



Five Flowers Tea, or Wu hua cha 五花茶 is a traditional Chinese folk tea, enjoyed especially during the summer months by Cantonese people in the hot and humid south. Sweet and slightly cold, its' main TCM functions are to clear heat and toxins, drain dampness, promote urination, cool blood, and alleviate summertime wind-heat.

There is no official version of the recipe in the traditional Chinese pharmacopoeia, but most herbal tea shops in Asia use five kinds of flowers: Honeysuckle, Chrysanthemum, Japanese Pagoda tree, Kapok, and Frangipani. In herbal clinics, the tea is modified for individual prescriptions based on the drinker's constitution. Modifications can include Roses, Magnolia, Dandelion and Self-heal flowers as well as non-flower herbs such as Mulberry leaves, Hedyotis diffusa, and Bamboo leaves.

Try these Summer Tea ingredients:

Honeysuckle / *Lonicera japonica* / Jin yin hua

Chrysanthemum / *Chrysanthemum morifolium* / Ju hua (white is recommended for lighter taste)

Japanese Pagoda tree / *Sophora japonica* / Huai hua

Kapok / *Gossypium malabarica* / Mu mian hua

Frangipani / *Plumeria rubra* / Ji dan hua

Roses / *Rosa rugosa* / Mei gui hua

Magnolia / *Magnolia denudata* / Xin yi hua

Dandelion / *Taraxacum mongolicum* / Pu gong ying

Self-heal / *Prunella vulgaris* / Xia ku cao

Mulberry leaves / *Morus alba* / Sang ye

Hedyotis diffusa / Bai hua she she cao

Bamboo leaves / *Lophatherum gracile* / Dan zhu ye

Hawthorne fruit / *Crataegus pinnatifida* / Shan zha

Goji fruit / *Lycium barbarum* / Gou qi zi

Brewing Instructions

Summer Tea

Whatever combination of herbs you prefer, simply:

Soak about 2 gram each of the dried flowers for 5-10 minutes in a tea pot or mug

Drain water and pour 8-10 ounces of freshly boiled water over flowers

Cover and let steep for 10-15 minutes

Strain out flowers

Sweeten to taste

Can be enjoyed hot or put in fridge to cool into a refreshing, cold drink.

Forage your own ingredients!

Depending upon the region where you live, some flowers and herbs can be found fresh in your garden or on a hike. You may consider harvesting them for your tea, but be sure that they are an edible species, have not been sprayed with dangerous pesticides, and wash thoroughly before using.