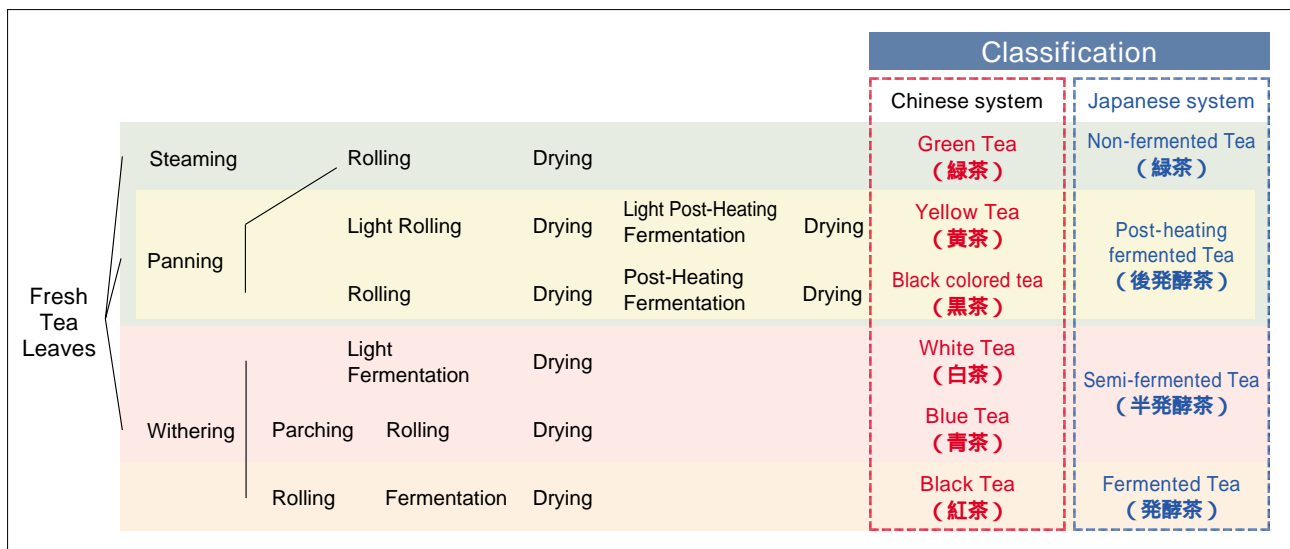




Classification of Tea in the World



There are different systems of tea classification in China and Japan. Chinese tea is basically divided into six groups: Lu-cha (Green tea, 綠茶), Huang-cha (Yellow tea, 黃茶), Hei-cha (Black colored tea, 黑茶, not Black-tea), Bai-cha (White tea, 白茶), Qing-cha (Blue tea, 青茶) and Hong-cha (Red colored tea, 紅茶, implied Black tea)

On the base of method of processing Japanese system classifies tea to three groups: Non-fermented tea, Semi-fermented tea and Fermented tea. In this text, we used Japanese classification system in addition to one more term, post-heating fermented tea.

The critical aspect is the way of activation of oxidizing enzymes (e.g. polyphenol oxidase and peroxidase) contained in the leaves. During fermentation procedure, oxidizing enzymes become active, result in changing the color of tea from green to brown.

Green tea, non-fermented tea, is manufactured by the following procedures. After being plucked, fresh leaves of tea immediately treated with high temperature (100 in the steam method or 300-350

in the pan-fired method) in the factory in order to inactivation of oxidizing enzymes of leaves. The color is undoubtedly green as its name, because inactivated enzymes do not break down the chlorophyll. Green tea making process will be explained later in detail (see page 24)

In the first step of processing of semi-fermented

tea (Oolong tea) or fermented tea (Black tea), the leaves are withered, rolled, and incubated for 5 to 20 hours without applying high temperature. During this step, so called fermentation process, oxidizing enzymes are especially active and change tannin and other substances in raw leaves to the oxidized forms. As a result, the color of the leaves become typically brown or red and their taste and aroma enhanced as in Black tea and Oolong tea.

Green tea, Oolong tea and Black tea can be produced from all of tea cultivars by each manufacturing process. Of course, among cultivars, we know the difference in amino acid and tannin contents. Generally, the leaves containing much amino acid and small quantity of tannin are suitable for green tea. Varieties rich in tannin, on the other hand, are very good for Black tea and Oolong tea. In view of this, breeders for Green tea, Oolong tea, and Black tea intensively produce many cultivars.

Taste of post-heating fermented tea has a marked bitterless. After tea leaves are plucked, panned, dried, they are pile up during a few weeks (post-heating fermentation) and finally dried. This type of tea tastes characteristically an odor like lactic acid drinks, produced by microorganisms. Puercha in China is most famous and a longer stored one is more expensive. Tokushima's Awabancha, Kouchi's Goishicha and Toyama's Kurocha are also post-heating fermented teas in Japan but slightly in quantities.

Four Major Type of Tea



Green tea Oolong tea Black tea



Non-fermented tea(Japanese green tea)



Fermented tea(Black tea)



Semi-fermented tea(Oolong tea)



Post-heating fermented Tea(Cake-Tea)

Unique Tea in the World

Cake tea is unique form, manufactured over than one thousand years ago in China. A method of preparing this tea was described by Lu Yu in the first book on tea, published in China about 780 AD. The cake tea described by Lu Yu was wrapped in bamboo for the sake of transportation.



Cake-Tea wrapped in bamboo



Small Cake-Tea



Flower shape (Green tea)



Cake-Tea wrapped in fruit peel



Typical cake tea