



The TEA House Times™



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The TEA House Times™

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Greetings from The TEA House Times!

Sing along! “It’s the holiday season! (The holiday season) With the whoop-de-do and hickory dock.” Don’t forget to put some tea in their socks!

It’s The Tea House Times’ Nov/Dec 2021 issue already!! Where did the year go? Ups and downs and plenty of frowns, it is my wish for you that 2022 will be filled with happiness and smiles across the miles and in person, finally, too!!

I’m hearing whispers of some great events coming in 2022 and will certainly inform you as soon as those plans are firm with various organizers. I’m so looking forward to getting out again and especially new opportunities to share tea around the world.

If you are hoping and wishing for civilized conversations this holiday season, be sure to read Cynthia Grosso’s etiquette column on page 9 for tips on healthy dialog while being civil, respectful, and less combative, even when ideologies don’t align.

Conversation can be infused with civility!

SALUTATIONS

Whether you are able to leave home and visit friends and family in person or if you must stay at home and meet virtually, use tea to bond, to do business, to connect in every way.

Wishing you an abundance of personal blessings to be grateful for this Thanksgiving and good health and happiness this holiday season and into the New Year too. Remember, tea is comfort. It can be uplifting, energizing, and calming at the same time. “While the merry bells keep ringing, happy holiday to youuuuuu!!”



All the best,

*Gail
Gastelu*

@WORK

A message from . . .



Founded in 1899, the Tea Association of the USA, Inc. was formed to promote and protect the interests of the tea trade in the United States and is the recognized independent authority on Tea.

Tea has always been known as a healthful beverage and a better tasting alternative to water. Benefits of drinking tea include hydration and more profoundly, well-documented health-promoting qualities above and beyond that of plain water.

There are thousands of papers examining tea and the number continues to grow with an average of 400 to 500 new studies per year. Scientists have uncovered many of tea's health promoting qualities that have a positive effect on the cardiovascular system, gut and bone health, cancer prevention, obesity, neurodegeneration and even mood.

Much of the work over the last two decades has been on green tea. Now, Black Tea is beginning to get its fair share of research and it is proving to be (as I've always said!) as efficacious as green tea.

In either case, the power of *Camellia sinensis* is well recognized. To help further the message, the Tea Council and Tea Association of the U.S.A., have sponsored five International Scientific Symposia. We are now in the throes of planning a sixth symposium and are looking at Spring of 2022 to bring together (virtually) leading researchers in this area.

I am looking forward to bring this effort to fruition and in providing more healthful facts to the American consumers, further underlining the power of tea and its healthful qualities.

We are fortunate enough to be involved in an industry that produces not only a great tasting beverage with seemingly endless variations of flavors, varieties and appearance, now with a powerful endorsement of tea's positive contributions to human health, is a powerful marketing combination.

Please stay safe and well!



A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Peter F. Goggi".

Peter F. Goggi, President
Tea Association of
the U.S.A., Inc.
TeaUSA.org
STltea.org

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A message from . . .



October 15 was World Food Day and FAO (Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations) hosted a fantastic virtual meeting in Rome; a "Dialogue on Tea and Coffee." Conversations explored the cultural significance and economic importance of tea and coffee. It was such a pleasure to hear many unique yet similar takes on where the future lies with these two beverages which are an integral part of an everyday balanced diet and social life too! Find a replay here: <http://www.fao.org/webcast/home/en/item/5677/icode/>

If you are a tea industry professional, many of the statements made during this meeting may be things you have heard of and discussed with colleagues already. The point is to globally and collectively consider where we are and what we need to do.

Pandemic trends showed a surge in at-home consumption of tea with a focus on quality too! While that's great news, out-of-home consumption declined for obvious reasons. Collective commentary and largest takeaways from the meeting were to stand firm on quality and higher price that is associated with it. Consumers are understanding the value and more willing to pay for it. Tea and/or coffee must be treated as other beverages which people turn to as connoisseurs of quality and taste. Sustainability and innovation need to be top of mind alongside quality with enormous opportunities in agriculture. All caffeinated drinks have driven history and will continue to do so in the future.

Tea is known to be healthy, coffee is known to be social. Tea helps you slow down, coffee gets you going. You should cross market these ideas with new ways in which you show and demonstrate all of the qualities of these two beverages to younger generations.

If you continue to work from home, please remember that tea brings comfort no matter how it is shared. Socialize over tea, even if it is virtual! Share thoughts and ideas. Innovate!

A handwritten signature in green ink that reads "gail".

Gail Gastelu
Owner/publisher
TheTeaHouseTimes.com
TeaTradeShow.com



A message from . . .



