

The One Tea I Recommend Above All Others: Yerba Maté

By Robert Ferguson

For years, I've been a fan of both hot and cold teas. However, over time, my enthusiasm has deepened -- especially for hot teas -- due to their **medicinal and health-promoting benefits**. During the last couple of years, as I began reformulating our popular **"6 Day Detox Drop"** program, I revisited the world of teas with a clear purpose: to **identify one tea I would recommend above the rest**.

After extensive research and personal use, I've confidently landed on **yerba maté**.

Now, let me be clear—I'm not saying green tea or other herbal teas aren't beneficial. Many of them offer impressive health benefits. But if I had to choose only one tea to drink and recommend based on its versatility, science-backed advantages, and long-standing tradition, **yerba maté would be my pick**.

In this article, I'll share exactly why this centuries-old tea is such a standout, and how it supports everything from **appetite control and metabolic health to inflammation reduction and sustained energy**.

A Brief History of Yerba Maté: The Drink of the Guaraní

Yerba maté has been consumed for hundreds of years, long before modern science confirmed its health benefits. Indigenous to South America, the plant was revered by the **Guaraní people**, who believed it was a gift from the gods. They chewed the leaves or brewed them into a hot infusion to boost energy, enhance digestion, and promote healing.

In the 16th century, **Spanish Jesuit missionaries** learned about yerba maté from the Guaraní and began cultivating it across the region. This led to yerba maté becoming known as **"Jesuit tea,"** and its popularity spread throughout **Argentina, Paraguay, Uruguay, and southern Brazil**. Today, it remains a cultural staple in these countries and is now gaining global recognition as a natural, functional beverage with wide-ranging health benefits.

Yerba Maté and GLP-1: A Natural Boost

GLP-1 (glucagon-like peptide-1) is a hormone your body naturally releases after eating, and it plays a key role in:

- Slowing gastric emptying (which helps you feel fuller longer)
- Stimulating insulin secretion
- Reducing appetite
- Lowering blood sugar levels

Pharmaceutical GLP-1 drugs like Ozempic and Wegovy are widely used for weight loss and diabetes, but they come with side effects and high costs. Yerba maté offers a **natural way to support GLP-1 activity**, without those downsides.

How Does Yerba Maté Help?

Scientific studies have found that yerba maté can **stimulate GLP-1 secretion** in the intestines. This is likely due to its rich polyphenol content and compounds like **chlorogenic acids, caffeoyl derivatives, and saponins**, which may interact with gut cells to promote GLP-1 release and glucose regulation (Kawada, 2018).

In one study, overweight participants who consumed yerba maté experienced **reduced waist circumference, decreased appetite, and increased fat metabolism**—all indicators of enhanced GLP-1 function (Andersen et al., 2015).

Rich in Polyphenols: A Natural Anti-Inflammatory Shield

Yerba maté is rich in **polyphenols**, powerful plant-based antioxidants known to fight inflammation and oxidative stress. Key polyphenols found in yerba maté include:

- **Chlorogenic acid**
- **Quercetin**
- **Rutin**
- **Caffeic acid**

These compounds support cellular health by reducing damage from free radicals and promoting mitochondrial function. They also help **protect omega-3 fatty acids from oxidation**, which enhances their stability and bioavailability in the body.

Energy, Focus, and Mood—Without the Crash

Yerba maté naturally contains **moderate caffeine**, as well as theobromine and theophylline—compounds that act as smooth stimulants:

- Promoting alertness without causing jitters
- Supporting sustained energy levels
- Enhancing focus and mental clarity
- Elevating mood and motivation

Unlike coffee, yerba maté offers a **clean, long-lasting energy boost** with less risk of energy crashes or overstimulation.

Other Health Benefits of Yerba Maté

In addition to GLP-1 activation and antioxidant protection, yerba maté may also:

- ✓ Improve insulin sensitivity
- ✓ Support fat oxidation and thermogenesis
- ✓ Reduce LDL oxidation (a key factor in heart disease)
- ✓ Support liver detoxification
- ✓ Improve gut health and microbial balance
- ✓ Enhance exercise performance and endurance

How to Enjoy Yerba Maté

Yerba maté can be enjoyed in a variety of forms:

- **Traditional gourd and bombilla** (metal straw) for a ritual experience
- **Loose-leaf maté** brewed like loose tea
- **Tea bags**, which are convenient and still offer great benefits
- **Cold brew maté** over ice for a refreshing twist
- **Ready-to-drink** bottled or canned varieties (just watch for added sugars)

Tip: If using tea bags, steep for 5–10 minutes and consider using two bags for a more potent brew.

Best Brands Available in the U.S.

If you're shopping in the U.S., here are a few high-quality yerba maté tea bag brands to look for:

- **Guayakí Organic Yerba Maté** – Fair Trade, organic, and widely available
- **ECOTEAS Unsmoked Yerba Maté** – Organic, smoke-free drying process
- **Union Yerba Maté** – Traditional flavor, affordable
- **Pajarito Yerba Maté** – Bold, authentic taste and high quality

These brands offer both convenience and potency, especially when prepared properly.

Final Thoughts

Yerba maté is more than a drink—it's a tradition, a source of natural energy, and a powerful health tonic. Whether you're looking to **boost GLP-1**, reduce inflammation, enhance metabolism, or simply find a better alternative to coffee, yerba maté is worth considering.

If I could only drink one tea for health, it would be this one. I hope this article helps you understand why, and maybe even inspires you to give yerba maté a try.

References

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