



The Tea Room Times

Presented by: The White Heron Tea & Gifts

January is National

Hot Tea Month



As the weather gets cooler during the first part of the year, it seems only fitting that we would celebrate a beverage that makes us feel warm and fuzzy inside. Yes, I'm talking about tea....the second most consumed beverage world-wide (behind water). However, in the United States, tea ranks only in the top ten of beverages, and over 80% of tea consumed is iced.

Despite not being the number one preferred way to enjoy tea, hot tea, long thought to be time consuming to make and often not tasting the greatest (especially if using largely commercial brands), actually has a lot of benefits for your body.

For many people, simply holding a nice cup of hot tea and sipping it provides a type of relaxation that is rarely achieved today. With our busy lives, we rarely take time out to just be, and enjoying a nice hot cup of tea gives us that break, releasing stress, and warming us from the inside out.

In addition to the relaxation aspect, tea has many other benefits, including but

not limited to: helping control blood pressure, boosting immunity, increasing bone density, lowering cholesterol, decreasing overall body inflammation, and increasing memory.

These benefits are derived from the actual *Camellia Sinensis* tea plant, and includes black tea, green tea, oolong, white tea, yellow tea, and dark tea (puerh). Herbals, not including the tea plant and often called tisanes, have different benefits.

The reason the *Camellia Sinensis* plant is so important is because it contains certain chemicals that help the cells in our body to respond positively to it, and to replace damaged cell parts with good to make our cells work properly. Those chemicals include L-theanine (an amino acid that triggers relaxation and the "umami" feeling), and catechins (a natural antioxidant that helps prevents cell damage and prevents the formation of free radicals in the body, that ultimately protect our cells from being damaged).

Knowing all of the positive aspects that tea can provide our bodies, I encourage you to take time each day during this new year to sip a nice warm cuppa or two and give your body the boost it needs to be the best that it can be.

Winter 2025

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The White Heron Tea & Gifts,
as seen on Daytime TV, ABC
Action News, Bay News 9,
and House Hunters.
Featured in Tea Time
Magazine, Destination Tea,
Tampa Bay Magazine,
Suncoast News, and Tampa
Bay Times. Voted Best
Tea Room in Tampa Bay by
readers of the Tampa Bay
Times Best of the Best (2025,
2024, 2023, 2022, 2021,
2020)

Dear Friends and Tea Lovers...

Happy Winter! I know many of our guests enjoy Florida's warmer weather more than the cooler months, but I just love when the temperatures drop. I don't think that it's that I especially love colder weather (I was born and raised in Florida after all), but I get excited about that is to come after the cold weather. The promise of growth and renewal. With the onset of Winter, Spring is just a few months away!



To keep you busy this Winter, we have some great things planned for you. From Tea After Darks to Paint and Sips with Coastal Creations, and Tea Leaf Readings with Dawne, there's lots to do. We hope you will take a look at our upcoming events calendar and make plans to join us at one or all of the fun activities at our tearoom.

Also happening this January, our tearoom celebrates its 10-year anniversary. Who would have thought that what started out as a dream over ten years ago, would celebrate a decade of serving tea and hosting tea parties. And in New Port Richey, no less.

I still remember when I was trying to decide what business I wanted to open in my beautiful hometown. Back then, New Port Richey looked much different. Many storefronts were vacant, and the town had very little foot-traffic to support any business. I remember telling my family I wanted to open a business in the downtown district and I believe they thought I was crazy. I'm sure I was, but I had hope that I could become part of our historic city's landscape and help in its revitalization efforts.

A tearoom wasn't my first choice. I originally wanted to open a gift shop, a place where people could come and feel comfortable, where we could share community. You know, like those shops we all see in our favorite holiday movies. I had stars in my eyes and love in my heart for creating that sort of atmosphere for our town. But fate had a different idea.

After talking with my advising team about business and types of establishments our town needed, and that would actually survive, I decided a gift shop might not be the best idea. Then, divine intervention happened. The idea of a tearoom surfaced, and although my first thought was, "I don't even like tea," I decided to consider the idea.

Did you know that people will travel for teatime? At the time I decided to open my tearoom, statistics showed that guests would travel up to an hour and a half just to enjoy the afternoon tea experience. That alone had me convinced that a tearoom would work in New Port Richey. And the rest, they say, is history.

As we celebrate our 10th anniversary this January, I reflect on how far we've come. From our three table, twelve seat original tearoom, to three units in our beautiful historic building, I have all of you to thank for helping me fulfill my dream. Not just my dream of owning a business, but my dream of being a catalyst in returning New Port Richey to grandeur.

Today, over 50 new businesses call downtown New Port Richey home. It's exciting for us business owners, but even more exciting for our community, that has struggled throughout history. Having a thriving downtown was a dream, just as much as the tearoom. And I have to thank you for making both a reality, and something that we all can be proud of.

As we celebrate this year, we look ahead, to what our tearoom can continue to do to be a positive and exciting experience for our guests, and what we can continue to do to help New Port Richey towards a path of success. Thank you to each and every one of you who have ever visited us for tea, shopped in our gift shop, or shared about our tearoom with your friends. You are just as much a part of our success story, and we thank you.

Cheers to an amazing New Year!

Kelly M. Hackman

Upcoming Events

January 2026

10 Year Anniversary and National Hot Tea Month Proclamations from the City of New Port Richey - Tuesday, January 6, 2026 at 6 pm

Join The White Heron team at the New Port Richey City Council Meeting, where we will receive two proclamations. The first proclamation is in recognition of 10 years in downtown New Port Richey and our contributions to the city's revitalization efforts, and the second is to celebrate National Hot Tea Month. We will have a tea and mini-scone sample in the lobby for guests to enjoy.

