

The Roots of Afternoon Tea



MILLENNIUM MAYFAIR MENU

TRADITIONAL CREAM TEA

Warm home baked fruit plain scones served with Devonshire clotted cream,
lemon and preserves
A pot of tea chosen from our Mayfair loose tea selection

AFTERNOON TEA

A selection of home-made sandwiches, warm home baked fruit and
plain scones served with Devonshire clotted cream, lemon curd and preserves.
Selection of home-made pastries
A pot of tea chosen from our Mayfair loose tea selection

CELEBRATION TEA

A glass of sparkling Bisol Jeio Rosé Prosecco
A selection of home-made sandwiches, warm home baked fruit and
plain scones served with Devonshire clotted cream, lemon curd and preserves.
Selection of home-made pastries
A pot of tea chosen from our Mayfair loose tea selection

For those with special dietary requirements or allergies, please consult your server

While tea was part of the staple diet of the poor, among the rich tea-drinking was evolving into an elaborate social occasion. Afternoon teas probably had their roots in the ladies tea-parties of the seventeenth centuries, but evolved during the eighteenth century into something of a national institution.

Tradition has it that afternoon tea was 'invented' by Anna Maria, the wife of the seventh Duke of Bedford, who in 1841 started drinking tea and having a bite to eat in the mid-afternoon, to tide her over during the long gap between lunch (eaten at about 1 o'clock) and dinner (eaten at around 7 o'clock). This swiftly developed into a social occasion, and soon the Duchess was inviting guests to join her for afternoon tea at 5 o'clock. It did not become instantly popular elsewhere though, partly because in fashionable circles dinner was eaten earlier, leaving less of a gap to be filled by afternoon tea.

But by the 1860s the fashion for afternoon tea had become widespread. Such teas were elegant affairs, with tea drunk from the best china and small amounts of food presented perfectly on little china plates. On offer might be bread and butter, scones and cakes, and sandwiches with the crusts cut off.

Contemporary manuals on etiquette and good housekeeping are full of advice on how to conduct a correct afternoon tea. The idea of needing an instruction book in order to enjoy a cup of tea and a biscuit with some friends seems rather alarming these days, but although nineteenth century afternoon teas were elaborate affairs from our point of view, in those days they were considered relatively informal occasions. Invitations were issued verbally or by note, and rather than attending for the entire duration guests were free to pop in when it suited them and likewise leave when they wanted to.

The hostess would pour the tea, but it was the responsibility of the men to hand the cups round. If there were no men present, this job fell to the daughters of the hostess or other young women present (goodness know what happened if there were no men and no daughters available!).

There was a fashion for women to wear tea gowns, but these were softer and less restrictive than evening gowns, and it was not always deemed necessary for women to wear gloves. Nonetheless many did, and the author of *The Etiquette of Modern Society* points out that a thoughtful hostess should always provide biscuits with tea, since these can be eaten more easily than sandwiches without removing one's gloves.



The Ritual of Tea

BRITISH AFTERNOON

A quintessentially British tradition, this classic tea ceremony dates back to the 1830's when Anna Maria, the Seventh Duchess of Bedford, first introduced it to her exclusive circle of friends.

ORIENTAL

A delightful fusion of Chinese and Japanese traditional tea ceremonies, with all the poise and elegance of the Orient, this delicate, precise ritual takes you back to the true origins of tea.

TISANE

Originating from the Greek for barley water, the Tisane ritual offers not teas, but a fabulous array of herbal and fruit infusions – perfect for those seeking a light and refreshingly different experience.

Tisane



The word “tisane” originates from the Greek word “ptisane”, a drink made from pearl barley, but is by definition any herbal infusion other than one from the leaves of the tea bush. Tisanes can be made with fresh or dried flowers, leaves, seeds or roots, generally by pouring boiling water over the plant parts and letting them steep for a few minutes. The tisane is then strained, sweetened if so desired, and served.

Herbal “tea” is best known for its medicinal effects. Though very little scientific evidence exists of its actual efficacy, herbal tea is still highly regarded as a preventative treatment for certain ailments. Choose from a range of light and refreshing infusions, which will brew to give a delicate and fragrant taste and aroma.

