Our cigarettes often contain different types of tobacco leaf from different countries, blended for aroma, taste and character to meet smokers' taste preferences.

Three main types of tobacco are used in cigarettes: Virginia, Burley and Oriental.

**Virginia or Flue-cured tobacco** is named after the US state where it was first cultivated. It is also called 'bright tobacco' because of the yellow to orange colour it achieves during curing. It grows particularly well in subtropical regions with light rainfall, such as Georgia, Florida and the Carolinas in the USA, Southern Brazil and Zimbabwe. Cigarette brands like Power use exclusively Virginia tobacco. Virginia blends contain only flue-cured Virginia tobaccos.

**Burley** is a slightly lighter green than Virginia. It requires heavier soils and more fertilizer than Virginia. Some of the best Burley is grown in US states such as Maryland and Kentucky, in Central America, Malawi, Uganda and Indonesia. After being air-cured, it turns brown with virtually no sugar, giving it an almost cigar-like taste. Along with Virginia and Oriental tobacco, it makes up an American Blend for cigarettes, as used in brands like Vivier or Viva. Typically, air-cured tobacco is treated with sugars such as molasses or liquorice, and the blend may also contain added flavours.

**Oriental** is the smallest and hardiest of all tobacco types, grown in the hot summer of the Balkans, Turkey and the Middle East. These conditions and a high planting density create an aromatic flavour, enhanced by sun-curing, as in a traditional Turkish cigarette. An Oriental blend can contain up to 100% sun cured tobaccos.

Several factors can influence the smoking characteristics, including the variety of plant, how it is harvested and influences such as soil, climate and weather. All these can affect the tobacco’s taste and aroma.

**Grades of leaf in blends:**

One tobacco plant can produce several grades of leaf. For example, the leaves at the top of the plant are more exposed to the sun than the ones at the bottom.
Grades are generally determined by a leaf's position on the plant, its thickness, aroma, graininess and colour (lemon, orange and mahogany are the most typical) and the quality and maturity of the plant. The quality of the various grades is determined by the leaf’s ability to withstand manufacturing, as well as its sensory properties, which can result in taste differences, from a harsh experience to a smoother, richer taste.

Leaf is bought from growers and sent for threshing, which separates the stem and lamina parts of the leaves. It is sorted by grade and each grade is stored to mature for three months to two years to allow for taste variations in the final product.

A typical Virginia style of cigarette:

Cigarette brands offer many different tastes and looks. Like many consumer goods, an important difference among brands is based on the different recipes – the way the various grades of tobacco are mixed to make different tastes. Various blend recipes are used to meet the vast range of adult smokers’ preferences.

All the grades of lamina are carefully blended and cut to ensure consistent smoking characteristics. Cut stem is then added to the lamina to produce the final blend.
Factors Influencing Smoking Quality

Soil  Climate  Cultivation Practices  Leaf Variety

Field Of Tobacco

Harvesting And Curing

Flue-Cured Grades

Different Grades

Basic Blends

Final Blend Including Stem And Expanded Tobacco

Final Cigarette Design And Its Components