



## Tea & herbal infusions

» Tea is grown in over 80 countries and is the most consumed drink in the world after water.

» Tea is derived solely and exclusively from the tender leaves of varieties of the species *Camellia sinensis* (L.) Kuntze, the tea plant.

» Herbal infusions, sometimes referred to as tisanes, offer an almost unlimited variety of taste and flavour. About 400 different parts of plants from 300 different plants are sourced globally and are commonly used for the production of herbal infusions.

» Herbal infusions are intended for consumption by brewing with freshly boiled water unless they are specifically labelled as cold brew products.



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TEA AND HERBAL INFUSIONS -  
VARIETY BY NATURE



## Health

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- » As beverages, tea and herbal infusions consumed plain, contain almost no calories and can contribute to a balanced diet.
- » Extensive scientific research suggests there are many health benefits associated with drinking tea and herbal infusions due to the natural constituents they contain.
- » Flavonoids, antioxidants and further plant compounds present in tea are regarded as being beneficial to the human body.
- » Drinking teas and herbal infusions is a tasty way to maintain healthy hydration.



## Variety

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- » Depending on origin and processing, tea offers an unlimited experience of flavours. The most popular types are black, green, white, yellow and oolong tea. These all originate from the tea plant *Camellia sinensis*.
- » Darjeeling is a well-known example of a protected geographical indication. Beyond that, an unlimited variety of provenances, processing methods, blends and flavourings serve every conceivable demand for tea.
- » Herbal infusions offer every kind of imaginable colour and flavour from fruity, minty, flowery, spicy to sweet. These drinks offer the full range of flavours to suit every taste and any occasion.
- » Peppermint, chamomile, fennel, linden blossoms, rosehip and hibiscus are well known examples of herbal infusions, however, over 300 different plants provide the natural source of ingredients for herbal infusions.



## Quality

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- » Food safety is a priority for the tea and herbal and fruit infusions industry. EU food safety regulations are amongst the most stringent in the world.
- » From the field to the cup: Food business operators have implemented rigorous quality assurance systems to assure conformity with legal requirements and additional higher in-house quality requirements.
- » Checks carried out by companies, as well as independent testing by consumer associations show consistently high conformity with legislative requirements.
- » Tea is a regulated product in the countries of cultivation and in many cases local tea boards and tea research institutes provide best practice recommendations for growing and processing tea.



## Cultural heritage

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- » Tea is an ancient beverage that has a cultural significance in many societies: The custom of drinking tea dates back to the third millennium BC.
- » Herbal infusions have a consumption history of over 1000 years. Chamomile, linden blossoms and mint are examples of historically used medicinal plants which were already described in herbal books of the Middle Ages in several European countries.
- » In 2019 the United Nations designed 21<sup>st</sup> May as International Tea Day to celebrate the tea industry around the world.
- » Afternoon Tea has been a British tradition since the mid-19th century. Since 2016 the East Frisian Tea Culture is listed in the UNESCO nationwide inventory of intangible cultural heritage, recognising the 300 year old distinct East Frisian way of preparing and enjoying tea.



## Economy

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- » With a total production of over 5 Mio. t., tea is one of the world's most important crops.
- » Tea and herbs are a principal source of livelihood for millions of smallholder producers and provide feasible solutions to rural poverty and employment in underdeveloped regions.
- » Only 5% of the global tea consumption of 5 Mio. t is in Europe and the highest consumption is in the countries of cultivation. The largest tea producing countries are China, India, Kenya and Sri Lanka.
- » Franconian Peppermint, South African Honeybush, US Spearmint, Ginseng from China or Mate from South America: Raw materials for herbal infusions come from all five continents. Rooibos tea from South Africa is even a protected designation of origin.



## Nature

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- » Tea and herbal infusions are minimally processed beverages of natural origin.
- » The plants used for herbal infusions are an indispensable contribution to agricultural biodiversity and provide an opportunity for smallholder farmers to specialise in minor crops.
- » Approximately 1/3 of the plants used for herbal infusions are classically cultivated in fields. The remaining 2/3 of the plant parts are generated sustainably through wild collection using renewable natural resources.
- » China, Korea and Japan have four tea cultivation sites designated as Globally Important Agricultural Heritage Systems (GIAHS) by FAO.