

THE TEA ROOM TIMES



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March - April 2019

Spring is in the Air!

Once the months of March and April roll around many of us are eagerly awaiting the day where the temperatures warm and spring shows it's early signs of arrival (unless you are in Florida, where it seems to be Spring or Summer all year round).

For many, Spring offers a promise of hope and renewal. In fact, according to online research, many equate Spring with rebirth, rejuvenation, resurrection, and regrowth. And so with the warming of the season, we start to see many flowers and plants return to life after their long winter slumber, and we too often find ourselves out more, visiting with friends or participating in social activities.

It is also during this time of year that our beloved tea plants begin to show signs of new growth. What laid dormant for the winter season is now ready to give way to some of the most prized teas of the year, and start the various growing and plucking seasons.

Once the sun returns and the weather warms, tea plants begin to recirculate their energy, pushing all of that energy into the production of new shoots that will ultimately lead to new tea for us to enjoy.

Plucking tea leaves is done in what experts call a "flush". Several flush exist throughout the year (typically up to 4, but can be more or less depending on weather and how the tea plants respond with production of new leaves). With each flush, each time the leaves are grown and then plucked, comes different flavor characteristics of the leaf that will ultimately translate into the flavor the tea will produce once it is processed. It is during these flush that we see different characteristics of the tea emerge, allowing us to enjoy different floral, fruity, or earthy notes than the flush before.



A small bud among the tea leaves brings hope for a great growing season.

First flush tea, being the newest after the plants dormancy, tends to fetch a higher price because of its delicate nature, especially in the region that produces Darjeeling. Darjeeling, the "Champagne of Teas", has been known to demand a price higher than \$100 a pound, depending on the estate from which the tea was plucked.

Annually, the first pluck helps determine what the rest of the tea season will be like. If plants produce a lot of buds in the spring, will they continue through the season? Did the harsh winter (or mild for that matter) have a positive or negative impact on the tea plant and the flavor it will produce? So many questions about the growing season once Spring comes around.

We like to think of Spring in the tea world is an opportunity to make plans for the rest of the year. Spring sets in motion the desire and ability to produce great tea, an opportunity for renewal of our craft, and endless possibility to a great year ahead. To us, it is almost like New Years! You see, Spring is a chance for tea plants to be reborn, and in so, to rejuvenate us when we consume their beverage.



"Tea is quiet and our thirst for tea is never far from our craving for beauty."

~James Norwood Pratt

In This Issue

- The Perfect Tea - Is there such a thing?
- Sunday in the City
- Seasonal Staff Pick: Cherry Rose
- Mark Your Calendar: Check out our Upcoming Events



“A variety of teas exist, all processed from the tea plant, *Camellia Sinensis*. Add those varieties and herbals together and the options of which “tea” to drink are virtually endless. That’s great news for all of us, since we don’t all like the same flavors,” explains Kelly Hackman, Tea Sommelier and Tea Specialist

Not a day goes by that I am not asked what the best type of tea is. Often times our guests are looking for some assistance with an ailment, or just looking for something to sit back and enjoy. After all, I don’t know about you but when I enjoy something, I tend to do more of it. And that is what we all need to do more of, drink more tea!

When asked about the best type of tea, my questions in return to my guests often include: what type of tea do you typically drink? Black? Green? Something else? Do you prefer floral or fruit, sweet or salty? And, are you looking for something to enjoy and be healthy or are you looking for a certain benefit?

I know it may seem like so many questions just to be able to recommend a tea but the reality is that each of us has our own preferences and our own way of tasting flavors.

Yes, all of those little receptors on our tongue that send messages to our brain, those aromas that enter our nose and trigger memories of the past, for each of us they are different. For each of us, they trigger either a positive or negative response. Neither is the wrong response, it just provides us with a preference when we are making a decision on what we want to eat or drink.

Take, for example, my preference of teas. When asked to have tea, 99% of the time I will choose a black tea over green tea. It’s not that I don’t like green, I just don’t enjoy it as much as I do black. It’s the same reason I don’t like vegetables or bitter foods while a majority of my friends love both. The choice of tea, like clothes, is a personal preference based on how your brain is wired, and how you perceive what you are eating.

So, the next time you wonder what type of tea you will like best, or if you should try something new (which we always encourage), also remember that your like or dislike is your personal preference, how you process the flavor you are tasting. Knowing your likes and dislikes will help you narrow down your tastes and help you find your perfect tea.

And if it’s been a long time since you have tried a certain tea, I encourage you to try it again. Our brain and receptors change over time (I used to not drink tea at all and now I can’t go a day without it). What you once didn’t care for may, in the future, become your favorite.

Happy Steeping!

Kelly

*Kelly M. Hackman is a Tea Sommelier, Certified Tea Specialist, and Owner of The White Heron Tea & Gifts in historic downtown New Port Richey, Florida.



Spring Jelly Bean Contest

Join us this April for our Annual Jelly Bean Contest.

Stop in our gift shop from **April 2nd - April 13th**

And take a guess at how many jelly beans are in our jar for a chance to win a \$15 gift certificate and the jar of jelly beans.

*Contest is free to enter. Guest who guesses closest without going over will win contest. In the event of a tie, winners will be placed in a drawing to determine final winner.



Tea To Go Loyalty Program

Do you like to grab our hot / iced tea on the go?

Now you can enjoy our Tea To Go Loyalty Program each time you stop in and grab a tea to go.

Purchase 9 Teas To Go (at regular price of \$2.49) and receive your 10th on us!

Begins April 2, 2019

*Valid only on Tea To Go, not valid for Parlour or Tea Room purchases.

