



ENGLISH BREAKFAST

(English Favourites Tea)

Country of Origin: Sri Lanka **Region:** Nuwara Eliya, Dimbula, and Uva **Shipping Port:** Colombo/Sri Lanka
Grade: FP (Flowery Pekoe) **Altitude:** 5600 ft. to 6400 ft. above sea level **Manufacture Type:** Orthodox
Cup Characteristics: Good body but not overpowering with satisfying full tea flavor notes.
Infusion: Coppery bright - especially enticing with milk **Ingredients:** Luxury black tea.

Information:

Today the habit of tea drinking is inexorably linked to the British despite the fact that the British were fairly late on the tea scene in historical terms. Ironically the first mention of tea in English literature is a translation of a Dutchman's travels to the east. Tea was first brought to England via Holland on Dutch ships. Since tea was becoming an 'in' beverage the British government became quite incensed that a tiny nation such as the Netherlands would control the shipment of tea to the UK. In 1651 the British government passed the Navigation Acts, which forbade the importation of any products on non-British ships. Traders and Dutchmen, being resourceful continued the trade in the usual manner but for one little wrinkle - The tea was transhipped in Holland onto British ships!

Early in British life tea was known as a health beverage and claimed all sorts of curative powers. In the 1650's, Garway's Coffee House proclaimed that tea amongst other things:

"Tea makes the body active and lusty. Tea is declared to be the most wholesome; preserving perfect health until extreme Old Age"
 Afternoon tea was the invention of Anna, wife of the seventh Duke of Bedford. At that time custom dictated only two planned meals per day: a hearty breakfast and a late evening dinner. Anna in an effort to ease the "sinking feeling" began instructing her servants to prepare tea and cakes in the late afternoon. Thus began a fashionable habit, which still exists today.

Britain is steeped in tea history. Think of:

High Tea, The Brown Betty, The American War of Independence, The Opium Wars, The Boxer Rebellion, The Clipper Ship races from Fuzhou, China to Portsmouth UK, The Earl of Grey, English Breakfast etc. etc.

Hot tea brewing method: As with all top quality teas, scoop 2-4 teaspoons of tea into the teapot. Pour in boiling water that has been freshly drawn (previously boiled water has lost most of its oxygen and therefore tends to be flat tasting), steep for 2-4 minutes (to taste), stir (virtually all the leaves will sink), pour into your cup, add milk, (do not use cream) and sugar to taste. When you are making a pot of tea - using loose tea of course - you will see the tea leaves uncurl and expand dramatically. This uncurling and expansion is called 'the agony of the leaf'.

Iced tea-brewing method: (to make 1 liter/quart): Place 6 teaspoons of tea into a teapot or heat resistant pitcher. Pour 1 1/4 cups of freshly boiled water over the tea. Steep for 5 minutes. Quarter fill a serving pitcher with cold water. Pour the tea into your serving pitcher straining the leaves. Add ice and top-up the pitcher with cold water. Garnish and sweeten to taste. [A rule of thumb when preparing fresh brewed iced tea is to double the strength of hot tea since it will be poured over ice and diluted with cold water]. Please note that this tea may tend to go cloudy or 'milky' when poured over ice; a perfectly normal characteristic of some high quality black teas and nothing to worry about!