

TEN FUN FACTS ABOUT TEA

TEA WAS DISCOVERED IN 2732 BC

According to legend, Emperor Shen Nung discovered tea in 2732 BC. One day, wind blew leaves from a wild tree into his pot of boiling water. He sipped the intriguing brew and was instantly enchanted by it.

TEA CAME TO EUROPE IN 1610

The Portuguese and Dutch first imported tea into Europe in 1610. Tea's rise in England started when King Charles II married a Portuguese princess. Britain's new queen loved tea and served it to her friends.

MONKS BROUGHT TEA TO JAPAN

The Buddhist monk Dengyo Daishi is credited for bringing Chinese tea seeds to Japan. Tea became an integral part of Japanese monastery life and the monks used tea to help stay alert during meditation sessions.

ICED TEA WAS INVENTED IN A HEAT WAVE

Americans tasted their first iced tea at the 1904 World's Fair. A tea merchant had planned to give away free samples of hot tea. When a heat wave hit, no one was interested, so he put ice in the brewed tea.

TEA HAS LESS CAFFEINE THAN COFFEE

According to a study published in 2004 comparing 200 cups of coffee and tea prepared by consumers, the average caffeine level in the cups of tea was 40 mg compared to 105 mg in the cups of drip coffee.

TEA IS GOOD FOR YOU

Tea it contains polyphenols – antioxidants that repair cells and may help our bodies fend off cardiovascular diseases, cancers, osteoporosis, diabetes mellitus, and other maladies.

FINISHED TEA REQUIRES A LOT OF TEA LEAVES

It takes around 2,000 tiny leaves to make just one pound of finished tea. Tea plants grow wild in parts of Asia, but over 25 countries cultivate tea as a plantation crop. The very best tea comes from high elevations.

STEEPING THE PERFECT CUP OF TEA TAKES TIME

Ideal steeping times and temperatures vary depending on what variety of tea you're making. For black tea, steeping time is 3-5 minutes at 200°F. For white tea, steeping time is 1-2 minutes at 170°F.

FERMENTATION CREATED BLACK TEA

Until the middle of the 17th century, Chinese tea was green tea. As foreign trade increased, the growers discovered that they could preserve the tea leaves with a special fermentation process, creating black tea.

TEA BAGS WERE CREATED BY ACCIDENT

In 1908, a New York tea merchant sent samples of his product sealed in silk bags to restaurants and cafes throughout the city. He discovered that the restaurants were brewing his tea directly in the silk bags to save time.