

## Matcha green tea: Coming to a latte, smoothie or ice cream near you!



We kick off with an ingredient that's bright green, packed with insoluble fibers, antioxidants, and L-theanines, and starting to show up in some high-profile products from Häagen-Dazs ice cream to Jamba Juice smoothies.

But what's so special about Matcha green tea?

Typically tea is steeped in hot water - either on an industrial scale or in consumers' homes - so that many of its nutrients stay in the pot or teabag.

By contrast, Matcha - a ceremonial tea grown in Japan - is sold as a fine powder containing the entire leaf.

And this extra nutritional punch, coupled with the bright green color and health halo of green tea, is attracting manufacturers of baked goods, energy bars, chocolate, ice cream, lattes, smoothies, protein powders and cocktails, says AIYA, which harvests Matcha green tea in Japan, and distributes it all over the world.

But there are some challenges to overcome with ready-to drink beverages, as the powder can leave a layer of sediment, acknowledges the firm.



Some customers are not overly concerned about this, as consumers are becoming more accustomed to sediment in many natural products, and expect to shake some drinks before consumption, said James Oliveira, sales rep at AIYA America.

However, for firms that don't like it, AIYA has developed new grades of Matcha that combine it with other ingredients to render it more water soluble, he said.

One recent innovation, for example, is a new product combining Matcha and ADM's fibersol fiber ingredient to create a granulated powder you can drop into water for an instant cold green tea beverage, said Oliveira.

Right now it's in a 'Matcha to go' stick pack for consumers, but AIYA is hoping it could unlock new industrial-scale opportunities in ready-to-drink beverages, he added.

*"I'm amazed at how many people we meet at trade shows in the US recognize the name Matcha now, even if they don't know exactly what it is."*