

High Tea

Afternoon Tea or High Tea has become very fashionable again, and as the wonderful coffee shops and cultures of today, drinking tea is becoming just as popular and 'tea houses' are being established throughout the world.

High tea is a term associated with the British, and their fondness of tea, and the custom stated as a 'posh term' for afternoon tea, and teats were then usually displayed on the 'high table. (Used for the evening meal) Whence the name -High Tea

Drinking tea

Drinking tea, most likely originated in the 1700s after its introduction to Europe. It was tremendously popular in France. It first arrived in Paris in 1636 (22 years before it appeared in England!) and quickly became popular among the aristocracy. . . Tea was so popular in Paris that Madame de Sévigné, who chronicled the doings of the Sun King and his cronies, also reported that it was a Frenchwoman, the Marquise de la Sablière, who initiated the fashion of adding milk to tea, this is said to have delighted the English, who eagerly adopted the "French touch."

Tea drinking in England is said to be attributed to a 'consort' of King Charles II of England, the Portuguese Catherine of Braganza., who brought her own tea chest to England in the 1700s (Tea was imported from the East by the Portuguese tradesmen into Portugal) and introduced the 'afternoon tea custom' to the English. This custom was adopted by the upper classes and royalty, and naturally, the other classes followed. Soon, everyone was eager to partake in the sophisticated custom of this afternoon ritual.

It is also told that one particular royal, who had a "sinking feeling" between the morning and evening meals that were typical of the day. She is said to have had her ladies-in-waiting slip her a few snacks from the kitchen. Enjoying a pot of tea and some nibbles in her boudoir, as afternoon tea.

The most Consumed beverage in the world.

Today besides water, tea is the most consumed beverage in the world.

Tea with its cooling, slightly astringent flavour is enjoyed worldwide and includes approximately six varieties. White, yellow, green, oolong and black, which are all made from the same species of plant, used in different varieties. And pu-erh tea which is a post fermented tea, also used as medicine.

Herbal teas are made by infusing leaves, flowers fruit, herbs of other plant material that does not contain '*Camellia sinensis*' which is the species of plant whose leaves and leaf buds are used to produce tea.

The term Red Tea refers to an infusion made from black tea found in Asia or the Rooibos found in South Africa

So it is time to get out your best teas set (keep it out always) and set a tea table, bake a cake, and invite your friends for tea- it is perhaps one of the great joys of life, tea and chatter.

So enjoy and be the best until next time.

Quote

In 1663 - The poet and politician Edmund Waller (1606-1687) wrote a poem in honor of Queen Catherine Braganza for her birthday crediting her with making tea a fashionable amongst the courtiers.

Venus her Myrtle, Phoebus has his bays;
Tea both excels, which she vouch safes to praise.
The best of Queens, the best of herbs, we owe
To that bold nation which the way did show
To the fair region where the sun doth rise,
Whose rich productions we so justly prize.
The Muse's friend, tea does our fancy aid,
Regress those vapours which the head invade,
And keep the palace of the soul serene,
Fit on her birthday to salute the Queen.

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