



The Okura Prestige
BANGKOK

ANNIVERSARY
14th

The Okura Prestige Bangkok





FOURTEEN YEARS OF OMOTENASHI AND SPIRIT

To our cherished guests,

Time, much like the preparation of a fine bowl of tea, is best measured not by its speed but by the depth of the moments we choose to inhabit.

As we celebrate our fourteenth anniversary, we find ourselves reflecting on the philosophy that has guided our doors since the very beginning – *‘the art of refined Japanese hospitality.’* It is a journey defined by the quiet details, the scent of seasonal blooms, the soft texture of hand-loomed linens, and the profound silence that greets you at the end of a long day.

To honour this magnificent milestone, we invite you to explore the world of **“Matcha.”** More than a beverage, Matcha is a bridge between the ancient and the modern. It is a practice born in the mist-covered hills of Uji and perfected in the tea rooms of Kyoto, teaching us that there is luxury in simplicity and grace in the ritual. In the pages, we hope you find a moment of tranquil, a chance to unwind and discover the emerald stillness that has sustained Japanese culture for centuries.

Thank you for being a part of our story for fourteen wonderful years. We invite you to sit, linger, and savour the spirit of the whisk.

Warm regards
Niek Hammer
General Manager

C O N T E N T

GM Note	2
A Japanese Philosophy	4
Chapter I	5
Chapter II	7
Chapter III	9
Harvest of Spring	12
Chapter IV	14
Chapter V	18
The Final Note	21



A Japanese Philosophy

In Japan, Matcha is a social glue and a spiritual anchor. The culture of *Chado* or ‘*The Way of Tea*’ is built on four pillars: Harmony, Respect, Purity, and Tranquillity.

Whether it is a formal ceremony in a tatami room or a modern Matcha-to-go, the essence remains the same; a momentary escape from the chaos of the outside world. It is an invitation to be present, to appreciate the craftsmanship of the ceramic bowl, and to acknowledge the guest before you.

At its heart, Matcha culture is the ultimate expression of Omotenashi, giving one’s whole heart to the preparation of a single cup.



The Okura Prestige
BANGKOK



A LEGACY OF ZEN IN THE MODERN WORLD

In the quiet corners of our heritage, there is a ritual that has remained unchanged for eight centuries. To whisk a bowl of Matcha is to hold a conversation with history, a lineage that traces its path from the mist-veiled hills of Uji to the serene tea rooms of the Imperial Court.

This is not merely tea; it is *'The Way.'* Brought to Japan by the monk Eisai, Matcha was first a monastic secret, a tool for clarity used by Zen masters to sustain hours of meditative silence. It eventually caught the eye of the Shoguns, becoming a hallmark of the Japanese nobility. To serve Matcha was to show the highest form of respect, a gesture of Omotenashi that we continue to honour today.

As you sip, imagine the stillness of a Kyoto morning, where the only sound is the soft rustle of silk and the gentle whisking of bamboo. This is the luxury of time, preserved in a single, vibrant bowl.



The character of a fine Matcha is an intimate reflection of the landscape from which it grew, a dialogue between the mineral-rich soil, the morning mist, and the hands of the artisan. To understand the origin of your tea is to appreciate the nuance of its “terroir,” much like the grand wines of a storied vineyard.

In the historic heart of Japan lies **Uji, Kyoto**, the undisputed aristocrat of the tea world. Here, the rolling hills and humid climate create a natural sanctuary for the tea bushes. An Uji Matcha is defined by its deep, creamy Umami and a sophisticated profile of toasted nuts and sweet grass. It is the gold standard of the tea ceremony, prized for a structural elegance that lingers long after the final sip.



A CARTOGRAPHY OF EMERALD TERROIR

Moving toward the coastal breezes of **Nishio in Aichi**, we find a different expression of the leaf. Grown in calcium-rich river soil and shielded by thick, traditional shading, the Matcha here is celebrated for its intense, electric vibrance. The flavour is one of maritime freshness, clean, bright, and spirited – making it a favourite for those who seek a refreshing, botanical clarity in their daily ritual.

For those who pursue the rare and the exquisite, the shaded groves of **Yame in Fukuoka** offer a buttery indulgence. The artisans of Yame are masters of traditional shading techniques, allowing the leaves to develop an extraordinary concentration of L-theanine. The result is a full-bodied Matcha with a rich, velvety texture and a lingering sweetness that feels like a silken ribbon on the palate.

