

TEA 101



Tea is a common beverage made from steeping processed *Camellia sinensis* leaves with hot water. Numerous studies show that it might have some health benefits. However, all teas are different, and some might offer more benefits than the others.

Use this guide to learn about the hidden benefits in each tea type and the brewing methods for a perfect cuppa.



I'm a Tea guy...

Yes... I drink coffee daily (black with no sugar or cream the way it was meant to be) however, I love tea as well. I just think its relaxing to pour hot water over a bag of tea and steep as the aroma starts to fill the room. I don't know the formal Japanese Tea Ceremony, so I pretty much made up my own.

So obviously, tea is good for you right? All natural plants leaves and all that. Well as we know all plants are not necessarily beneficial for us to ingest, some are in fact dangerous and some can be either, safe or detrimental based on the concentration and dosage of the active ingredients.

We do know however, that there are common teas that we hear about often, and then there are those that Grammy made for us when we were kids, that you won't find readily at your local Coffee shop.

So the benefits of tea vastly varies, from treating the common cold to what some might consider as very bold claims of curing disease. As always with things of this nature it is best that you do your diligence and make your conclusions based on available information and personal experience.

We will cover a few of the commonly known teas below, and one or two that are not so common.

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CHOOSING GOOD TEA

Tea made in the traditional way (called the orthodox method) retains the sophistication that natural soil, and climatic factors induce. Tea packed at source, retaining its freshness and in particular tea that maintains the purity of its origin – single origin, single region or single estate tea – is best.

STORING TEA

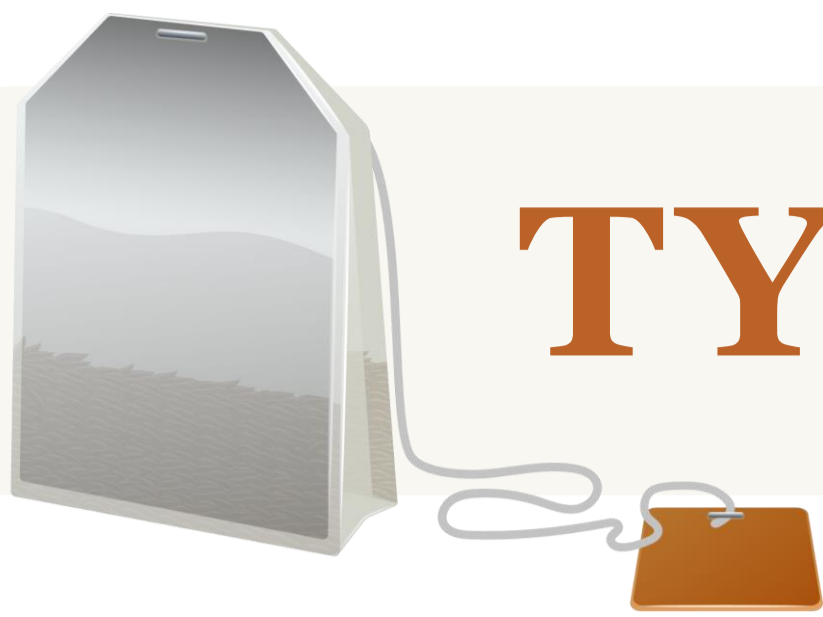
Tea is hygroscopic, absorbing moisture and similarly odors or fragrance. Store your tea in an airtight container, and keep it away from moisture, heat, light and odors. Stored in a cool and dry place never warmer than 86F (30C). For medium term storage, keep your stocks of tea in an airtight foil pouch or ceramic container in the refrigerator.

BREWING

Brewing is the extraction of the goodness nature has induced in the tea leaves. Using the right amount of tea for the volume of tea you wish to brew is critical, as is the method of brewing. Check out details of brewing for each tea type below.

STIRRING

Once the tea and freshly boiled water are combined, the leaves or tea bag tend to settle at the bottom of the teapot, reducing the contact between tea leaves and water. Stir to agitate the tea and allow proper extraction.



TYPES OF TEA

WHITE TEA

Benefits: Defying Age

A delicate and smooth tea that is native to China and India. The leaves are picked when very young. This variety of tea contains the least amount of caffeine at just 15mg per cup. It has high levels of polyphenols, which strengthen the elastin in your skin to help combat wrinkles. It's also high in antioxidants and contains a high source of fluoride, catechises and tannins, which can strengthen teeth.

Brewing guide:

Loose leaf/ Tea Bag: 1 tsp = 1 Tea bag

Water: 7.5 fl oz. (220ml)

Brewing: 160-175F (70-80C)

Brewing Time: 2-3 Minutes



GINGER

Benefits: Enhanced Recovery

Thanks to its powerful anti-inflammatory properties, this herbal tea is a perfect post-workout brew as it can help to soothe aching muscles. It can also help fight morning sickness, nausea and relive joint pain. You can also make it from a slice of fresh ginger or half teaspoon powdered ginger just by adding it into a cup with boiling water.

