

Date: June 4, 2019

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**LOCAL TEA ROOM TO CELEBRATE NATIONAL ICED TEA MONTH WITH TEA TASTING
AND TEA ON TAP**

New Port Richey, Florida – This June is National Iced Tea Month and The White Heron Tea & Gifts in historic downtown New Port Richey is the perfect place to celebrate the nation's love of this delicious beverage.

Iced tea, according to statistics by the Tea Association of the U.S.A., Inc., accounts for 75-80% of all tea that is consumed nationwide. "This time of year, we see a large increase in the request for iced tea, in both our tearoom and in our tea-to-go services," states Kelly Hackman, Tea Sommelier and owner of The White Heron Tea & Gifts. "We still see the a majority of hot tea drinkers for our traditional tea services in our tearoom, but there is no doubt that iced tea is a large part of what we serve overall, especially to go."

As history goes, iced tea started to appear in the United States around the 1860's. While mostly in the southern regions, mainly the Carolinas, iced tea became more wide spread by the 1870's. It was around this time that recipes for making iced tea began to appear in cookbooks. In fact, two of the earliest cookbooks with iced tea recipes were the *Buckeye Cookbook* published in 1876 and written by Estelle Woods Wilcox, and *Housekeeping in Old Virginia* published in 1877 and written by Marion Cabell Tyree.

Despite these early publications, iced tea didn't gain in popularity until after the World's Fair in St. Louis in 1904. It was at this World's Fair that Richard Belchynden, a merchant and tea plantation owner, decided it would be better to sample his tea cool rather than hot, due to the hot weather at the fair. The tea sold so well at the World's Fair that it gained national popularity.

To help celebrate this national designation, The White Heron Tea & Gifts has scheduled their Summer Tea Tasting, on Friday, June 21st from 5 pm to 7 pm at their location, 6228 Grand Boulevard, New Port Richey. This tea tasting will feature 6 different iced teas, from blacks to

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National Iced Tea month cont.

greens and herbals. “Each summer we feature some of our unique teas in cold form so that guests can see how they change in complexity and how refreshing tea can be,” explained Hackman. “We make our teas with no added ingredients or sweeteners and are happy to provide refreshing and healthy alternatives to stay hydrated in the summer heat, at zero calories and with a delicious taste.”

In addition to their upcoming Summer Tea Preview, The White Heron is excited to announce that starting June 11th, they will also have Tea on Tap. “We are very excited to offer Tea on Tap for our guests,” stated Hackman. “Tea on Tap is where we make a keg of tea and put it through our kegerator for dispensing. It is regular iced tea that becomes slightly carbonated and is very refreshing.”

Hackman has been supplying kegs of iced tea for Tea on Tap to her husband’s brewery, Cotee River Brewing Company (also located in historic downtown New Port Richey) since he opened, to allow for guests to enjoy non-alcoholic beverages while visiting the brewery. “We have seen the popularity of Tea on Tap and thought it was only natural that our tea shop have it available for our guests too,” Hackman says. “It will also provide our guests with a quicker way to get tea, as they won’t have to wait for tea to be steeped if they choose one of the teas that is on tap.” Guests will still be able to get freshly brewed hot and iced teas of their choice if they prefer.

The White Heron Tea & Gifts is open Tuesday through Saturday. The gift shop is open from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. Tuesday through Thursday, and 11 a.m. to 7 p.m. Friday and Saturday. The tearoom is open for reservations each day at 12 p.m., 2 p.m. and 4 p.m. and the Tea Parlour serves tea and scones without reservation Tuesday through Saturday from 11 am to 4 pm daily. A complete menu is available online at www.thewhiteheronfl.com or by stopping in The White Heron Tea & Gifts at 6228 Grand Boulevard, in historic downtown New Port Richey.

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