

Title:

Tea: Origins, Flavors and Health Benefits

Word Count:

513

Summary:

Here you can read about the difference between black tea, green tea, oolong tea and white tea. Individual health benefits are mentioned too.

Keywords:

tea, drink, drinks, food

Article Body:

How many times do we just want to drink tea after a heavy meal, but are then bombarded with all the various tea flavours that we get lost. This article answers that need.

What you should always remember is that there are only four types of tea.

- 1) Black tea
- 2) Green tea
- 3) White tea
- 4) Oolong tea

All these are made from the leaves of the *Camellia sinensis*, also known as the tea plant. Other herbal infusions such as chamomile tea, ginger tea or red tea made of rooibos leaves are disqualified as types of tea since the tea plant is not involved in their making. The difference between the four tea variations lies in the process of making them. In addition, each type of tea has another flavor and various health benefits.

1) Black Tea

The strong flavored burnt Sienna colored hot beverage is the most popular type of tea in the West. Either served with a squeeze of lemon or added milk and a cube of sugar, the cup of black tea is part of daily tea ceremonies that take place worldwide. Black tea is made of heavily oxidized *Camellia sinensis* leaves. When served plain, it contains no calories, carbohydrates, or fats. A cup of black tea contains more caffeine than any other types of tea but less than in any cup of coffee.

2) Green Tea

The lightly oxidized tea has been popular in China, Japan and Korea for centuries. Recently, rumors on its health benefits increased its popularity in the West as well. It has been proven that drinking green tea can lower cholesterol, prevent cancer, increase metabolic rates and be helpful in variety of other conditions and illnesses. The green tea is lightly oxidized, dried, but not fermented. It is usually served plain, without sugar or milk. Since some of the green tea variants taste a bit bitter, it should be brewed in lower temperature than the boiling point.

3) White Tea

White tea is rarer and more expensive than the other types of teas mentioned above. Originated in the Fujian province of china, the white tea is made of young *Camellia sinensis* leaves, which go through a long process of steaming or frying, inactivate fermenting and drying. Since the leaves are harvested while the buds are still covered by white hair, it is called white tea. White tea has the most delicate, sweet taste than the other types of tea. Moreover, it contains the smallest amount of caffeine and the largest amount of antioxidant that help prevent cancer.

4) Oolong Tea

The traditional Chinese tea is the common companion of Chinese foods such as dim sum and chop suey in American Chinese restaurants. The oolong tea, black dragon in Chinese, got its name after its long, dark distinguished leaves that look like wild black dragons when brewed. The unique taste of the oolong tea is achieved by a long process that includes sun drying of the *Camellia sinensis* leaves, light oxidization, cooling and drying processes. The result is a lighter flavor than the popular black tea and stronger than the delicate green tea.