

Recent Tea Trends

Tea is for Trendsetter

While you might think of coffee as the trendsetting beverage, tea is actually growing faster. Older tea buzzwords were ["fair trade"](#) and "organic", ["green tea"](#) and "bubble tea".

Recently, tea is hipper than ever and is showing up in places you wouldn't imagine. Here are some of the hottest up-and-coming tea trends:

Tea-Resistible Cocktails

In the trendiest big city nightlife spots, tea is making its way into the most innovative of libations. Bartenders are slipping green, black, and [scented teas](#) into all kinds of drinkables. With names like Green Tea De Lite, the Earl Grey marTEAni, and the Moroccan Mojito, tea is making its mark in cocktails.

A Tea for All – Tearooms, Tea Lounges, Tea Bars

No matter the space or the place, the tea business is booming. Specialty tearooms, tea lounges, and tea bars where tea lovers can belly up to the bar for tasting sensations are popping up all over big cities.

"Tea coppers" set up tasting presentations so tea aficionados can learn about and appreciate firsthand fine, world-flavored teas.

It's the Special tea

With the entire buzz about the [health benefits of tea](#), more and more tea drinkers are coming out of the woodwork, and they're demanding quality teas.

Even hotels and fine restaurants are catching on and offering loose leaf teas and a selection of high-quality specialty teas. After all, there's nothing worse than an amazing meal coupled with a bad cup of tea.

Sweetening the Pot

So they're serving specialty teas, setting up exquisite afternoon tea and tea ceremonies, and pairing great dishes with the perfect teas. However, this latest fervor for tea goes beyond the finger sandwich.

Many chefs and restaurants are experimenting with tea on their menus. Think green-tea vinaigrette, tea-scented rice, powdered green tea sprinkled over fine desserts. The inspirations are endless.

Artsy Teas

As you gaze into a cup of this tea, you'll be impressed by its gorgeous artfulness that resembles the fine works of Mother Nature.

The tea leaves have actually been hand sewn in what steeps open into a full and beautiful flower shape, something like a peony or a radiant sea anemone in your cup. Not only are they eye-catching, but they're usually quite delightful as well.

Major Hot Teas

A few of the trendiest types of tea of late are white tea (similar to an exquisite green tea in flavor but double or more the price), Yerba Mate (a South American caffeine boost with the health benefits of tea), and rooibos or red tea (a caffeine-free South African herbal tea with antioxidant values of green tea).

Watch for more on these as their popularity soars.

Sources:

Cheers, May 2004

Nation's Restaurant News, May 3, 2004

www.gourmetretailer.com

