



### **Green vs. Black Tea**

Have you ever wondered what the difference is between green and black tea?

Both green and black teas come from the leaves of the *Camellia sinensis* tea bush. Whether these tea leaves end up green or black depends on how they are processed.

Green tea is made from tea leaves that are simply steamed and dried soon after harvest. Black tea is dried and crushed which allows the action of the naturally occurring enzymes to convert some of the simple catechins of green tea to more complex forms. These compounds are responsible for the distinctive flavour and darker colour of black tea. They are also the well-known 'antioxidants' in tea responsible for much of its benefits.

Those that are caffeine sensitive may choose green tea over black tea before bed. It looks and tastes more like a light herbal tea such as peppermint or chamomile and many people wrongly believe green tea to be caffeine-free. However, due to being derived from the same plant as black tea, green tea contains similar levels of caffeine (10 to 50 mg caffeine per cup).

So green tea is NOT the thing to drink before bed if caffeine disturbs your sleep. However, on a positive note, the caffeine content of all teas is only around 1/3 to 1/2 of that found in coffee. Therefore you don't get the sudden rush of adrenalin when you drink it. For those who are not as caffeine sensitive, it doesn't matter whether you choose green or black tea.

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