The race to save the planet from Climate Change is now focussed on the reduction of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions to Net Zero by the year 2050. Net Zero means putting no more carbon into the atmosphere than we are taking out, whereas Carbon Neutral refers to a policy of not increasing carbon emissions and achieving carbon reduction through offsetting. For the latter, businesses buy carbon credits generated by projects that are cleaning up our atmosphere, to compensate for emissions. There is scepticism around offsetting but, when done well, it can support local economies and fund work that makes a real impact.

In Europe, there is a strong drive towards capturing emissions data to calculate an environmental score to be placed on front of pack. The aim is to enable consumers to make more sustainable buying choices and to drive change in supply chains and manufacturing. The European Commission started to develop Product Environmental Footprint (PEF) methodology in the 2010s and it looks likely to form part of future legislation. However, due to the glacial pace of PEF development, a plethora of new calculation schemes are emerging across Europe. Foundation Earth, a not for profit working with major manufacturers including Nestlé, Danone and PepsiCo and retailers such as Tesco, Waitrose and the Co-op, is developing a colour-coded traffic-light scheme, like the one used for nutritional content, to be applied to all food products across Europe in 2022. What does all of this mean for the tea industry? We will need to develop a greater understanding of the carbon footprint of our supply chains, production, end-product use and waste disposal (the product's life cycle). To help with this, The Tea and Herbal Association of Canada and the UK Tea & Infusions Association commissioned a review by Soil & More collating scientific data on emissions and sequestration of tea.

There will not be a single assessment for the tea industry due to its complexity - the different growing regions, tea types and infrastructure - but we hope the review will be a starting point to develop guidance for our members to investigate GHG emissions in their supply chains and to address the requirements of future policies, such as environmental labelling schemes that could become mandatory in the future.



Sharon Hall
Chief Executive
UK Tea & Infusions
Tea.co.uk



A message from . . .



TEA & HERBAL
ASSOCIATION OF CANADA
ASSOCIATION DU
THÉ ET DES TISANES
DU CANADA

And the beat goes on... I know we're all tired of speaking the words: COVID, but the truth is, it's still very much a part of our lives. Some day we'll reference time as pre-COVID and post-COVID; the way things used to be and the way they are now.

THAC held its mid-year meet up at the end of September, Level Up, highlighting one of these fundamental changes, Shipageddon. Are you noticing your products are taking longer to get to you? Is the delivery date on your tea extended beyond what you're used to? This is Shipageddon. And yes, the match may have been lit by COVID, but the challenges being faced by those in logistics will not end once COVID is 'over' – whatever that means.

It started with cancelled sailings causing a container imbalance which combined itself with a 5% surge in consumer demand for global merchandise, resulting in terminal congestions, infrastructure challenges and delays. So here we are. A container of tea from China pre-COVID cost \$3,000 to ship to the west coast of the US; today that same container costs in excess of \$20,000 – and that's assuming you're one of the lucky ones to get your container onto a vessel. What will a 700% increase in freight do to the price of our favourite beverage?

It's easy to assume that things will go back to the way they were, and perhaps they may have, had this scenario been only caused by COVID. But it hasn't; because we've all changed. The way we consume has changed and the way we live has changed. In a post-vaccine world, port congestions are getting worse, infrastructure challenges persist and the cost of the materials to build new containers have more than doubled. Add labour shortages in North America and Europe and the picture above isn't getting better.

Nobody likes to be the bearer of the bad news, but unless you know a problem exists, you can do nothing to mitigate the fallout. This holiday season may look different for some, especially if your shops weren't stocked by the end of the summer. If that's the case, then learn from that and start planning ahead. Because by all accounts, this new reality isn't going away any time soon.



Shabnam Weber
President
Tea and Herbal
Association of Canada
Tea.ca
TeaSommelier.com



Savory Tarts for Holiday Entertaining

A savory tart is a welcome addition to a tea table or a cocktail party. Here are three recipes I have used for many years and are well loved. Little tartlets are charming, but the presentation of a whole tart is very enticing (and quicker to make)! Using square or rectangle tart pans makes for easy cutting and serving. Prepare a pot of your favorite tea or a pitcher of tea cocktails and indulge.

My Favorite Pie Crust Recipe

Makes a double crust

2-1/2 cups unbleached white wheat flour
 1 stick butter
 1/2 cup Crisco
 1/3 cup or more iced water

In large bowl, cut butter and Crisco into flour with pastry blender until the mixture looks crumbly and the size of peas. Sprinkle cold water on mix and fold in until the mix is moistened. Press dough with hands and add water until dough holds together. Wrap in plastic and refrigerate for at least 30 minutes. When ready to use, divide dough in half, flour surface and roll dough to about 1/8 inch thin.

This recipe can be halved.



