

# Obubu Tea - Houjicha (Dark Roast)

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My journey through the world of Japanese teas led me this time to houjicha. For those whom houjicha is just as new as it was to me I have written a brief overview in the next section.



*Houjicha liquor*

*Houjicha is a roasted green tea from Japan. The roasting process is the reason why houjicha doesn't look and taste like a green tea at all but more like a Pu-erh or maybe a black tea. This tea is usually made from bancha but sometimes also sencha or kukicha is used. As caffeine and catechine are degraded by the roasting process the tea is very mild and therefore not suited as stimulant.*



Houjicha leaves

Houjicha (Dark Roast) of Obubu Tea is, as the name suggests, strong roasted. The fragrance is woody and slightly reminds me of tobacco, pipe tobacco. That brings back memories of school days when I was sent by Mr. Haven, the janitor of the school, to buy pipe tobacco. That wasn't a problem back in those days and surprisingly, we have all survived that, sort of. But it had to be Borkum Riff Ultra Light and no other. However, there was always a nice tip in for the delivery.

Back to tea: I steeped the tea at about 90 ° for about a minute, maybe a little more. The tobacco scent was persisting in the infused liquor too. In addition taste of dark chocolate and coffee joined the tobacco taste. Again, I see parallels to certain Pu-erh teas. Toasty and smoky flavors are only subtle while earthy tones are predominant. The liquor is shimmering chestnut brown in the cup - an unusual color for a green tea.

As one can see I used a gaiwan to steep the houjicha. Of course, a kyusu or a dobin pot would be more suitable for a houjicha. But, since I always need to adjust to a new "tool" and I only have a 10g sample from the houjicha I rather don't experiment.



Houjicha in gaiwan

The second infusion is much brighter than the first. This may be because I have exceeded the recommended steeping time during the first infusion. Also in the second infusion the woody, tobacco like and chocolate flavors outweigh but, now they are milder. The absence of any tartness or bitterness is still confusing me even though it is a key feature of houjicha.



Houjicha leaves after steeping

The third infusion is similar to the second one is rather unspectacular. I notice that the tea runs out of juice slowly. Yet, I taste a new nuance - a hint of Indian masala chai. Though not quite as spicy and also the milky taste is missing. Obubu Tea recommends infusing the used leaves overnight in the fridge in order to make iced tea and get the rest out of the leaves. I will try this next time and also a the recommended houjicha latte sounds interesting.