Each region tells a different story of the Japanese landscape, allowing you to select a profile that resonates with your own internal rhythm.



THE GRADES AND PROFILES OF MATCHA



The Pinnacle: The Ceremonial Grade

This is the most refined expression of the tea leaf, harvested during the first flush of spring. Only the youngest, most tender leaves from the very top of the plant are selected. These leaves are traditionally ground by granite stones into a powder so fine it feels like silk between the fingertips.

The flavour of Ceremonial Grade is defined by Umami – a savoury, brothy sweetness that lingers on the palate. It possesses almost no bitterness, offering instead a creamy mouthfeel and a delicate aroma reminiscent of fresh rain on a spring field. This grade is intended to be whisked simply with hot water, allowed to stand alone without the distraction of milk or sweeteners.

The Balance: Premium Grade

A versatile and sophisticated choice, Premium Grade Matcha is often harvested slightly later than the ceremonial leaves. It retains much of the vibrant emerald hue but carries a more pronounced ‘tea’ character.

The flavour profile is beautifully balanced, it offers the signature nuttiness of high-quality Tencha “the leaf” before it is ground with a very subtle, refreshing sharpness. It is the ideal choice for a daily morning ritual or for those who prefer a **‘Matcha Latte’** that still honours the integrity of the tea’s natural spirit.

The Foundation: Culinary Grade

While it lacks the delicate sweetness of its ceremonial counterpart, Culinary Grade is prized for its boldness. Harvested from the lower leaves of the tea bush, it possesses a stronger, more sharp flavour and a slightly more muted green tone.

This robustness is intentional. It allows the essence of the green tea to shine through when paired with other rich ingredients. In the hands of a master pâtissier, this grade transforms into elegant sponges, silky mousses, or the refined '*Matcha Opera*' cakes often found in our bakery selections.

A Note on Umami

The soul of luxury Matcha lies in its high concentration of L-theanine, the amino acid responsible for that unique savoury-sweetness. This is the '*Umami*' of the tea world, a depth of flavour that satisfies the palate and calms the mind simultaneously. When you sip a truly refined Matcha, you are tasting the result of weeks of patient shading and centuries of artisanal craft.





AN INTERIOR GLOW

In an era of digital noise, the most sought-after luxury is inner clarity. Matcha offers a unique biological elegance – a state of *'Relaxed Alertness'* that coffee simply cannot replicate.

The secret lies in the shade-growing process, which persuades the leaf into producing high levels of L-theanine. This rare amino acid works in harmony with natural caffeine to provide a sustained, silver-threaded energy, a gentle lift that keeps the mind sharp while the spirit remains tranquil.

At the heart of Matcha's restorative power lies a remarkable polyphenol known as EGCG – Epigallocatechin Gallate. While many superfoods boast antioxidant properties, EGCG is the undisputed *'Gold Standard,'* a potent molecular shield that is found in its most concentrated form within the shaded leaves of Japanese Tencha.

Rich in EGCG antioxidants, every bowl is a ritual of longevity, a *'living elixir'* that nourishes the skin and protects the system. It is wellness, refined. It is the art of feeling as radiant as you look, proving that the most effective beauty and health rituals are those rooted in nature and enjoyed in silence.





THE SEASONAL BREATH

THE HARVEST OF SPRING

In the world of high-end Matcha, time is the most precious ingredient. The most coveted harvest is the first flush – Shincha, occurring in late April to May.

After resting through the winter, the tea bushes burst with nutrient-dense buds. This '*Spring Harvest*' is the source of all Ceremonial Grade tea, offering a vibrant, electric green hue and a sweetness that is lost as the year progresses.

Subsequent harvests in summer and autumn produce a bolder; more sharp leaf, perfectly suited for the culinary arts or a robust afternoon latte.



CRAFTING YOUR OWN SANCTUARY

To prepare a bowl of Matcha is to perform a small, private ceremony. It is an invitation to put down the world for a few moments and focus on the tactile beauty of the present. Whether in the quiet of a sunrise or as a mid-afternoon transition, the ritual is as restorative as the tea itself.