Spinach Cheese Tart

(Modified from Spinach Cheese Tartlets, The Charms of Tea – Reminiscences and Recipes, Victoria Magazine, 1991)

Preheat oven to 375 degrees
 4" x 13" tart pan
 Bake 25-30 minutes

Filling

4 large eggs
 12 oz. smooth ricotta cheese
 1 small yellow onion, chopped fine
 1 10-oz packet of frozen chopped spinach, thawed
 1 cup grated Monterey Jack cheese
 1/2 cup grated Parmesan cheese
 1/4 tsp. salt

Using a large sieve, drain liquid from spinach. Press spinach to remove as much liquid as possible.

Line and trim a 4" x 13" tart pan with removable bottom with pie crust dough. Mix all ingredients together and fill tart pan. This should come to the top.

Bake for 25-30 minutes until golden and toothpick comes out clean.

This recipe will also make 30-32 tartlets. Place filled tartlets on baking tray and bake 20-22 minutes until puffed and golden.

Huddersfield Onion Pie

Named after a town in Yorkshire, this flavorful savory tart combines the sweetness of slowly caramelized onions & sage and sharpness of an aged Cheddar. The toasted hazelnuts complement the two in flavor while adding a contrasting texture. Continued on page 7.



Karen Donnelly is a certified Tea Association of Canada Tea Sommelier Professional and has been an afternoon tea event planner, speaker and teacher for over 20 years. She is the owner of Greenhalgh Tea, selling premium teas, tea ware, and gifts. Join her for on-line Tea & Cookery classes and classes on tea production styles, preparation and history. See GreenhalghTea.com

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Preheat oven to 400 degrees

Makes four 4-1/2" tartlets or one 9" round tart

Prepare tartlet or tart pans by lining and trimming with pie crust. Prick shells with fork and chill for about 20 minutes. Blind bake shells for about 10 minutes. Reduce oven to 375 degrees.

Use electric mixer on low to blend flour, butter, sugar, and ground hazelnuts. Roll out to 1/8" thick and cut into 1-1/2" rounds or preferred size & shape.

Filling

- 1 medium yellow onion, very thinly sliced
- 2 Tbsp. unsalted butter
- 5 fresh, large sage leaves, minced
- 4 oz. sharp cheddar, grated
- 1 egg
- 2/3 cups light cream
- 1/4 tsp. fresh ground pepper
- 1/2 cup roughly chopped hazelnuts

While shells are baking, sauté the sliced onions & minced sage in the butter over medium heat until golden brown and thick. This will take about 10-15 minutes. Stir the onions constantly to keep from burning. Cool.

Add hazelnuts to baking sheet in single layer. When the shells are removed from the oven, place hazelnuts in oven for about 5 minutes. Remove and cool.

Divide the onions and grated cheese evenly among the 4 tartlet pans or spread evenly in large tart pan. Beat the egg, cream, and pepper together and add to tart pan or divide among the 4 pans.

Bake tartlets 15-20 minutes and larger tart for 20 to 25 minutes or until golden and set.



Artichoke Leek Tart

*Modified from Artichoke Leek Squares,
Bon Appetite magazine, October 1983*

Preheat oven to 400 degrees

Bake 25-30 minutes.

Makes 1 8" square tart pan with removable bottom

Prepare tart pan by lining and trimming with pie crust. Prick shell with fork and chill for about 20 minutes. Blind bake shell for about 10 minutes. Reduce oven to 375 degrees.

Filling

- 2 6-oz. jar marinated artichoke hearts
- 1-1/2 cup minced leeks
- 1 tsp. minced garlic
- 4 eggs
- 1/4 tsp. dried oregano
- 1/4 tsp. salt
- 1/8 tsp. ground pepper
- 1 Tbsp. dried parsley
- 1/4 lb. grated sharp Cheddar cheese
- 1/4 lb. grated Muenster cheese

Drain marinated artichokes and set liquid aside. Chop artichokes roughly.

Add marinade to a sauté pan and add leeks and garlic, sautéing until soft, about 5 minutes. Remove with slotted spoon and discard liquid.

In a large bowl, beat eggs. Stir in breadcrumbs, spices, chopped artichokes, leeks, and cheeses. Pour into shell and bake for about 25-30 minutes and golden. Can be served at room temperature.

CULTURE

Enjoying the Holidays

by Gail Henderson

If you have been looking for joyful ideas for gift-giving or serving during the holidays, may I suggest a few teas to make gatherings more festive and interesting?

