Black tea

Red leaf and red tea
Black tea is made from new tea leaves, and is refined through a process of rolling and cutting, fermentation, and drying. In Chinese, black tea is actually referred to as “red tea”, because the colour of the dry tea leaves and brewed tea are usually red.

During the processing of black tea, the pro-oxidant effects of polyphenols are activated, resulting in a change in the chemical composition of the fresh leaves. The polyphenols are reduced by more than 90%, and produce theaflavin, thearubigins etc. The intensity of the aroma from the leaves increase after this process, and the combination of caffeine, catechins and theaflavins during this stage produce a more refined, complex taste.

Congou tea, Souchong tea and fine tea
Congou tea: this tea is considered to be one of the best varieties of Chinese black tea; it is typically only found in China. Unlike red tea, the leaves are kept whole and intact instead of being chopped up during processing, which gives the tea an elegant and full bodied finish.

Souchong tea: Souchong tea is a special tea of the Fujian Province in China. The tea is smoked by pine so it has a very strong smoky pine aroma. After brewing the colour of tea is dark red and is incredibly fragrant. This tea goes well with a little milk added to it.
Fine tea: After the process of atrophying and rolling, tea leaves are put through a machine which shreds them into smaller pieces. They are then fermented and dried. Fine tea brews faster than other types of tea due to its small leaf size. This tea goes well with milk and sugar, and should only be brewed once.

The famous black tea

1. Qimen Congou Red

Qimen congou is mainly produced in the Chinese Qimen County, Anhui Province. It has hundreds of years of production history. The tea leaves of Qimen congou are tight and color is dark red with gray, commonly known as "Glory". It smells like honey or orchids and keeps for a long time. When brewing, it tastes mellow and fragrant. Qimen congou red, Darjeeling tea from India and Sri Lanka season tea are three of the best black teas in the world.
2. **Dian Congou Red**

Dian Congou red is produced in the Yunnan Province, China. Because of the province’s favorable growth environment, especially fertile soil in Yunnan province, the tea is of exceptional quality and is a tea lover’s favourite. Dian Congou red has a relatively large leaf and is curled tight after rolling. The colour of the tea leaves are red and gold. By the end of 1938, the first batch of Dian Congous was sold in London. It sold for 800 pence per pound. It was the highest price for black tea at the time, and still is the most expensive tea in the world now. It is said that one of the Queen of England’s favourite teas is the Dian Congou.

3. **Ning Congou Red**

Ning Congou is famously known as one of China's oldest black teas. It is produced in the Jiangxi Province of China. It has a long tea tree planting history, as early as the Tang Dynasty (AD 618 ~ 907 years). These areas are quite mountainous, the soil is fertile and the climate is mild. As a consequence the tree has extremely deep roots, giving the leaves a complex flavour. Ning Congou Red's leaves are straight, almost black in colour with a smooth texture. Its flavour is mellow and sweet, like Qi Congou Red, and lasts a long time.

**Brewing black tea**

Because black tea involves fermentation in its production process, it is better to brew the leaves with a high temperature. If you don’t like the bitterness, avoid soaking for a long time. When brewed properly, the black tea is fragrance and mellow. There are two ways of brewing, the ‘quick’ method and the ‘Gongfu’ method (which is more complex). Black tea can be drunk alone or with milk and sugar added; it is up to what you like. It can also be boiled in the stove. Generally we recommend using tea cups for black, but teapots can also be used if making for a large group.
of people. Our instructions for brewing a cup of black tea are listed below.

1. Cleaning: Generally before brewing, we need to prepare the tea set, such as tea pot and tea cup. Then use clean water to clean them one by one.

2. Put tea into the cup: Generally put 3-5 g tea or 1-2 teabags into a cup. If you use tea pot to boil the tea, use the same ratio for the amount of tea to water.

3. Brewing: Pour the boiling water into the cup. Choose white porcelain cup for quality tea, that way you can also enjoy the color and shape of leaves after brewing. Usually water is poured until it is 80% full. If you’re making tea on the stovetop, the water should be boiled first, then boiled again after the tea leaves are placed inside.

4. Watch and smell: Usually after brewing for three minutes, it is ready for you to take in its fragrance and watch the color. This is an essential step for brewing quality tea.

5. Tasting: Enjoy the tea when it is ready. Take your time when drinking the tea, especially for quality tea. Drink slowly and enjoy the flavour. Congou black tea can be brewed 2-3 times. Others are usually brewed only once. Do not add water when tea is all gone, add it when there is still one-third of the tea is left. This will keep tea at the right temperature, as well as the right concentration.

The benefit of black tea
Black Tea is one of the most common teas in the world. In Chinese Medicine, Black Tea has warm properties and is generally used for cold and blockage symptoms.

Black tea and health
Black tea is best suited for drinking in the morning. After sleeping all night, the body is in a
relatively static state. Drinking tea can promote blood circulation, while the body can get rid of the cold, promoting a healthy blood supply to the brain. Although generally it is not good to drink tea on empty stomach, black tea is mild, so it can be taken every morning when you wake up. It is also good to have a cup of black tea with milk after breakfast.

Afternoon around 3:00 is also a good time to drink black tea. At this time, drinking tea plays a role in conditioning with human body, and enhances the body's immune system, as well as cold prevention. It is the most important time in a day for the tea, commonly known as afternoon tea. For the people with high blood pressure, high blood sugar or high cholesterol, if you insist on drinking tea, it can achieve the result which medicine usually cannot.

Black tea is mild and good for the stomach, and most suited for the colder months of the year. In these seasons human body is physiological weak and Qi is weakened, so it requires more energy and nutrition. Black tea can raise Qi of body and is rich in protein and sugar, which can give warmth to the body enhance the body's resistance to cold. Have a cup of tea in the afternoon of autumn, it can warm your body and prevent you from disease.

Black tea is not suitable for drinking when cold. It counteracts the black tea's ability to nourish and warm the stomach. Leaving the tea out for too long can also affect the nutritional value and efficacy of the tea.