Sunday in the City!

Join us as we open and celebrate our beautiful downtown at our monthly Sunday in the City.

Our gift shop will be open from 12 pm - 4 pm. Our Parlour will be open from 12 pm - 3 pm (last seating time at 3 pm)

March 10, 2019 Strawberries Galore

Enjoy 2 fresh plain scones with



delicious strawberry preserves with our homemade Devonshire Cream, and your choice of a pot of tea for just \$7.95. Held in our Parlour from 12 pm - 3 pm. *No Substitutions.

April 14, 2019 Celebrate Spring

We have the perfect teas for you to enjoy this Spring season.



Sunday in the City April Specials include:

Cherry Rose Green Tea, or Jasmine with Flowers Green Tea, just \$1.99 to go (iced or hot, reg. \$2.49). Available from 12- 4 pm during Sunday in the City in April only.

UPCOMING EVENTS



Tuesday, March 12, 2019 - 6:00 pm - Tea Room After Dark

- Join us for our monthly Tea After Dark! Tea After Dark is an elegant evening event held in our tea room on the 2nd Tuesday of each month. Our evening will include delicious tea-fare: side salad, tea sandwiches, scone, delicate desserts, and tea of your choice. *No substitutions as this is a special event. LIMITED SEATING - RESERVATIONS REQUIRED. **\$20 per person (plus tax & gratuity).**

Friday, March 15, 2019 - 5:00 - 7:00 pm - Spring Tea Preview.

Join us as we sample some delicious teas that will have you clamoring for spring to arrive! Florals and spring fruit flavors will be in abundance as we welcome this beautiful season of renewal. Several hot teas will be available for sampling, and some light refreshments will be served. This event is free to attend.

Thursday, March 21, 2019 - 6:00 - 7:30 pm - Etiquette and Tea.

Have you ever wondered about the proper way to hold your tea cup? What do you do with the saucer? And what about your napkin? We will share these answers and more with you at our upcoming workshop. Led by our owner and Tea & Etiquette Consultant, Kelly Hackman, your evening will include an etiquette lesson filled with knowledge you can use every day, and tea time to practice what you have learned. ADVANCE RESERVATIONS REQUIRED. **\$10 per person.**



Thursday, March 28, 2019 - 6:00 - 7:30 pm - Exploring Tea: Is All Black Tea The Same?

Have you ever wondered about the differences in teas grown in different regions around the world? After all, tea is tea, right?. It shouldn't matter where it is grown. That's not necessarily true. Join our Tea Sommelier and owner, Kelly Hackman, as we explore how black tea is made, and why black tea from different regions around the world taste different. We will explore teas from several different regions, and have a chance to sample each one. ADVANCE RESERVATIONS REQUIRED. **\$10 per person.**



Saturday, April 6 2019 at 2 pm and 4 pm: Mommy and Me Princess Tea.

We invite you to join us for tea as we enjoy some precious time with the Princess from the Sea. She looks forward to spending time with our guests, both small and tall. **\$16.95 per person.** Adult must accompany child for tea. ADVANCE RESERVATIONS REQUIRED. Call early as *Mommy and Me Princess Tea* fills quickly.

Tuesday, April 9, 2019 - 6:00 pm - Tea After Dark - Spring.

Spring is in the air, and also in our tea room. Join us for an elegant and intimate evening tea. Our evening will include delicious tea-fare: soup or salad (TBD), tea sandwiches, scone, petite desserts, and your choice of tea. *No substitutions as this is a special event. RESERVATIONS REQUIRED. **\$20 per person (plus tax and gratuity).**

Thursday, April 25, 2019 - Exploring Tea - So Many Green Teas to Choose From! - 6 pm.

Join our Tea Sommelier on a journey to learn about different types of tea. This tasting workshop will have you exploring several different types of green teas. Learn where they came from and how to properly fix them. \$10 per person. RESERVATIONS REQUIRED.

Seasonal Staff Picks: Cherry Rose



“Cherry Rose is a perfect tea any time of year. The light cherry flavor makes this tea slightly fruity, while being delicately balanced by the sweet aroma of rose. I personally love this tea in the afternoon. Its relaxing rose aroma provides me the perfect mid-day break,”
Kelly Hackman, Owner and Tea Sommelier, The White Heron Tea & Gifts

Flavor Profile: A blend of high quality green tea with sweet cherry flavors & subtle rose hints gives this tea wonderful exotic character.

Luxury Ingredients: Green tea, Rose petals, Natural flavors.

Tea(s) From: China

Antioxidant / Caffeine Level: High / Low

Steeping Times and Temperatures*

To steep what we consider the perfect cup of tea, we recommend using 6-8 ounces of water to the following:

White Tea: 1 Tbsp at 175-185 degrees for 1-3 minutes

Green Tea: 1 tsp at 180-185 degrees for 3 minutes

Black Tea: 1 tsp at 205 degrees for 3-5 minutes

Herbal: 1 Tbsp at 205 degrees for 5-7 minutes

*Each person is different when it comes to how they like their tea. We encourage you to try different amounts of tea and steep it for different amount of time to determine how you like your tea the best.

Contact Us

**The Tea Room Times is a publication of
The White Heron Tea & Gifts**

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Visit us on the web at
www.thewhiteheronfl.com

Enjoy our tea at home. Visit our tea website at
www.driftwoodteacompany.com

Reservations required for tea room services. Please call a minimum of 48 hours in advance.

***Large parties are encouraged to call well in advance as the tea room fills quickly.**



The White Heron Tea & Gifts
Home of Driftwood Tea Company
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