Fortunately, there are some winter holiday gift boxes that deserve attention. Simpson and Vail in Connecticut has created three new gift boxes that contain loose teas in tins with clear tops so you can show off the teas you are serving. The Holiday Tea Box contains five favorites including Organic Candy Cane, Gingerbread, St. Nicks and Winter Wonderland. (If you prefer a larger selection, a Holiday Sampler Gift Box includes ten teas, all decoratively and attractively packaged. The Literary Tea Box contains tins of the top five authors (out of 17 authors available, Henry David Thoreau and Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley the latest.) Pair the latest teas with Frankenstein or Walden for an interesting gift. And if you're counting calories or staying healthier, the Dessert Box contains five tins, including soft's 2021 "Gold" Award winner, a rooibos blend called Blueberry Cinnamon Crumble, along with Crème Brulee and Snickerdoodle.

For friends who have explored National Parks lately, Glacier (Montana) and Joshua Tree (California) are two new blends Simpson and Vail has added to the National Park Gift Box, including all ten parks created to date. My grandchildren taste-tested these with much enthusiasm and interest.

Perhaps your guests will want to sample another famous Connecticut family-owned tea company's offerings: Bigelow's "Special Edition Harvest Collection" teas includes Caramel Apple, Salted caramel, Cran-

berry Harvest, and Pumpkin spice. Thanksgiving never tasted so good.

Finally, to toast in the new year, I hope you still have some of Adagio's Bella Luna Blue. Sold only one day a year, it is made from lemongrass, blueberry, and Butterfly pea flower, brews a blue color and changes like magic into purple when lemon juice is added. Guests were fascinated with the tea and the astronomy behind it this summer. So unique, this tea will not be available again until August 31, 2023, the date of the next blue moon. But hopefully many teas to enjoy before that! Praying you enjoy all your holidays with precious family and friends!



Gail Henderson connects people through her business - Love Your Neighborhood. She lives in Palmetto, Florida. Gail makes memories with her grandchildren and helps others make memories by giving away tea resources and information. Visit her website to learn more: LoveYourNeighborhood.com Or call 813-928-1166 for information and help. Photo credit: Martha DeWeese

Your Manners Matter® Minute with Cynthia Grosso



Please Let's Change the Subject



“The world is changed by your example, not your opinion.” -Paul Coelho

As we enter the holidays this year with family and social gatherings we want to be mindful of the conversation. Since, the world seems to be more combative and less civil than in years past. Ideology appears to be more polarizing, so if a person's ideology does not align with yours, the conversation may become heated. So how do we engage in healthy dialog while being civil, respectful, and less combative, even when our ideologies do not align? The following thoughts may help to infuse the conversation with civility, respect, and build healthy relationships in the process.

Be respectful of the person or group you are conversing with. Remember there is probably no one on the planet that agrees with you on everything. Even the best of friends and family will never agree with everything. So do not make it about win-lose. Some people feel they must win an argument or change the view of the other person, but instead use the skill of empathy which is understanding we do not have to agree or disagree, take a side, or make a choice, we can simply listen and ask questions to understand the perspective of those we love, even when it does not align with our thoughts or

ideology. We give people value just by listening and do not have to do anything else. However, we may even learn and grow as we interact with others with varying perspectives.

Some families enjoy engaging in healthy debate and the holidays may be the opportunity to do so. I do suggest that there may be some ground rules; first to let people know it is a safe place to express themselves. Keep to the issues, no personal attacks, no yelling, letting people speak their opinion without interruption, etc. The skill of learning to have difficult discussions is also a valuable skill learned in the home, that may benefit us in all areas of our lives.

Many times, however, it is not the time or place for heated conversations, so before that happens ask yourself, is this the right time and place? Is it necessary? Is it kind? If the answer is no, then transition to another topic. People like to talk about their passions and experiences, so actively engage in those conversations by listening and asking questions.

These are just a few thoughts that can assist you in developing great communication skills. Many of us have relationships with others that look, act, and think like we do, but as we grow in our communication skills, interacting with others who are different then we are can positively expand our world. I once heard a person say, “good people skills are getting others to like you, great people skills are getting them to like themselves, for having been around you. So, lets apply these skills to allow others to like themselves better this holiday season and all through the year!



Editor's note: Alongside the multi-cultural experience of tea, many tea lovers travel the world - to tea growing countries and to those places where tea is experienced in special ways. Updates to this wonderful feature page for manners, etiquette, and international protocol will help you in every situation around the world. Enjoy!

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Cynthia Grosso is Founder of The Charleston School of Protocol and Etiquette. The Charleston School of Protocol and Etiquette specializes in helping people handle life's events and changes with style, polish and confidence. The Charleston School of Protocol and Etiquette teaches the skill of confidence to eliminate personal and professional barriers and live an extraordinary life.



The Importance of Quali-Tea Time

The Sweet Teas Chapter was founded several years ago by **Queen Linda S.** from Michigan, USA. Her chapter consists of members from all over the state of Michigan and even parts of Canada.

