KOREAN CUISINE

Insamcha

Ginseng Tea | 인삼차



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A quintessential Korean herbal wellness tonic made by carefully simmering ginseng roots with sweet dried jujubes, perfectly balanced with a generous spoonful of honey. It boasts a remarkably deep, earthy aroma and a complex bittersweet flavor profile. Highly revered in traditional Eastern medicine, ginseng is packed with ginsenosides (saponins) that actively boost the immune system, combat fatigue, and replenish lost energy. Its warming properties naturally stimulate blood circulation and soothe the digestive system, making this cozy tea an exceptional remedy for revitalizing both the body and mind.

⏱️ **Total: 45 mins | Prep: 5 mins | Cook: 40 mins |** 🍳 **Easy |** 🟤 **Earthy, Bittersweet & Cozy |** 🌿 **Ultimate Wellness Tonic**

Ingredients (3-4 servings)

- **Main Ingredients:** 1–2 fresh ginseng roots (or 20g dried ginseng root), 4–5 dried jujubes (*daechu*, Korean red dates), 1.5 liters water
- **Sweetener:** Honey 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

- Glass, Ceramic, or Stainless Steel Pot (Strictly avoid cast iron or aluminum), Small brush (like a toothbrush) for cleaning, Knife, Cutting Board

Cooking Instructions

1. **Washing the Ginseng:** If using fresh ginseng, gently but thoroughly scrub the root with a small brush under cold running water to remove any dirt hidden between the fine rootlets. Cut off and discard the firm top crown (the "head" of the root), as it can sometimes cause slight nausea.
2. **Prepping the Ingredients:** Slice the cleaned ginseng diagonally into thin pieces (about 2–3mm thick) to maximize flavor extraction. Wash the dried jujubes well and make a small slit in each one to help release their natural sweetness into the broth.

3. **Boiling:** In a glass or ceramic pot, combine the 1.5 liters of water, sliced ginseng, and jujubes. Bring to a rolling boil over high heat.
4. **Simmering:** Once boiling, reduce the heat to low. Let it simmer gently for 30–40 minutes to fully extract the earthy ginsenosides and the sweet aroma of the jujubes into the water.
5. **Finishing & Serving:** Turn off the heat. Pour the deeply infused tea into warm mugs. Stir in a generous amount of honey to beautifully mellow out the ginseng's natural bitterness, and enjoy while delightfully hot.

💡 Cooking & Pairing Tips / Health Benefits

- **The Instant Powder Method:** If you don't have the time to simmer raw roots, you can easily use high-quality Korean ginseng powder! Simply mix 1 teaspoon of fine ginseng powder and a spoonful of honey into a mug of hot water, stir well, and you have an instant, highly nutritious cup of *Insam-cha*.
- **The Perfect Synergy:** Boiling ginseng entirely on its own can result in a harsh, overly bitter brew. Adding vitamin-rich dried jujubes and natural honey not only softens the intense flavor but also creates a powerful nutritional synergy that provides immediate energy to a fatigued body.
- **Warmth & Circulation:** Ginseng naturally possesses "warming" properties. Drinking this tea actively promotes metabolism and blood circulation, making it an incredibly effective natural remedy for people who often suffer from cold hands, cold feet, or poor digestion.

Nutrition Facts (Estimated)

Total Content : Approx. 250ml (1 serving, incl. 1 tbsp honey)
Calories : 65 kcal
– Sodium : 1mg
– Total Carbohydrate : 16.0g
– Sugar : 14.0g
– Total Fat : 0.0g
– Saturated Fat : 0.0g
– Cholesterol : 0.0mg
– Protein : 0.2g
– Calcium : 10.0mg

*Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet and standard Korean nutritional reference values
**Nutritional values are calculated based on the original ingredients, not substitutes

The Primordial Breath of the Golden Root: A Majestic Symphony of Ginsenosides and Honeyed Warmth

Insamcha (Ginseng Tea) represents the most revered and majestic zenith of traditional Korean restorative gastronomy (*Eumcheongnyu* | *Bohyak*), where cultivated ginseng—having quietly absorbed the primordial energy of the soil and weathering the seasons—unfurls its noble vitality into the soothing embrace of warm water. Whether prepared through the patient decoction of whole roots or by whisking micro-milled powder into hot water, this ancient root transforms into a profound culinary elixir when married to the mellow, crimson fruitiness of dried jujubes and the velvety gloss of raw honey.

The earthy, forest-floor bouquet and crystalline woody fragrance billowing from the ceramic cup instantly clear the senses, breathing pure vitality deep into the respiratory tract before the liquid even touches the lips. The initial sip introduces a regal, grounding bitterness powered by active saponins; yet, as it glides down the throat, the rounded sweetness of stewed jujubes and the nectarous body of honey gently embrace the medicinal sharpness, radiating a profound wave of internal warmth throughout the entire body.

True gastronomy does not dwell in fleeting artificial sweetness; it flourishes in the holistic wisdom of drawing forth nature’s most potent medicinal properties to restore bodily equilibrium and fortify immunity. Holding a steaming cup of Insamcha today is an empowering healing ritual—melting away deep-seated chills and exhaustion while replenishing the spirit with unyielding vitality and enduring solace.

Editor's Review

1. A Noble Sensory Cadence of Resolute Ginseng Bitterness, Jujube Fruitiness, and Honeyed Velvet

The moment the teacup nears the lips, a magnificent wave of deep woodland aromatics and piquant root essences surrounds the senses, gently diffusing tension. Taking a sip releases a pronounced, medicinal bitterness and profound savory depth that coats the tongue, swiftly rounded out by the gentle tang of simmered jujubes and the silky glide of honey. This dynamic interplay softens the sharp saponin edges into an endlessly comforting, multi-layered sensory experience that lingers gracefully on the palate.

2. Controlled Decoction Thermodynamics and Ginsenoside–Acidic Polysaccharide Bioactivation Mechanics

Insamcha represents an exacting study in phytochemical extraction and food thermodynamics. Gentle heating systematically releases precious ginsenosides (such as Rg1 and Rb1) and immune-enhancing acidic polysaccharides from the root's dense cellular structure without thermal degradation. The liberated saponins act as natural surface-active agents, while the water-soluble pectins from dried jujubes and the simple monosaccharides from honey form a molecular

buffer across the taste buds. This matrix moderates mucosal stimulation, accelerates peripheral vasodilation, and optimizes the bioabsorption of essential adaptogens.

3. The Restorative Solace of Ancestral Herbal Wisdom and the Grounding Sanctuary of Vital Warmth

Encountering a steaming bowl of ginseng tea when winter chills set in or physical energy flags serves as an intimate sanctuary for deep systemic recovery. Revered for millennia as the ultimate restorative tonic to warm the core, stimulate circulation, and fortify natural defenses, partaking in this honest, gold-hued nectar washes away modern fatigue, granting a timeless sanctuary of stillness, physical revitalization, and lucid vitality.



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