PURE CAMOMILE

An infusion that is golden in colour, the Camomile is a sweet and subtly flowery beverage with a light and gentle taste. The Camomile aroma is famously relaxing and non-more so than with this infusion.

REDBUSH CAMEL VELVET

The Redbush (Rooibos) is indigenous to South Africa and is renowned for its health benefits. Full of antioxidants and with zero caffeine this infusion is sweet and almost sugary with caramel overtones and can be described as indulgent luxurious. This infusion deeply aromatic and deep copper in colour.

SUPERFRUITY

A deliciously juicy and fruity blend, packed with wonderful countryside flavours.

British Afternoon Tea Selection



THE MIGHTY ASSAM

Mighty by name, mighty by nature. Smooth, rich & full bodied with an unmistakable malty punch. This tippy golden broken orange pekoe is the highest quality 2nd flush Assam as it should be. One for those looking for a strong, powerful smooth tea of unmistakably high quality.

THE EARL

A sublime blend of black Chinese teas with complex yet delicate bergamont and lemon peel flavouring. This superb blend results in a deep copper colour and an unrivalled citrus aroma. A tea with a rich history that is best enjoyed with a slice of lemon.

THE LADY

A divine blend of black Chinese teas with a refined blend of orange and lemon peel that delivers a refreshing, aromatic and delicate tea. These subtle citrus tones are best paired with a slice of orange.

ELDERFLOWER & BLOSSOM DARJEELING

Widely regarded as the finest tea in the world the 1st flush Darjeeling is considered the Champagne of the Tea world and can only be picked for three weeks of the year. Grown at altitudes around 6000 ft the Darjeeling is light tea that is packed with delightful flavour which is delicately complimented by elderflower.