With so much time being spent socially distant, some members felt that something needed to be done as regulations loosened. That somebody is **Vice Queen Tanya Q.** from Michigan, USA. Like most women within the society, she missed the presence of being around her sisters. The close bond that they share and laughter is what she desired the most. Therefore, she did what any red hatter would and took the initiative to host a tea event once she knew it was safe to do so. She hosted a tea party at the marvelous Holly Hotel which is a historic, charming, and quite possibly haunted building.

As a sisterhood, chapterettes from **The Sweet Teas Chapter** could not let Tanya do it all on her own. There were members who helped assemble teacup charms and others even handmade pins to distribute to the attendees. There were also members who came earlier to help set up. Now, that's what we call teamwork!

Fifty eager red hatters were invited to rejoin their sisters for a day of laughs and hugs. The ladies soon realized the importance of quality time with their friends. To say the least, these ladies cannot wait until their next outing!



If you're looking to join a group of women who share the same hobby or interests with you, join RHS today! Visit RedHatSociety.com to get started!



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CONNOISSEUR

James Norwood Pratt



Sonja Norton of Vancouver, Washington, was recently a winning subscriber to Tea Sipper News, the invaluable online resource curated by the heroic Babette Donaldson. You'll enjoy Tea Sippers Society if you join and maybe you'll win one of the monthly prizes also see (TeaSippersSociety.com). Sonja won a free signed copy of James Norwood Pratt's *Tea Dictionary*.

My Carolina cousin Dorothea Johnson, founder of the Protocol School of Washington and author of *Tea & Etiquette*, celebrated her 92nd birthday with Liv Tyler, her actress/granddaughter. Dorothea reports that Liv continues to be 5'10" and her son Milo (17) stands nearly 6'. The best of teas to you, dear Dorothea, and all you Libra-sign ladies!

The Tea Smith of Omaha, Nebraska, lists founder Tim Smith as "Chief Leaf." Online sales kept the Chief over-busy during the pandemic. Now the entire Tea Smith team has returned to the retail shop, much to the relief of the Chief and Omaha's tea lovers. (TheTeaSmith.com)

Okakura Kakuzo and his timeless classic, *The Book of Tea*, have no greater champion than Bruce Richardson. His beautifully illustrated and annotated edition of *The Book of Tea* will outlive us all. Next January this Okakura authority takes

about twenty lucky students from Center College, Danville, Kentucky, to Boston in search of Okakura, tea and art. They will visit the home of Okakura's great patroness, which is now the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum, Boston's Museum of Fine Arts where Okakura was curator of Asian art, and then travel on to the Peabody Essex Tea Museum. Sounds like the ideal Boston Tea Party. (ElmwoodInn.com)

Top Secret: First came a tip from a friend in England and confirmation followed from India. The legendary Rajah of Darjeeling Tea, heir to and formerly owner of Makaibari Estate, has produced yet another miraculous tea. It's a small batch, naturally, and said to be his best since 1975! It's called Rimpocha White Moonlight. Plucked by the hard-working, back-bending, gentle women of West Bengal, some of this magic is still available from a student/collaborator of Rajah's in the US named Harshmaria Hiwale. Tell her I sent you. (Gudumji@gmail.com)



JNP's Tea Society is an inside look into the social, cultural, and business happenings of tea. It is a "society page" of who's who and what's influencing tea today.



James Norwood Pratt is acknowledged as America's Tea Sage. He is an award winning author and authority on tea.
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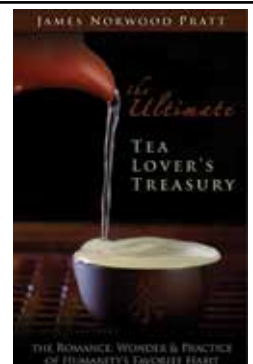
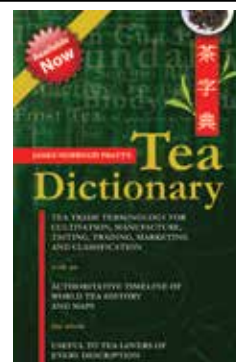
JamesNorwoodPratt.com for Norwood's schedule of appearances and to purchase his books.

****Do you have input or a question for Norwood?**

Send your question to info@theteahousetimes.com

Find more of James Norwood Pratt's work at TeaCourse.com where learning never ends.

TheTeaHouseTimes.com | 12 | November/December 2021



Mix it up – make your own brew by Birendra “Jopy” Perera

Hello to all my fellow tea lovers.

Winter is coming and we all need something to remind us the changing environment around us means it is time for us to make changes in how we live our lives too.