Brewing guide:

Loose leaf/ Tea Bag: 1 tsp = 1 Tea bag

Water: 7.5 fl oz. (220ml)

Brewing: 200-210F (95-100C)

Brewing Time: 3-5 Minutes



BLACK TEA

Benefits: Energy Booster

This tea is made from the same plant that's used to make green tea. However, the leaves are dried and fermented, giving black tea a darker color and richer flavor. This tea accounts for roughly three quarters of the worlds consumption, which isn't that surprising considering it has the highest levels of caffeine at around 40mg per cup, making it perfect for a pre workout booster. It also contains flavonoids that combat inflammation and support healthy immune function.

Brewing guide:

Loose leaf/ Tea Bag: 1 tsp = 1 Tea bag

Water: 7.5 fl oz. (220ml)

Brewing: 200-210F (95-100C)

Brewing Time: 3-5 Minutes

3 Minutes Normal brew

5 Minutes for strong brew



GREEN TEA

Benefits: Fat Burner

This tea originates from China and Japan. It can help speed up metabolism to burn more calories, making it a popular supplement. It is exceptionally high in flavonoids that can help boost your heart health by lowering bad cholesterol and reducing blood clotting. Studies also show this type of tea can help lower blood pressure, triglycerides and total cholesterol. It's also packed with potent antioxidants that can help prevent certain forms of cancer. For maximum impact, drink the matcha variety, made with powdered green leaves, that contain even more antioxidants than regular green tea.

Brewing guide:

Loose leaf/ Tea Bag: 1 tsp = 1 Tea bag

Water: 7.5 fl oz. (220ml)

Brewing: 150-160F (65-70C)

Brewing Time: 2-4 Minutes



OOLONG TEA

Benefits: Mental Alertness

Oolong tea is a traditional Chinese tea variety that's made from the same plant used to make green and black teas, the difference is in how it is processed. Oolong tea contains l-theanine, an amino acid that reduces anxiety and increases alertness and attention. It is also high in polyphenols, which are linked to lowering inflammation, preventing the growth of cancers and decreasing type 2 diabetes risk.

Brewing guide:

Loose leaf/ Tea Bag: 1 tsp = 1 Tea bag

Water: 7.5 fl oz. (220ml)

Brewing: 175-190F (80-90c)

Brewing Time: 2-3 Minutes



PEPPERMINT

Benefits: Digestive Aid

This minty brew contains menthol, which can improve mobility in your digestive tract to help relieve the symptoms of upset stomach, constipation, irritable bowel syndrome and motion sickness. This tea variety can also offer pain relief from tension headaches and migraines. It's also an easy herb to cultivate in your garden, for a homegrown cup. Just dry the leaves and add boiling water.

Brewing guide:

Loose leaf/ Tea Bag: 1 tsp = 1 Tea bag

Water: 7.5 fl oz. (220ml)

Brewing: 200-210F (95-100C)

Brewing Time: 3-5 Minutes



CHAMOMILE

Benefits: Relaxation and Sleep

Made from the flower of the same name, this sweet beverage has been found to reduce anxiety and stress levels making it a perfect choice for improved sleep and relaxation. **Bonus: it can also help to alleviate chesty coughs.**

Brewing guide:

Loose leaf/ Tea Bag: 1 tsp = 1 Tea bag

Water: 7.5 fl oz. (220ml)

Brewing: 200F (90C)

Brewing Time: 3-5 Minutes



Cerasee

A tea made of the vine is used for diabetes, hypertension, worms, dysentery, malaria and as a general tonic as a blood purifier. It is also very effective to relieve constipation and colds and fevers in children. As a tea it has been known to be used by women in Latin America for menstrual problems and to promote discharge after childbirth. It is said that if the tea is taken 9 days after giving birth it cleans out and tones up all the organs involved in the delivery. For the same reasons it has been used as a natural method of birth control by taking 2 cups each day after intercourse for 3 days. As a wash, the tea is used externally for sores, rashes, shin ulcers and all skin problems. As a bath it is good for arthritis, rheumatism, gout and other similar ailments. It also has claim to sooth the skin and used to treat fever, flu, congestion, and cramps.

Brewing suggestion:

Loose leaf/ Tea Bag: 1 tsp = 1 Tea bag

Water: 7.5 fl oz. (220ml)

Brewing: 175-190F (80-90c)

Brewing Time: 2-3 Minutes



FEVER OR LEMON GRASS

Considered a cleanser and a relaxer. Lemon Grass is principally taken as a tea to remedy digestive problems such as diarrhea, flatulence and stomachache. It is particularly suitable for children. Aids in lowering fever from the flu. If applied externally as a poultice or diluted into an essential oil it can be used on pain from arthritis..



Shepard's Needle

Said to lower blood pressure, help with nose bleeds, promote wound healing and stimulates uterine contractions.

Brewing suggestion:

Loose leaf/ Tea Bag: 1 tsp = 1 Tea bag

Water: 7.5 fl oz. (220ml)

Brewing: 200F (90C)

Brewing Time: 3-5 Minutes



Source: Healthline.com; Bahamian Bush Medical Garden