

## THE WHO'S WHO OF TEA – A SHORT INTRODUCTION

*Wondering what the difference is between a green tea and black tea? Confused by the difference between white teas and oolongs? Interested to learn where rooibos tea fits in? Here's our handy guide to the differences between the many different tea types!*



**ROOIBOS**



**BLACK**



**OOLONG**



**GREEN**



**WHITE**



**HERBAL**

### What is tea?

- All traditional tea – whether black, green, white, oolong or pu'er – is made from the leaves of the tea bush (an evergreen shrub), which grows primarily in China, India, Sri Lanka and Kenya.
- Dark teas are made from leaves that have been allowed to naturally oxidise (or ferment) once picked, while lighter teas (such as greens) have been dried or baked before the leaves change colour, thereby cutting short the natural oxidisation process.
- Tea's huge variety of tastes and colours is due to the different growing environments, the different harvest practices, and most importantly the tea making process itself.
- Rooibos (or redbush) teas and herbal/fruit teas are not made from the leaves of the tea bush. Caffeine free rooibos is made from a shrub that only grows near Cape Town, South Africa, and herbal infusions are simply herbs, flowers or fruits that have been laid out to dry.

### More on black teas

- Black teas are made with fully oxidised (or fermented) leaves from the tea bush. This makes for a stronger and darker 'classically British' brew, often served with milk.
- Quality artisan black teas from India and China make for a delicious gourmet taste experience – nothing like the low-quality 'builders' teas' produced on vast, industrialised tea estates.
- Explore the rich and malty Assam teas, the more delicate and floral Darjeeling teas, or the afternoon tea favourite, Earl Grey, which is black tea scented with real Bergamot citrus oil.

### More on green teas

- Greens teas, which come in many variations and flavours, are the fastest growing type of teas in Britain (up 19% in 2014), mainly due to their many perceived health benefits (antioxidants).
- Green teas are made from the same plant species as black teas and therefore do contain some caffeine (though less than black teas) – however, as the leaves are not oxidised they retain their green colour and are lighter and more refreshing.
- Many complain that green tea tastes bitter. However, good quality green teas that are correctly brewed (don't use water that is too hot or steep for too long) are sweet, fresh and smooth.

*For more information on our teas or for some general tea advice or samples please visit [dragonflytea.com](http://dragonflytea.com), email [hello@dragonflytea.com](mailto:hello@dragonflytea.com) or call 01635 278648*

## More on white teas

- White tea is one of the rarest and most prized teas. It is light, delicate and subtle and has no astringency – perfect for people who want to drink green tea but can't warm to the taste.
- Real white tea must be from the special tea bushes that grow only in China's Fujian Province – the tea leaves here are covered in a fine silvery white down that gives the tea its name.
- White tea, which typically has less caffeine than green or black tea, undergoes the least amount of processing of all the teas. The leaves are simply expertly picked and laid out to dry.

## More on oolong & pu'er teas

- Oolong teas are made from semi-oxidised tea bush leaves, which places them somewhere in between green teas, which are not oxidised, and black teas, which are fully oxidised.
- Oolong teas are very popular in Asia, but they are less well-known in Europe. Their taste is typically rich, smooth and fragrant, with a long, sweet finish.
- Pu'er, famous for its reputed slimming properties, is different from other teas. The leaves are allowed to ferment in a carefully controlled aging process, giving it a distinctive earthy taste.

## More on rooibos & herbal teas

- Rooibos tea (pronounced 'roy-boss'), also known as redbush, is a full-bodied naturally caffeine free tea that only grows in South Africa's Cape region. The taste is smooth, natural and slightly sweet.
- Recently voted one of the world's healthiest foods by TIME magazine, rooibos is often appreciated as a soothing and health-giving substitute for traditional black tea.
- Fruit and herbal teas, which are simply made from dried herbs and flowers like peppermint and camomile, are also caffeine free and appreciated for their use in traditional medicine.