We spent the past two years in trying hard to adapt to changes which we had to make in order to live how we perceive to be in a “normal” sense and we soon called it the “new normal”. But we all know there was nothing “normal” about what was new; it was more a situation of “essential” vs. “normal”.

But what if we take a look at what we could have changed for ourselves without having to do it through the lack of choice but because we need a new choice and therefore creating a new choice that did not exist before.

Previously I spoke about loose tea and how creating the perfect blend and finding the perfect blend was both an art and the epitome of experience when it comes to tea. And since the basis of blending was to replicate a good experience, we can use those same perfect blends we have discovered in our lives, merge, mix and match them to create our own bespoke experiences and satisfy our desires.

I find seasonal holidays such as Halloween and Christmas often invoke certain tastes we associate with that time and the experiences we have had since we were little children. From candy & caramel apples post the trick or treating frenzy to the warm dry fruit infused plum pudding post the turkey and Christmas eating fest, we all have our personal favorites.

So let us explore the contents of our tea caddies and some items we can find in the larder to prepare ourselves a beverage which will make each of us happy in our own unique way.

A cinnamon and apple infused iced tea soda is a brilliant way to reminisce as well as enjoy your favorite brew and the sheer refreshing effervescence of some fizz. You will need some apple tea, a stick of cinnamon, brown sugar, ice cubes and soda water. Brew the apple tea with double portion of tea to one portion of water. The cinnamon stick should be cut or broken into one short piece and one long piece. The short piece should be brewed along with the tea. Allow four minutes and filter the tea into a tall highball glass. Add the brown sugar but again double portion. Your highball should be no more than quarter full. Fill up the glass with ice cubes and add the long stick of cinnamon. Slowly add the soda water to the highball while jogging the long cinnamon stick up and down to homogenize the drink and ensure the tea mixes well with the soda and the ice. Sip slowly or enjoy with a long straw using the cinnamon stick as a cocktail stick to stir occasionally. A thin slice of red apple works well to garnish.

Similarly a hot caramel tea enjoyed with a helping of plum pudding will help us relive the memories of childhood and Christmas.

The lesson to take home here is that our creativity is what helps us make a unique experience memorable, thus turning any situation into one that is memorable in a good way. Playing with your favorite brew and being creative will give you a world of options when it seems we have none. Open up the kitchen larder, check your refrigerator, and find those syrups, dried fruit, sweet herbs and interesting flavors. Experiment with the ideas, try a few new brews but always remember to keep your favorite go to brew handy and incorporate your favorite to create new worlds of flavors and experiences.

Until next time, mix it up, find yourself in uniqueness and enjoy the seasonal holidays. Always remember to share your experiences with those closest to you.



Birendra Perera grew up in a family business through which he engrained or “infused” himself in the art of selecting and tasting the finest teas of Sri Lanka. As a director of Mlesna Group, Birendra leads the marketing and export of tea; actively participates in the procurement of tea at public auctions; procures unique flavours and ingredients; and expertly carries out daily tea tasting and blending activities ensuring all Mlesna products match their tagline, “Naturally the best!” Birendra has worked with major universities; is a regular presenter; and works closely with the Colombo Tea Traders Association and the Sri Lanka Tea Board on promotion, authenticity and the global marketing of Pure Ceylon Tea from Sri Lanka. **MlesnaTeas.com**

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TEA IS POETRY POURED

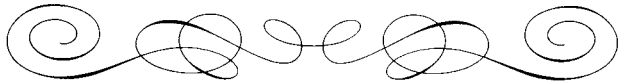
By Susan Patterson aka Earlene Grey

I don't know where you are in our collective journey with the COVID pandemic. I am not going to get in to the differences of our beliefs. What I will tell you is what James and I have learned. We like staying in. We like the quietness of our home. We like long and meaningful conversations. For us, gone are the noisy restaurants and sporting events. Gone are the loud and raucous parties we used to host. Oh, don't get me wrong. We love our friends and family and fun. But we have also enjoyed staying in. Out in the world we are less accepting of loud noise at inappropriate times and places. Space is important to us. Courtesy is a must.

Our current humanity may be on the verge of a new type of civility. We've had the Victorian era, the dour years of the Great Depression, the fearful World War years. Each had its own resulting behavior and manners. What is right and acceptable in decorum comes and goes. I am curious now to see how we will move forward from here. Hopefully our new etiquette will be one of respect and appreciation for each other. Hopefully social graces will be kind and loving. Gentility might be the name of the game. Having tea might be common. We will watch and see what happens.

In the next few weeks, we at Earlene Grey will be venturing into social media. Yes. So, look for me on Spotify, You Tube, Facebook and more. I will keep you posted on how this somewhat reticent poet does.