The Essential Curations

True luxury is found in the tools of the craft. To begin your journey at home, we suggest a minimalist collection of traditional implements:



The Chawan

A hand-crafted ceramic bowl. Its weight should feel grounding in your palms, its shape designed to be cradled



The Chasen

A whisk carved from a single piece of bamboo, boasting fine, delicate tines that breathe life into the tea



The Chashaku

A slender bamboo scoop, designed to measure the perfect golden ratio of powder to water

The Ritual Flow

1. **The Preparation of the Vessel:** Begin by warming your Chawan with gentle hot water. This preheats the ceramic and softens the bristles of your Chasen, ensuring the bamboo is supple and ready
2. **The Sifting of Emeralds:** Place two scoops of ceremonial Matcha through a fine sieve into the bowl. This ensures a texture as light as air, removing any clusters to allow for a perfectly smooth finish
3. **The Temperate Pour:** Add roughly 70ml of water. Crucially, the water should be hot but never boiling – ideally 80°C. Boiling water ‘scolds’ the delicate leaves, masking their natural sweetness with bitterness
4. **The Dance of the Whisk:** Using your wrist, whisk the tea in a swift “W” or “M” motion. Watch as the emerald liquid transforms, building a thick, creamy froth of tiny bubbles – what tea masters call the ‘Jade Foam.’
5. **The Moment of Stillness:** Lift the bowl with both hands. Inhale the fresh, grassy aroma before taking your first sip. Notice how the world seems to quieten as the umami settles on your palate





A SILENT DIALOGUE OF RESPECT



In the refined world of *Chado*, or the Way of Tea, every movement is a choreographed expression of mindfulness. To receive a bowl of Matcha is to enter into a silent dialogue with your host, a practice rooted in the sixteenth-century philosophy of *Omotenashi*. It is an invitation to leave the distractions of the outside world at the threshold and fully inhabit the present moment.

The ritual begins with the arrival of the *Chawan*. When the bowl is placed before you, it is customary to acknowledge the person to your left with a slight, graceful bow – a gesture of shared presence. As you lift the vessel, cradle it in the palm of your left hand while your right hand stabilizes the side. This physical connection to the warm ceramic is designed to ground the senses, drawing your focus to the weight and texture of the artisan's craft.

Before the first sip, a subtle yet significant gesture of humbleness is performed, rotating the bowl. In Japanese culture, the 'front' or the most beautiful side of the bowl is always presented to the guest. To avoid drinking directly from this artistic face, one gently rotates the Chawan clockwise by roughly ninety degrees. This act is a profound sign of respect, signaling that you recognise the beauty of the object while maintaining a modest posture.

The drinking itself is a slow, sensory exploration. While a quiet sip is expected, the final draught is often accompanied by a spirited, audible 'slurp,' a traditional signal to the host that the tea was enjoyed to its very last drop. Once finished, use your thumb and forefinger to gently wipe the rim where you drank, a final act of purity before returning the bowl.

Beyond the technicalities, the true etiquette of Matcha is found in the spirit of Ichi-go Ichi-e, the realisation that this specific gathering, with these specific people, in this exact light, will never happen again. To drink with etiquette is to drink with gratitude.







CARRYING THE STILLNESS FORWARD

As we conclude this journey through the emerald world of Matcha, we find that the true essence of the ritual lies not in the whisk or the bowl, but in the space it creates within us. Over the past 14 years, it has been our greatest privilege to provide that very space for you, a sanctuary of refined luxury amidst the vibrant pulse of the world.

The *“Way of Tea”* teaches us that every encounter is a gift, a fleeting moment of harmony that can never be precisely replicated. Whether you are savouring a bowl in our guest room or recreating the ritual in the quiet of your own home, you are participating in a tradition that celebrates the beauty of the present.

As we look toward the future, our commitment remains unchanged; to honour the spirit of *Omotenashi*, to seek the extraordinary in the subtle, and to ensure that every visit to The Okura Prestige Bangkok feels like a homecoming.

Thank you for fourteen years of shared stories, and celebrated milestones. We look forward to whisking the next chapter of our journey together!

The Okura Prestige Bangkok



The Okura Prestige
B A N G K O K

Okura
HOTELS & RESORTS

Park Ventures Ecoplex, 57 Wireless Road, Bangkok 10330, Thailand
T.02 687 9000 F.02 687 9001 E. info@okurabangkok.com okurabangkok.com
facebook.com/theokuraprestigebangkok



THE LEADING HOTELS
OF THE WORLD