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INKATERRA'S TEA ROUTE

Much like in many cultures, tea plays an important role in Peru. Most famous for its coca tea, the herbal infusion, also known as mate de coca, is famed for relieving altitude sickness, and thus is popular amongst travellers who are unused to the Peruvian heights.

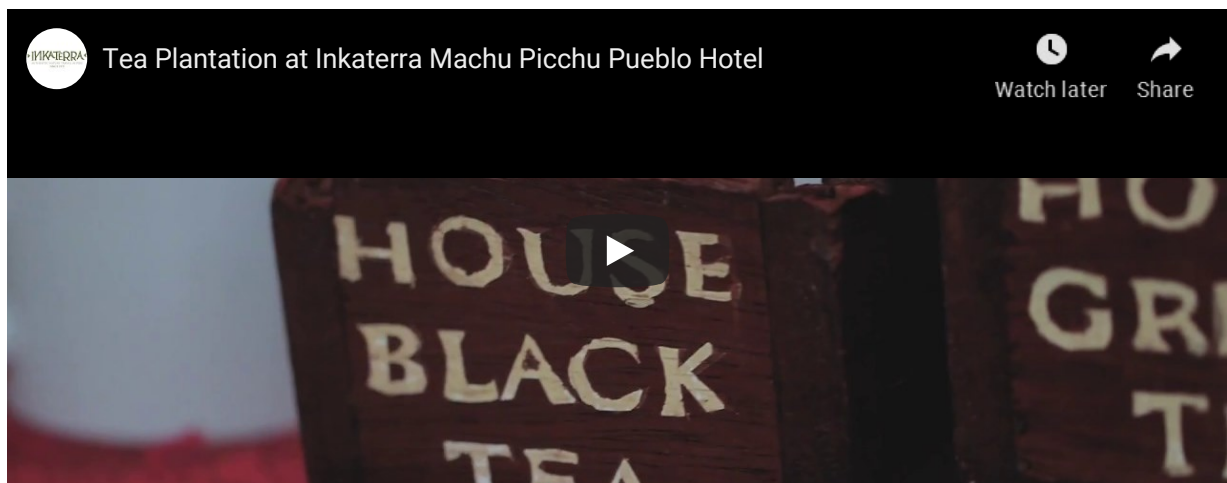


At Inkaterra, guests are able to experience even more types of tea, as we cultivate our own leaves at our Inkaterra Machu Picchu Pueblo Hotel organic tea plantation. Although tea is produced all over the world, from Japan to India, the only variety that has successfully adapted to Peruvian soil is the Chinese *camellia sinensis*, and

therefore this is what we grow at Inkaterra. All of the tea we grow is free from chemicals and organic, allowing our guests to enjoy the highest quality of flavour when staying at our hotel.



The process of picking and collecting the leaves takes place over the course of a day when the new shoots begin to grow. The age of the new leaves (which must be between 25 and 30 days) and the number of leaves taken from each branch are the determining factors in the quality of the tea being produced. For example, 'Premium' tea is the result of picking only one leaf from a branch, 'Gold' tea takes three leaves whilst 'Standard' tea uses five leaves from the same branch.



The leaves then begin the wilting process to soften them into more pliable sheets ready for rolling, a process which takes place either by hand or using a machine. The action of rolling not only forms the tea leaves into strips, but it also causes essential oils and sap from inside the leaf to be released, further enhancing the flavour of the tea. The rolled leaves are then placed in ceramic bowls and kept in a humid environment at a constant temperature of 22 degrees celsius for a period of

12 hours.

By drying the leaves, we are able to stop the fermentation process at a particular point, however, getting the timing right is essential. Not drying the leaves enough can result in a tea leaf that has a high water content, and therefore runs the risk of getting mildew. Leaves that have been dried too much are likely to lose a lot of their flavour as well as developing large areas of insolubility within the leaf itself.



The last stage of the process is the final selection that takes place after the leaves have been dried. The leaves are passed through sieves of various scales in order to separate them, before being ranked based on size and appearance.

By making simple changes to the processing methods, tea producers are able to create various different tea types from the same plant, such as Black, Green, Red White or Blue teas. At the Inkaterra plantation, we use our leaves to produce Black and Green tea.





At Inkaterra Machu Picchu Pueblo, guests are able to visit our organic tea plantation and tea house to discover for themselves the wonders of the traditional tea making and harvesting process. From taking part in the pressing process, to enjoying a glass of fresh hot or iced-tea at the Tea House in the hotel lobby, at our main restaurant or at [Cafe Inkaterra](#), there are many ways for guests to get involved in the Inkaterra tea journey.

For more information on all of the hotels, please visit www.inkaterra.com



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