Tea After Dark - 10 Year Anniversary Celebration - Thursday, January 15, 2026 - 6 pm

Join us as we celebrate 10 years of The White Heron with our Tea After Dark. This evening will be filled with delicious tea treats, as well as Kelly, our owner, sharing stories about the tearoom from her upcoming book, "Steeping a Dream: From Vision to Teacup, the Story of a Tearoom.", being released in February 2026.

Come join us for a relaxing and delightful evening in our beautiful tearoom. \$40 per person (plus tax and gratuity). Advance reservation required. Call (727) 203-3504.

Tea 101 with Kelly - Saturday, January 17, 2026 at 10 am

Join me to learn about tea, and why we love this beautiful leaf so much, and enjoy samples of three original teas as we talk about proper steeping and the benefits of drinking tea. Class is \$20 per person. Call to reserve your space today at (727) 203-3504.

Paint and Sip with Coastal Creations - Thursday, January 22, 2026 - 6 pm

Art and Tea? We are looking so forward to celebrating this month with the White Heron Tea & Gifts as they celebrate their 10-year anniversary! We decided simple but elegant fit the theme, so we will be painting a single flower on a canvas using acrylic paints in this workshop. The White Heron Tea will be serving up delightfully delicious tea & snacks to enjoy throughout the workshop. \$45 per person includes all supplies, instructions, and tea. Visit www.coastalcreationsNPR.com or call Coastal Creations at 727-843-1642 to register.

Tea Leaf Reading with Dawne - Friday, January 23, 2026 - 4 - 7 pm

What are the tea leaves trying to tell you? Join our tea leaf reader, Dawne, as she looks into your destiny and answers your burning questions, by reading your tea leaves. 15-minute one-on-one session, guests should arrive 15 minutes prior to their scheduled reading time. \$25 per person. Your tea leaf reading time will be provided to you when you register. Call (727) 203-3504.

February 2026

The Art of Letter Writing with Kelly - Thursday, February 5, 2026 - 5 pm

Writing letters used to be one of the only ways families and friends could communicate with each other. In today's world, where technology and our friends and family are just a call or text away, writing letters has all but become non-existent. Still, letters bring joy when the recipient finds one in their mailbox. Kelly loves to write letters, and she thought it would be fun to learn a little about letter writing and then write a letter to the person you chose. She will bring the paper, you bring the address, and together we will spend some time writing and mailing a letter the old-fashioned way. Guests will enjoy a pot of tea while writing a letter. Cost \$10 per person. Call (727) 203-3504 to reserve your space.

Tea After Dark - Galentine's Day Tea Party: Thursday, February 12, 2026 at 6 pm

This night is all about the "Gals" in our lives. We need our gals for support, friendship, and what better way to enjoy them than with an enjoyable evening tea. It's the perfect night to get dressed up, gather up your girlfriends and come join us for delicious tea-fare in our beautiful tearoom. Galentine's Day Evening Tea is \$40 per person, plus tax and gratuity. Space is limited and reservations are required. Reserve your table by calling the tearoom at (727) 203-3504.

Valentine's Day Tea - Saturday, February 14th - 2 pm

Bring your love to tea. Whether it's your spouse, significant other, best friend, best gal pal, mom, daughter, son, dad, or anyone you care about and want to spend time with, make time for tea with them this Valentine's Day. Reserve your table by calling the tearoom at (727) 203-3504.

Tea Leaf Reading with Dawne - Friday, February 27, 2026 - 4 - 7 pm

What are the tea leaves trying to tell you? Join our tea leaf reader, Dawne, as she looks into your destiny and answers your burning questions, by reading your tea leaves. 15-minute one-on-one session, guests should arrive 15 minutes prior to their scheduled reading time. \$25 per person. Your tea leaf reading time will be provided to you when you register. Call (727) 203-3504.



5 Fun Facts About Tea

1. Tea used to be very expensive. It was kept in a locked tea chest in the parlor. The lady of the house was responsible for the tea and was often the only person with the key for the lock.

2. English tea gardens were the first public gathering place where women were allowed to mix with men publicly, without scandal or criticism.

3. In Ancient China, tea was a form of currency. Tea leaves were pressed into a brick. One side was scored so that it could easily be broken if change was needed.

4. There is a special name for when tea leaves uncurl as hot water is poured over them. It is called "the agony of the leaves."

5. Herbal teas are not actually teas because they do not contain leaves from the plant *Camellia Sinensis*. Instead, they are infusions made from the roots, leaves, flowers, seeds, and/or fruits of various plants and are often referred to as herbals or tisanes.

For more information about tea and proper steeping techniques, visit our website at www.TheWhiteHeronFL.com

NEW BOOK RELEASE!

Steeping a Dream

From vision to teacup, a tale of a tearoom
The Story of The White Heron Tea & Gifts
By Kelly M. Hackman

Available for Pre-Order at The White Heron and online in January
Releasing in February 2026



The White Heron Tea & Gifts
Driftwood Tea Company
6228 Grand Boulevard
New Port Richey, Florida 34652

Winter Tea Sampler

We are excited to bring back our seasonal tea sampler.

Enjoy our favorite Winter Flavors in one place.

This seasonal sampler includes 6 of our favorites!

Each flavor includes 3 tea sachets for a total of 18 cups of tea!

Christmas in a Cup
Corsican Pear Spice
Granny Green Apple
Snickerdoodle
Vienna Eggnog
Winter Cherry

Limited quantities available for this year's tea sampler.
Now available at The White Heron Tea & Gifts and online at
www.DriftwoodTeaCompany.com

2025 WINTER COLLECTION

Driftwood Tea Company is excited to bring you



Winter Tea Highlight **Vienna Eggnog**

Just like the real thing! Rum notes with a sweet caramel and light cinnamon ginger finish.