-like character of the rice. There is a natural sweetness and almost chewy character to the finish of this tea. During the firing of the rice, it is not uncommon for rice to 'pop' not unlike popcorn, hence the pet name 'popcorn-tea'

Legend has it that during the 1400's an important samurai warlord in Hakone on the Izu Peninsula of Honshu Island (the Izu Peninsula is near the Shizuoka area) was having tea in the morning discussing a battle strategy with his patrol leaders. A servant by the name of Genamai was serving hot tea to the group. Leaning over to give tea to the warlord, rice that he had surreptitiously taken for a morning snack fell out of his pocket into the steaming hot tea. Some popped upon hitting the hot tea. The warlord was incensed, jumped up brandishing his samurai sword he promptly cut off Genamai's head in one fell swoop. He then sat down to continue the meeting. Despite the fact that the tea had been tarnished he drank it anyway. The flavor was very unique and he enjoyed it tremendously. In honor of poor Genamai he pronounced that this rice and tea be served every morning and be called 'Genmaicha' (cha being the name of 'tea' in Japanese)

**Hot tea brewing method:** When preparing by the cup, this tea can be used repeatedly - about 3 times. The secret is to use water that is about 180°F or 90°C. Place 1 teaspoon in your cup let the tea steep for about 3 minutes and then begin enjoying a cup of enchantment - do not remove the leaves from the cup. Once the water level is low - add more water, and so on and so on - until the flavor of the tea is exhausted. Look at the pattern of the leaves in the brew, not only do they foretell your fortune but you can see the bud and shoots presenting themselves, looking like they are about to be plucked.

Alternatively as with all top quality teas, scoop 2-4 teaspoons of tea into the teapot, pour in boiling water that has been freshly drawn (previously boiled water has lost most of its oxygen and therefore tends to be flat tasting), steep for 2-4 minutes (to taste), stir (virtually all the leaves will sink), pour into your cup but do not add milk or sugar since green tea is enjoyed 'straight-up'.

**Iced tea-brewing method:** (to make 1 liter/quart): Place 6 teaspoons of tea into a teapot or heat resistant pitcher. Pour 1 1/4 cups of freshly boiled water over the tea. Steep for 5 minutes. Quarter fill a serving pitcher with cold water. Pour the tea into your serving pitcher straining the leaves. Add ice and top up the pitcher with cold water. Garnish and sweeten to taste. [A rule of thumb when preparing fresh brewed iced tea is to double the strength of hot tea since it will be poured over ice and diluted with cold water.]