Oriental Afternoon Tea Selection

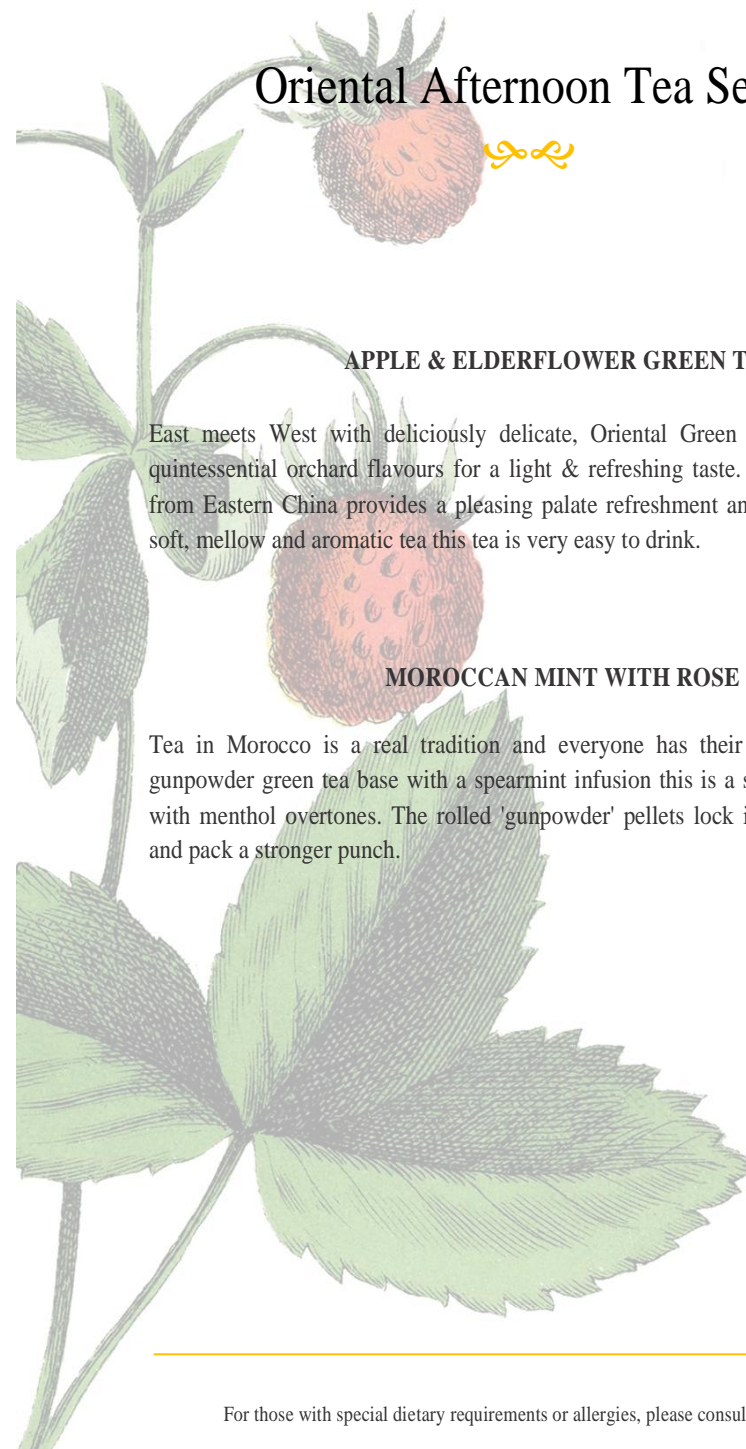


APPLE & ELDERFLOWER GREEN TEA

East meets West with deliciously delicate, Oriental Green Tea, infusing with the quintessential orchard flavours for a light & refreshing taste. The Sencha green base from Eastern China provides a pleasing palate refreshment and is bright in colour. A soft, mellow and aromatic tea this tea is very easy to drink.

MOROCCAN MINT WITH ROSE

Tea in Morocco is a real tradition and everyone has their own version. With a gunpowder green tea base with a spearmint infusion this is a sweet and refreshing tea with menthol overtones. The rolled 'gunpowder' pellets lock in the delightful flavour and pack a stronger punch.





British Afternoon Tea Selection



ROSY FIG WHITE TEA

White tea is the healthiest possible tea and is jam packed with antioxidants. This Chinese tea is plucked in the spring for the highest quality flavour and is indulgent and almost cloying with this unique flavour pairing. The rose and fig provide a light and refreshing tea with almond overtones.

PASSION FRUIT CEYLON

Ceylon teas originate from a variety of altitudes on hill sides in Sri Lanka. This high grown tea has a beautifully light flavour and blends perfectly with the sweet flavour of caramelized passion fruit.

NUTTY CHOCOLATE TEA

Inspired by tea & chocolate this blend is a match made in heaven. With a strong, rich and full bodied 2nd flush Assam base, this is a powerful yet honeyed tea with malty overtones. The deep chocolate richness comes from cocoa nibs and is complemented by delicate hazelnut flavouring and can be enjoyed with or without milk. *Nut allergy sufferers will not be affected.

ZANZIBAR CHAI

The base is an unusual blend of Rwandan black tea and Rooibos from the Cedarburg Mountains of South Africa. The lively and bright black tea and red-brown Rooibos needles bring depth and creamy notes to the flavour, finished with high-quality cinnamon and aromatic cardamom. The blend is completed by the faintly aniseed flavour of fennel seeds, with a pinch of pepper and cloves.

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Oriental Afternoon Tea Selection



The origin of tea dates back to 2737 BC and Chinese Emperor Shen Nung's discovery when the leaves of a nearby tea tree fell into some water his entourage were boiling. From its Chinese routes Japan started to learn about and drink tea in the 7th/8th century AD, developing its own distinctive tea ceremony Cha-no-yu, based on the Buddhist search for spiritual refreshment and harmony with the universe.

The traditions of the Far East have always been very different to that of the western world, as have their tea rituals. This Oriental tea ritual is a combination of both Chinese and Japanese ceremonies, taking you back to the Eastern origins of tea by combining notes from both tea cultures to create a delicate and elegant Oriental ritual around the following fine teas.

EMERALD DRAGON OOLONG

A green Chinese oolong made using only the youngest tea leaves, these tea leaves are bruised and only semi oxidised unlike black tea. A bright, light and colourful cup which is refreshing, summery and clean on the palate. This smooth tea is a joy to behold.

JASMINE PETALS & PEARLS

Each Jasmine Pearl is rolled by hand over 60 times to results in this tightly rolled ball. These delicate Jasmine Pearls are the result of light green tea layered with Jasmine flowers and relayered up to six times to create the perfect balance of flavour. When brewed the pearls unfurl to reveal a full leaf with an elegant jasmine scent. The camomile flowers & rose petals add soft floral notes to the blend.

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