

REVOLUTION TEA

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For centuries, tea has been a way of life for the people of Asia and England. In America, however, these traditions have yet to catch on as most Americans favor coffee to tea; in fact, we consume only 4% of the world's tea compared with 23% of its coffee. This could be traced, in part, back to our founding days when tea was a symbol of oppression by the British. In 1773, colonists dressed as Indians dumped 10,000 pounds of tea into Boston Harbor over taxation issues in the famous Boston Tea Party.

Tempe based Revolution Tea is hoping to invigorate the U.S. tea market. Since 1998, they have provided quality tea in an attempt to tip the scales away from coffee. Most tea connoisseurs agree that whole leaf tea is preferable, both in taste and healthfulness. For the purists, Revolution offers 2.75-ounce boxes of loose whole leaf tea. Today's "on the go" society, however, demands simplicity... enter the "Nylon Infuser" tea bag. While most manufacturers use "dust" grade tea in their bags (the leftovers after all the whole leaves are sorted out), Revolution's trademarked system offers the convenience of bags with the quality of whole leaves - the best of both worlds. For three years in a row now this commitment has earned them the "Gold Medal Taste Award of Excellence" from the American Tasting Institute.

True "tea" is made from the dried leaves of the *Camellia sinensis*, which was found growing wild in India and first cultivated in China. Today, tea is grown in many Asian countries including China, India, Japan and Sri Lanka. Each of the more than 3000 varieties has its own distinct character and is named for the district in which it is grown (ie: Darjeeling and Ceylon). All green, black, oolong and white teas come from the same plant - they are simply treated differently. Green tea is produced by steaming freshly picked leaves before drying; black tea is allowed to completely ferment before it is dried; oolong is only partially fermented; and white tea, the least processed of all, is simply withered and dried.

Tea is frequently compared to wine in terms of its variety and flavor complexity. Like winemaking, creating quality tea is a combination of cultivation, climate conditions and processing; teas are often blended in order to combine different tastes. From an 8000-square-foot facility in Tempe and a 500-square-foot facility in Taiwan, Revolution's "master blenders" combine whole leaf teas, fruits, herbs, spices, and natural flavorings in order to produce a cornucopia of proprietary flavors. If a single cup is in order, their Hot Tea selections include EARL GREY LAVENDER, TROPICAL GREEN, GOLDEN FLOWERS HERBAL, SWEET GINGER PEACH, ENGLISH BREAKFAST, SOUTHERN MINT DECAF, BOMBAY CHAI, WHITE TANGERINE, ROYAL PLUM and HONEYBUSH CARAMEL. Or, perhaps, try one of their two best selling Variety Packs and you're sure to find a flavor you will love. They also offer a unique system for making full pots, called the "Nylon Pyramid Tea Bag," which offers perfectly brewed pots of tea in one convenient bag. This excellent tea is available in many of the

above flavors, with the addition of DRAGON EYE OOLONG, CITRUS SPICE HERBAL, and their first organic offering, REVOLUTION ORGANIC GREEN.



If hot isn't your "cup of tea," iced tea is also available in bags, ready to make right in your coffee pot and offered in three flavors - RED HAWAIIAN, REVOLUTION BLEND and TROPICAL GREEN. While these can make excellent tea on their own, I like to combine two bags of the hot TROPICAL GREEN and two bags of their most popular flavor, SWEET GINGER PEACH, in a standard sized tea jar for the best iced tea I've ever had. In addition to teas, related accessories, such as teapots, boxes and gift sets are also available. Whatever your taste, Revolution is sure to please.

A selection of product is available locally at AJ's, Coffee Plantation and Sur la Table, as well as being served in various valley restaurants, such as The Desert Oasis, Sapporo, and Eddie Matney's. You can also order online at www.amazon.com or, for the best selection, use Revolution's extremely user-friendly website, www.revolutionteas.com. For \$4.99, you can purchase a box of 16 tea bags or loose-leaf tea; though the pyramid bags run \$11.99 for fifteen,

each one makes about three cups of tea, making it the best value. The iced tea bags are \$4.99 for four bags (three with the RED HAWAIIAN) and make one and a half quarts. Revolution distributes to 42 other states plus Europe, Australia and New Zealand and plans to begin shipping to South America in the near future. According to spokesperson Jeff Irish, international sales are “rocking and rolling” and outpacing domestic sales.

If the great taste of tea isn't enough to convince you, try this on for size: studies have shown that tea, especially green tea, can reduce blood glucose levels and high blood pressure. It contains antioxidants called polyphenols that can destroy cancer-causing “free radicals” and temper the effects of aging and pollution. Tea reduces LDL (bad cholesterol) while increasing HDL (good cholesterol) thus reducing the risk of heart disease. Even without cream, tea's many phytochemicals can strengthen bones and its content of fluoride strengthens teeth (just avoid the sugar). In some cases, the chemical used in decaffeination can decrease the health benefits; Revolution, however, uses a chemical-free water process that has shown not to negatively impact the benefits. For centuries, the Chinese have attributed tea drinking to increased life span. When eating your apple a day, you might want to wash it down with a cup of tea, just to be on the safe side. Besides, tea has half the caffeine as coffee and no calories.

As the health benefits of tea are examined by medical researchers and promoted by the media, tea will undoubtedly rise to prominence in Western culture. Revolution Tea is right on the cutting edge, poised to capitalize on this growing market. According to Mr. Irish, the company experienced a growth of 300 percent in 2003 and is looking for the same in 2004. With quality teas and reasonable prices, Revolution is giving everyone a great reason to Drink it in™.