

How to Make Tea

Plucking – Cut off twigs with 2-3 younger fresher leaves, than pull off the individual leaves. This also prunes the bush and encourages new growth, for more tea!

Withering – Lay the freshly picked leaves out on a sheet of paper in a warm, dry place for 24 hours to wither and lose about 40% of their moisture.

Rolling

Japanese Style Green Tea – Roll the leaves long ways as tightly as possible between both hands to produce long twists of whole leaf.

Orthodox Indian Tea – Roll the leaves in a circular motion using both hands. Press together as hard as possible to crush and break the leaves. Put the leaves in a paper bag for a day or two to ferment and lose some of their “greenness” and to develop a drier tea character. Remove the stalks and stems and roll briefly.

Drying – Place on a sheet of foil in a warm oven, below 245° F, for a maximum of 5 minutes. This dries the leaf and stops further fermentation. Be careful not to burn the tea!

Brewing – Green tea will brew in water slightly under boiling for 1 – 2 minutes. For standard tea, brew in boiling water for 3 – 5 minutes. The harder you roll the teas, the stronger it will be.

General Plant Care Information

Plant Name: Tea, *Camellia sinensis*

Family: Theaceae

Origin: China

Average Height x Width: 6' x 4'

Cold Hardiness: 20° F

In 2007 Americans consumed 2.5 billion gallons of tea! The drink is a fantastic source of antioxidants which have been known to inhibit the growth of cancer cells and support cardiovascular health. Many types of tea come from the *Camellia sinensis* plant, including white, green and black tea. Different picking times, and rolling and drying methods determine the type of tea being made. The plants are slow-growing and best kept to a height of 4 feet by regular pruning. Plant them in rich well-drained soil, in sun to part shade for best results. Tea plants also do well in containers. When pruning, try to trim only the tips of each branch to encourage new leaf flushes. The best tea is made from these newly formed leaves.

Information courtesy of
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