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

"Specialty Tea"

GREEN YERBA MATE

(Herbal Tea)

Country of Origin: Brazil **Region:** Southern Brazil - state of Parana and Mato Grosso
Altitude: below 1000 feet **Shipping Port:** Porto Alegre **Grade:** Unroasted
Cup Characteristics: Greenish and vegetative. Mate is rich in caffeine and was used as a caffeine beverage in Latin America before the advent of coffee.
Infusion: Tending light and yellowish
Ingredients: Luxury green mate.

Information:

Also known as Paraguay tea and yerba mate; mate is an herb prepared from the leaves of a South America evergreen shrub, *Ilex paraguayensis*, a relative of the common holly. The leaves are oval and about 6 inches long. Flowers of the plant are small and white. The fruit appears in small clusters of tiny red berries growing close to the stems of the plant. Like guarana and yopo, mate is rich in caffeine and was used as a caffeine beverage source by the native population of Latin America centuries before the European settlers arrived to establish coffee plantations.

Yerba Matte is called "The drink of the gods" by many of the indigenous people of South America who have brewed it for centuries. It was however, a people who believed in a different God that are responsible for the first commercial Yerba Matte plantations – Jesuit missionaries. Upon arriving in the new world, the Jesuits quickly adopted the native practice of drinking Yerba Matte as a tea. At the time, Yerba Matte leaves were only being harvested from wild stands of trees. Owing to its widespread popularity, the Jesuits realized the large economic potential of the plant and founded the first Yerba Matte plantations during the mid 1600's.

Mate leaves are processed somewhat like tealeaves. The tips of the branches are cut just before the leaves reach full growth and the leaves are steamed and dried (in fired mate the leaves are dried over fires) The dried leaves are sifted and allowed to age in order to enhance the flavor of the mate. The caffeine content of mate is comparable to that of mild arabica coffee.

Hot tea brewing Method: Use 1 teaspoon per one cup of boiling water. Pour boiling water into pot and let it steep for 5-7 minutes. Pour into your cup and savour a South American tradition.

Traditional tea brewing Method: The tea is prepared from the dried leaves, using one teaspoon of dried leaves per cup of boiling water. The aroma and flavor are of vegetative green leaves (there is also a toasted mate - which tastes quite toasty and is an acquired taste). The traditional native procedure involves making a cold water infusion in a small bowl and inserting a hollow tube or straw into the bowl, through which the tea is sipped. Some of the tubes are made of silver with a perforated strainer at the bottom to prevent the mate leaf particles from being sucked up through the tube. The bowl, called a *cuya*, and the tube, the *bombilla* are used in ceremonies at which participants take turns sipping mate through the silver straw.