Your poet in Oregon, skp



A Calling as Much as a Choice

When fads are dying out,
I'm living in.

When others are inspired by reaching out,
I'm living in.

When you are changing the world by going out,
I'm changing the world by living in.

Susan Patterson



The Cosy of My Cottage

Inside my house it is
Safe and warm,
The way that homes are
Meant to be.

No sharps of sticks
Or blows of guns.
Or faces we cannot see.

Fruit and cream are plenty
With breads and buns to spare.
The perpetual invitation is out,
And I am set,
Ready with tea to share.

Susan Patterson



Susan Patterson is an unexpected author. She did not put writing into her life's plan. However, after a demanding and busy career in business, much to her surprise, poetry came to her. Ms. Patterson is an author of the heart and writer for the soul. Her work, it has been said, is so sharp, so intricate; it is like a Fabergé egg. Ms. Patterson's worldwide audience declares her writing to be in the top caliber of modern poets. Her work, which ranges from humorous to thoughtfully intelligent, is always quietly compelling. Please visit EarleneGrey.com



Recipes used by permission of VictorianHouseScones.com, a member of the Association of Lodging Professionals.

Tea Flavored (or Infused) Scones

Choose a tea with a distinctive flavor, which is ‘clean’ and can stand (and be readily identified) on its own. Examples include several of the Chai teas, as well as Earl Gray blends.

Crush or grind the tea to the desired level of ‘fitness’ (a coffee grinder works quite well for this – but be sure to clean it out thoroughly before and after use if it is not going to be a dedicated grinder for this purpose only.

Add desired amount of ground tea blend to the dry ingredients before cutting in the butter or adding any other liquid ingredients. Some experimentation will be needed to determine the optimal amount of tea to be added. A good starting point is 1 rounded T per 16-20oz of dry ingredients. Add remaining ingredients and proceed as per the usual directions for your favorite scone recipe. Or for perfect scones every time, buy a mix from Victorian House Scones.

If you wish to further enhance the flavor of the tea, you may substitute some cooled, strongly brewed tea for some of the cream or buttermilk. A good starting point would be to substitute 1-2oz of tea for the same amount of cream or buttermilk.

Handy-Tip! Remember the adage that “less is more”. It is always best to start with a subtle flavor, and then know that you can continue to enhance the flavor – either with more dried tea, some liquid tea, or in the glaze.

Lemon Curd

As neither a custard nor a simple filling, Lemon Curd is a multi-faceted accent to many meals. We would prefer you spread it on your scones, but one batch goes a long way, so use it in lemon tarts, top a cake with it, or spread it on toast as a midnight snack.

Juice and zest of 4 lemons (divided)
1 ½ cups sugar
2 sticks of butter
4 eggs

Using a double boiler (be sure to get the bottom really boiling) melt sugar, butter and ½ the juice and zest. Make sure it is all melted and mixed well. Whisk the eggs with the remaining juice and zest. Add to the pan and using a WHISK (it seems to matter!) keep stirring until it is quite thick.

Immediately pour into a glass jar – let cool and refrigerate. This makes a mayo jar full. It is rumored to have a ‘shelf life’ of six weeks but has never made it that long.

Handy-Tip! Fine-tune it to your particular sweet-tooth with a little more or less sugar. After all, lemons come in all shapes and sizes!



Through our partnership with ALP - Association of Lodging Professionals, their member Bed & Breakfasts/Inns/Boutique Hotels are featured in every issue of *The Tea House Times*. All ALP member innkeepers receive a digital subscription and may share it as an amenity to guests. ALP’s non-innkeeper members include future innkeepers, retired innkeepers, vendor affiliates, and lodging associations - all receive *The Tea House Times* digital subscription to discover the inns that will welcome them with tea time and hospitality, and that also will enhance their personal knowledge and enjoyment of tea. Innkeepers who choose membership in ALP are committed to high standards of hospitality through continuing education on management, marketing, and exceeding guest expectations. ALP’s membership includes hundreds of innkeepers in the US, and is seasoned with innkeepers outside of the US borders. ALP is delighted to acquaint *The Tea House Times* readers with the historic mansions, rustic lodges, intimate cottages, contemporary inns, and more, with innkeepers that offer tea service. To discover more about ALP, visit www.ALPLodging.org



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OCCASION

Stockings or Shoes? by Kim Hendrickson

Holiday Imagery and traditions around the world include stockings hung or shoes placed, in December, to hold treats and gifts. As commonplace as this custom may be, why and where did this come from? The origins are based on a number of European stories, none of which can be documented, but make up the fabric of our holiday celebrations.

