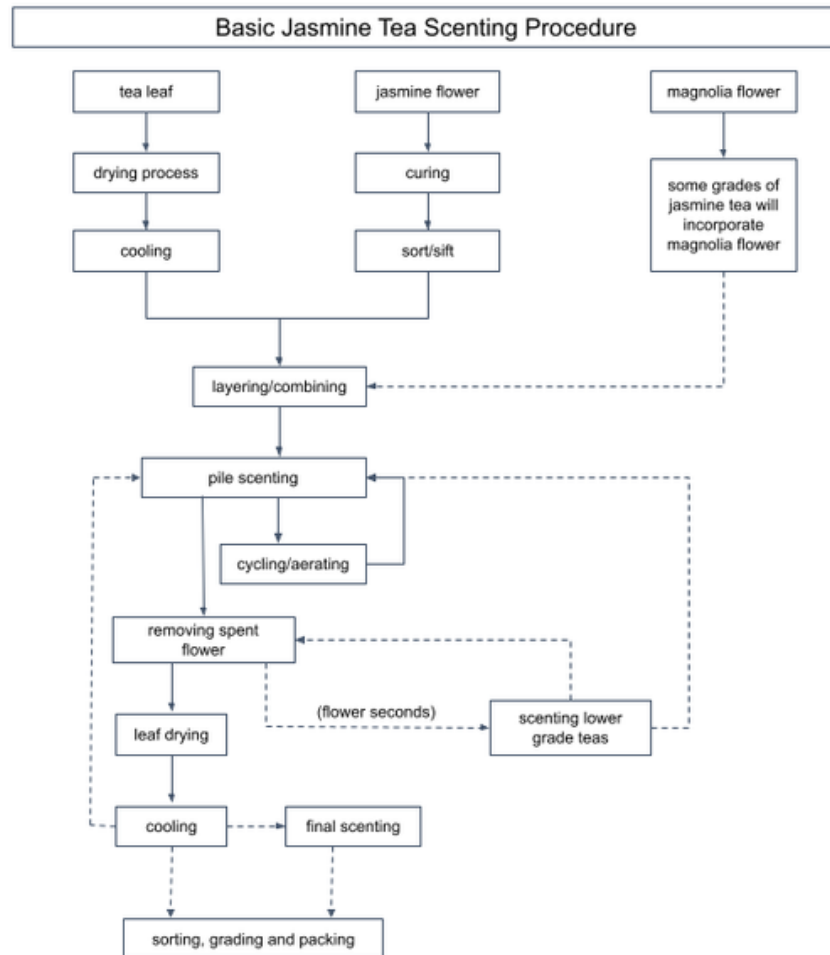


Creating popular and great tasting jasmine green tea requires more steps than making some other teas. The process involves bringing together fresh green tea and fresh picked jasmine flowers within a narrow window of opportunity. At its most basic description, jasmine green tea combines tea leaves (usually green tea) and jasmine flowers, but the technical process is so much more.



The process includes multiple steps:

TEA LEAVES

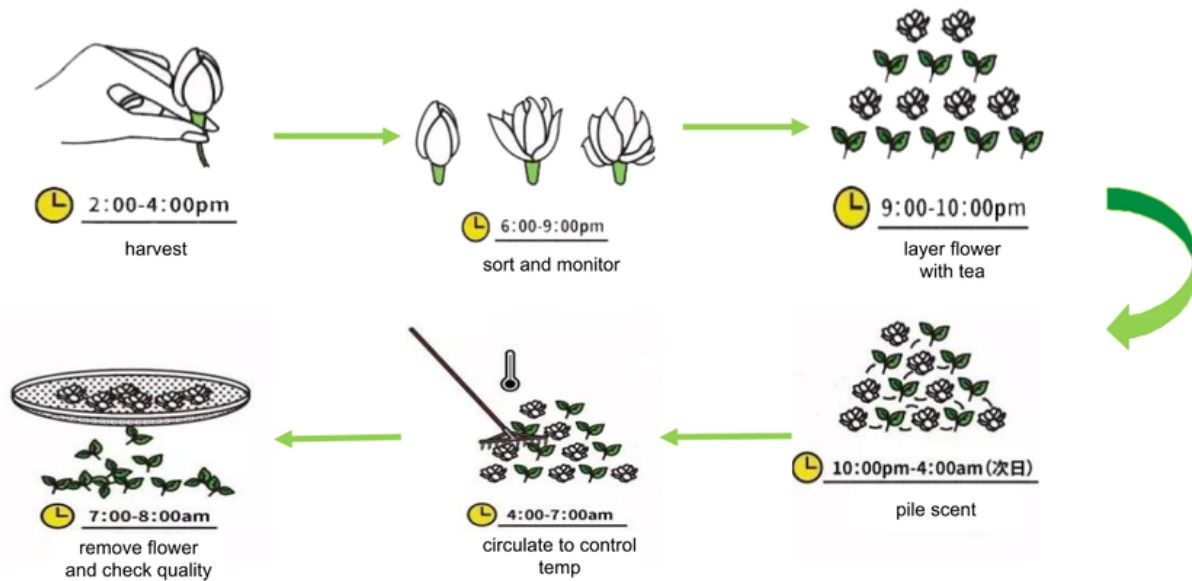
Green tea is harvested, dried, and allowed to cool to room temperature. The tea leaves' standard moisture content may range between 4% and 5%.

JASMINE FLOWERS

Jasmine generally blooms between June and September, and the majority grows in Fujian, Guangxi and Guangdong provinces. Hengxian County, Guangxi, has been dubbed the world's jasmine capital.

The optimal time for harvest occurs around 2pm, which means that optimal blooming begins around 9pm and often lasts until about 3am. The ideal bud is just starting to open; unopened buds and fully opened blossoms do not release as much (or any) fragrance.

Once the jasmine has been harvested, it is monitored and maintained in controlled temperature and humidity to better assure the right conditions for blooming and fragrance release. While in this “curing” stage, it is also sorted.



LAYERING & PILING

When the jasmine flowers begin to blossom and release their fragrance, alternating layers of tea leaves and flowers are spread out and placed one atop of the other to a combined height usually between 10 and 15 inches. Once the tea leaves and flowers are spread and distributed, they are then piled 4-6 feet in diameter for 4-6 hours depending on the target temperature and moisture conditions. During this time, the blossoms bloom and release their scent, and the tea leaves absorb the fragrance. The temperature and humidity are monitored to make sure the blooms remain open. The piles are also turned or circulated to better distribute the fragrance while also managing the temperature and humidity inside the piles.

After piling for 4-6 hours, the jasmine flowers have released all of their aroma and begin to yellow. The spent blossoms are filtered out, and the tea leaves are air dried as needed. At this point, the process can diverge depending on the quality and intensity of jasmine aroma desired. Lower quality jasmine tea may repeat the piling process fewer times, and they may go through one or all of the piling cycles with re-used jasmine flowers or other flowers (like a variety of magnolia flower). Higher quality jasmine tea will repeat the piling process with fresh jasmine flowers for a total of as many as 7 times. The piling time duration may vary by up to 2 hours depending on the number of times it is piled.

Once the piling cycles are completed and the leaves are air dried for the final time, the jasmine tea may be graded and packed directly, or it may go through one final scenting process using fewer jasmine flowers. This final scenting is intended to freshen up the fragrance without increasing the moisture content of the tea leaves.