



Gugijacha

Wolfberry Tea | 구기자차



<https://koreancuisine.net>

A soothing and restorative traditional Korean tea made by gently simmering dried goji berries (wolfberries). Often sweetened with a touch of honey or sugar to taste, this mild, earthy, and naturally sweet tea is deeply rooted in traditional Korean wellness. Long-term consumption of *gugija* is highly regarded in Korean culture for brightening the eyes, improving vision, and aiding in anemia prevention due to its rich, nutrient-dense profile.

 **Total: 35 mins** | **Prep: 5 mins** | **Cook: 30 mins** |  **Very Easy** |  **Mild, Earthy & Sweet** |  **Traditional Wellness Tea**

Ingredients (3-4 servings)

- **Main Ingredients:** 20g dried goji berries (about 2 tbsp, *gugija*), 1 liter water
- **Optional Sweetener:** Honey, sugar, or agave nectar to taste

Substitutes & Notes

- **Honey** → Agave nectar, maple syrup, or regular sugar for a fully vegan option.

Allergy Information

- **Warning:** If using honey, do not serve to infants under 1 year old due to the risk of botulism. (*Fully Vegan & Vegetarian-friendly if using sugar/syrup*)

Equipment

- Kettle or Small Saucepan, Fine-mesh Strainer

Cooking Instructions

1. **Washing:** Place the dried goji berries in a fine-mesh strainer and rinse them gently under cold running water to remove any surface dust.
2. **Boiling:** In a kettle or saucepan, combine 1 liter of water and the rinsed goji berries. Bring to a rolling boil over high heat.
3. **Simmering (Steeping):** Once boiling, reduce the heat to low. Let it simmer gently for 20–30 minutes until the flavor is fully extracted and the water turns a beautiful warm orange or reddish hue.
4. **Finishing & Serving:** Turn off the heat and strain out the berries. Pour the hot tea into cups and stir in honey or sugar to taste. (You can also let it cool completely and store it in the fridge to enjoy as a refreshing chilled beverage.)

Cooking & Pairing Tips / Health Benefits

- **Flavor Enhancement (Dry-Roasting):** For a deeper, nuttier flavor, lightly dry-roast the goji berries in a pan over medium heat for 1–2 minutes (without any oil) before boiling them.
- **Superfood for Eyes & Blood:** Goji berries are globally recognized as a superfood. They are packed with antioxidants like zeaxanthin, which protects the retina, and are rich in iron and Vitamin C, naturally supporting eye health and preventing anemia.
- **Zero Waste:** Don't throw away the plump, simmered berries! You can toss them into your rice cooker when making rice for an extra nutritional boost, or blend them into your morning smoothie.

Nutrition Facts (Estimated)

Total Content : Approx. 250ml (1 serving, un-sweetened)

Calories : 15 kcal

– Sodium : 5mg

– Total Carbohydrate : 3.5g

– Sugar : 1.5g

– Total Fat : 0.0g

– Saturated Fat : 0.0g

– Cholesterol : 0.0mg

– Protein : 0.5g

– Calcium : 10.0mg

(Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet and standard Korean nutritional reference values)

The Serene Elixir of Clarity: A Symphony of Sun-Ripened Berries and Gentle Heat

Gugijacha (Wolfberry Tea) is a pure aesthetic embodiment of Korean traditional tea culture and herbal gastronomy, where dried crimson berries surrender their concentrated vitality to the gentle embrace of warm water. The earthly energy and patient seasons stored within the berry's taut skin slowly unfurl through gentle decoction, transforming clear water into a luminous, ruby-toned elixir.

The delicate, roasted sweetness billowing softly from the teacup quiets the turbulent mind long before the liquid graces the lips. While the initial sip is remarkably clean and pristine, the lingering finish reveals a profound, grounding umami. Lightly kissed with honey to taste, it wraps the senses in velvety warmth. Ancient wisdom celebrating its power to brighten the eyes and nourish the blood transcends medicinal functionality, offering an authentic philosophy of seasonal wellness that revitalizes both body and soul.

True gastronomy does not dwell in fleeting stimulation; it flourishes in the serene

moment when a slow-simmered brew restores internal tranquility and crystalline clarity. Holding the warm cup with both hands and partaking in this vibrant infusion today is a quiet ritual of renewal—clearing away modern exhaustion and replenishing the spirit with gentle, enduring vitality.

Editor's Review

1. An Elegant Sensory Cadence of Translucent Ruby Hue, Mellow Earthy Notes, and Silky Honey

The moment the luminous, ruby-red tea coats the palate, a gentle, roasted berry sweetness with an almost imperceptible tang elegantly awakens the taste buds. As the silky, viscous glide of natural honey softens the brew's lean body, it slides effortlessly down the throat, leaving a pristine, refreshing finish that orchestrates an endlessly comforting and multi-dimensional sensory pleasure.

2. Slow Decoction Thermodynamics and the Aqueous Extraction of Betaine and Carotenoids

Gugijacha represents an exacting study in gentle thermal extraction, differing from rapid leaf infusions by utilizing sustained, low-heat decoction to soften the dense cellular matrix of dried wolfberries. This controlled boiling systematically leaches water-soluble polysaccharides, betaine, and essential minerals—including iron (concentrated up to 14.7mg per 100g in dried berry tea)—without thermal degradation. Concurrently, lipid-soluble pigments like zeaxanthin form a delicate colloidal dispersion, securing absolute optical clarity and a radiant crimson hue.

3. Meditative Respite in a Teacup and the Grounding Solace of Inner Clarity

Stepping away from the noisy pace of modern life to sit before a steaming cup of wolfberry tea serves as an intimate sanctuary for mental and physical recovery. Savoring this time-honored elixir—celebrated for generations as a restorative tonic to brighten one's vision and purify the blood—washes away daily fatigue, granting a timeless refuge of stillness, emotional rejuvenation, and lucid vitality.