One story has St. Nicholas knowing of a family in need of dowries for their daughters and St. Nicholas threw three bags of gold coins into their home near (or in) the stockings that were hung near the fireplace to dry as they slept. Thus the tradition was started and eventually the coins evolved into three gold balls (the symbol of a pawnbroker is three gold balls!) tossed into the stockings and over time the balls became oranges.

Scandinavian traditions, like European traditions placed their shoes or stockings out on St. Nicholas Day, not to interfere with the religious Christmas day. Early on Scandinavians still would set their shoes outside filled with hay and carrots for St. Nick's horse. Over time the tradition changed to empty shoes to receive sweets and toys. Scandinavia always kept St. Nick's Day and Christmas separate but in Europe and America, the holiday has merged with Christmas. Leaving a plate of cookies and milk out for Nick to feast on is well known to us and Christmas stories like the Night Before Christmas helped reinforce our current tradition. In England it is common to place stockings on the posts of one's bed and they are opened the minute one awakes. In the States, when we don't have a fireplace to hang stockings on, we go to great lengths to create a fake fireplace mantle to our stockings. Only in the US does the tradition of placing coal in a bad child's stocking continue, a true reflection of our puritanical colonial beginnings.

Stockings sold specifically for the holidays did not begin until the early 1800's but Romania continues to use shoes, some a gunny sack and in Africa a recycled bag. There are many versions of "stockings were hung on the chimney with care..."

Make the classic stocking the focus of your next party by using these ideas:

- Send invitations in the shape of a stocking using cut apart sweater or socks for the ornamentation of the invitation.
- Find little toys that best suit each guest. Small car for the car lover, dollar store earrings for the jewelry lover, a chocolate truffle for the fan in the crowd, etc.
- Hang stockings on the backs of each chair with their first name on each; beats a place card!
- As guests are coming in hand them a cup of grog, wintery punch or mulled cider to get them in the mood.
- Decorate the center of your table with various, clear, filled candy/cookie jars. Apples, oranges, pomegranates arranged around the base with found evergreens will fill in any empty space and keep within the mood.
- Collect some pine needles from your trees outside. Chop them finely and add them to your scone dough along with something sweet (red and/or green) cherries to create a unique Christmas-y scone.
- Find your stocking shaped cookie-cutter to use to make some finger sandwiches to play along with the theme.
- This is the time to show off your holiday cookies by including them on your dessert offering. Maybe cut a fruitcake into 1-inch squares, piping a dollop of firm hard sauce to the top and decorate with nuts, sprinkles or a cherry... even those whom may not like fruitcake will likely not refuse a small, sweet bite!
- Give your party a charitable dimension. Ask your guests to bring appropriate, maybe useful (soap, perfume, hand-wipes, edible treats, packaged snacks, etc) stocking-stuffer items for the group to fill socks, then deliver to a local shelter. Sox are the most requested clothing item by those in need.
- Comb the Internet to find things/people named Socks/sox/stockings and make a game out of guessing what they are.... those guessing the most win a prize.

Kim Hendrickson, author of the Tastefully Small cookbook series, has been teaching for over 25 years. A regular instructor in assorted programs in the New York area, JCCFS in North Carolina and The North Folk School in Minnesota and a frequent speaker throughout the US. She has catered for The Travel Channel's Bizarre Food Show, No Taste Like Home in NC, The New York Metropolitan Opera, Penguin Repertory Theatre, and TV's "Slangman" David Burke. Please visit salviapress.net



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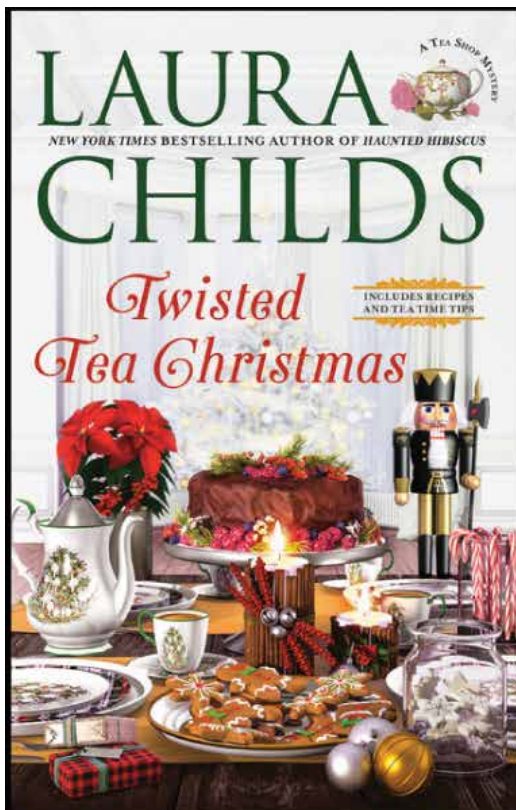


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