

# From Uji-river

Uji river that runs through over 1000 years... Attracted to the beauty of nature, nobilities in Heian period built their villas in Uji while writers chose this area as the site of their stories. And the climate by Uji river created and refined the unique Uji-tea culture. The scenery beauty, culture, tradition, and the aroma of Uji tea have been succeeded by generations.



Uji River fireworks display to color a summer night of Uji



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The river fog screening out from the Uji river protects the young leaves from frost and keeps them soft. The geographical features and people's efforts to develop the technique over generations have made Uji famous for tea.

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During the Heian period, nobilities were looking for a place to build their villas outside the capital Kyoto. Due to its geographical advantage and scenery beauty, nobilities built their villas. And the Fujiwara clan made Uji what is called Fujiwara villa town. Two world heritages - Byodoin and Ujikami Shrine - were built during this time.



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# Tea Town Uji



## The secrets of deliciousness of Uji tea

### Secret ①

We grow the Tea of Uji by using the method called "Ooishita" that covers tea leaves before plucking them. This method is endemic to Uji. By keeping sunlight off with cover, the tea leaves increase umami. We employ traditional method of hand-picking to pluck tea leaves. Tencha-tea - the ingredient of Matcha green tea - and Gyokuro tea made of only young leaves that have been picked carefully tip by tip are worthy of being called high-quality tea. Uji tea has attracted a national reputation with this unique and time-consuming method. And still Uji tea keeps winning many awards like the Minister of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries Award.

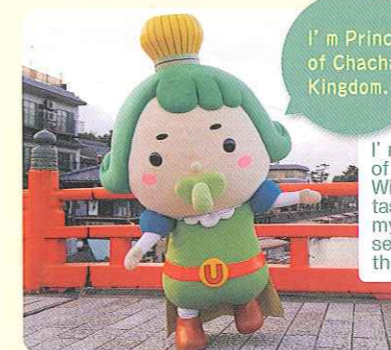
### Secret ②

Tea wholesalers steam and dry tea leaves and then blend different teas to produce distinct teas according their brand. This tea processing and blending technique has been tried and refined for several generations. The delicate and subtle sense and technique of the tea wholesalers has been inherited through generations and has supported the Uji tea brand.



### Tea trivia

Omotesando Byodo-in street is designated as one of the tea aroma landscape 100.

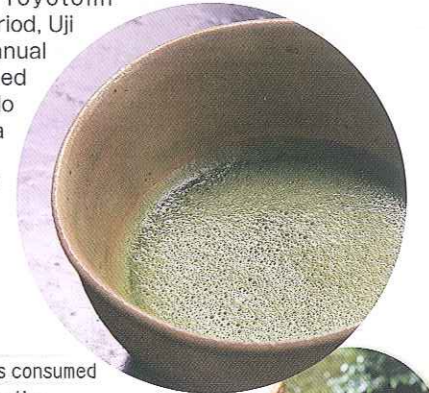


I'm Prince of Chacha Kingdom.

I'm the 88th Prince of Chacha Kingdom. With green tea tasting pacifier on my mouth, I am serving to spread the charm of Uji tea.

## History of Uji tea

It is believed the Buddhist master "Myoe" introduced Uji tea to the Uji area in the Kamakura era. When it came to the Muromachi era, great tea farms called "Shichimeien" and springs called "Shichimeisui" were established and Uji became a first-class tea producing area under the patronage of great samurais such as Oda Nobunaga and Toyotomi Hideyoshi. In the Edo period, Uji tea masters made an annual ceremonial journey called "Ochatsubodochu" to Edo (Tokyo) to present the tea to the Tokugawa shoguns, which made Uji tea a luxurious tea brand.



### Tea trivia

Initially tea was consumed by monks expecting its medicinal effects.



## Tea Town Unique events

### "Kencha-sai" (Tea offering festival)

In June when we show our gratitude for the picking of new tea leaves and in October when we offer tea to the royal family, we offer a prayer for the further development of the tea industry in temples and shrines and in front of stone monuments related to tea.

### "Ujicha-matsuri" (Uji tea festival)

Every early October this festival is held to show gratitude to three great benefactors of Uji tea - Eisai Zenshi, Myoe Shonin, and Sen no Rikyu - and to pray for the prosperity of Uji tea. On the Uji-bashi bridge called "San no Ma", where the Toyotomi Hideyoshi used to draw water from Uji-gawa river, we do same ritual that dips up water from the river just as they did.



Besides these festivals, other events related to tea such as "Hachijuhachiya" (88th day from the beginning of spring)-chatsumi (tea picking) gathering, "Harunodaichakai" (Spring big tea ceremony), National Sencha-do convention and so on are opened in several parts of Uji-city.



### Tea trivia

Toyotomi Hideyoshi visited Uji to see tea-leaf-picking. During the Edo period, it was popular to see tea-leaf picking here.

