



THE Tea Room TIMES

JUNE | JULY | AUGUST 2023

It's Time For Tea What Is White Tea?



**Jason McDonald from The Great Mississippi Tea Company
Helps Us Understand This Lesser-Known Tea.**

It's summertime and that means much warmer weather that leaves all of us looking for ways to cool down. Hot tea consumption declines in the

summer, while iced tea consumption increases.

When it comes to teas consumed, there are a variety of types of tea to enjoy. Many (especially in the southern states) enjoy black tea, sweet or regular. Iced green tea has also seen an increase in consumption in the recent years, though it is rarely found on a restaurant menu. But what other refreshing options are available?

White tea has become a favorite of many of our tearoom guests over the past several years. At the White Heron, we love the delicateness and lightness of this delicious tea. It's very different than the traditional black and green teas and that's why we like it. Like black and green teas, white tea is absolutely delicious hot, but on those warm summer days having an iced glass of white tea is about as refreshing as one can get.

To learn more about white tea, we enlisted the help of Jason McDonald*, owner of The Great Mississippi Tea Company to explain what makes white tea unique and different than black and green tea. We hope you enjoy our question-and-answer session with Jason as we all learn more about white tea.

Tea Room Times: Can you tell us what white tea is? We know it's tea but what makes it unique?

Jason McDonald: White tea is the least processed of the tea types. Unlike black, green, and other types of teas that are made



from the *Camellia Sinensis* plant that require extensive and precise rolling and drying, white tea doesn't require any of that.

There is a lot of mystery that surrounds white tea because so many people aren't familiar with the type of tea. While it is plucked and 'that's it', there are so many factors that go into the tea. It is not just plucking tea and sitting it on the table to dry.

TRT: White tea is made from the same plant as black, green, and oolong teas. How is white tea processed differently than these other teas?

JM: White tea does not have any rolling. All of the flavors must come from chemicals in the leaf from growing environment (i.e.- UV protection, sun protection, shade, etc.) or what is created in withering (i.e.- the breakdown of larger more complex chemical into smaller more delicious and aromatic chemicals).

Oppositely, black tea processing relies on the roll to break down the cells and create an oxidation which gives it, its main flavors. Green tea processing stops the chemistry before the oxidized flavors are created in the leaf.

The end result requires steps to get you there. In white tea, being able to use all of your senses and tea making skill is required because there is no external manipulation.

TRT: Is white tea easy to produce?

JM: No, it is actually one of the hardest to produce. Again, some folks think they are producing white tea by plucking and sun drying. This is not the case. Think Silver Needles or Bai Mu Dan when you think of white tea.

It is reported that when making a batch of white tea, the tea factory manager is the one who actually processes this tea because it cannot be trusted to other folks to make correctly. It is probably a tea which requires the most skill and nuance than any other tea. It is not as easy as "pluck, that's it".

White Tea continued inside

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Dear Friends and Tea Lovers



I hope that our latest edition finds you well and that you are enjoying your summer.

I have always loved summertime. Despite the heat that we feel here in Florida, I've always felt that it's a great time to find adventure and try new things.

For me, summer also means spending some time in my favorite home away from home, Tennessee. I have been vacationing in an area close to the Great Smoky Mountains nearly every summer since I was eight years old.

As a girl from Florida, you can probably only imagine my wonder and awe seeing mountains and beautiful, tall, lush green trees for the first time as a child. Over the years, journeying on many hikes up and down those mountains, tubing in the ice-cold river, and camping under the stars, this girl came to find peace and comfort in those mountains.

During the closures in 2020, Bryan and I moved our camper to Tennessee. It's a big and heavy camper and I always told him if the camper made it to Tennessee, it wouldn't be coming back (mainly because of the price of gas to get it there). Well, he found a place to store it in the mountains, and there it is, waiting for us to return. Our little home away from home.

I've never ventured too far from home for a long period. Sure, I've gone on trips for up to three weeks, but I always come home to New Port Richey. It's where my heart is, where my family is, Tennessee has part of my heart too.

where my businesses are, and where you (my friends) are. Still, Tennessee is how much time I get to spend coming up with new ideas and new products. Many days I spend my time relaxing, writing, taking pictures, staging new and old products for photos, and allowing myself to think clearly about where I want to take The White Heron, Driftwood Tea Company, and now Driftwood Botanicals, in the future. I know that I love all of my businesses and products equally. It would be like asking me to pick a favorite tea, it's just not possible because they are all different and I love them equally. I also love that I take time each day to sit down and enjoy some tea while I'm on vacation (unfortunately, this isn't something I have perfected at home yet, someday). It might be in the morning when Bryan is making breakfast, or around the campfire at night, but there's just something special about enjoying my favorite beverage in one of my favorite places.

This summer, whether you travel or are planning a "staycation", I encourage you to take a few moments each day, slow down, enjoy a cup of tea and some time to just be you. Too often we are running around doing so many things, creating new adventures, and living life to the fullest. An adventure doesn't have to mean traveling somewhere physically, it can be relaxing in your oasis of a backyard, enjoying the sounds of kids playing at your local park (while you sit and sip a cup of tea), or sitting and relaxing by our lovely river.

This summer I am going to accept my own challenge and take my tea on an adventure to see what other places I can enjoy it. Won't you join me in this summer's tea adventure? Check out our Summer Tea Adventure in this newsletter. Snap some photos and share them with us. You just might find yourself in our next newsletter or on our social media!

I wish you all a wonderful, adventurous summer ahead, full of good tea and great times.

Your Friend in Tea,

Kelly

Kelly Hackman, owner of The White Heron Tea & Gifts and Driftwood Tea Company in historic downtown New Port Richey, Florida, is a World Tea Academy Certified Tea Sommelier and Certified Tea Specialist and Etiquette Consultant.

Avocado Chickpea Salad

Enjoy this refreshing “plant-based” treat this summer. This recipe is great for making a sandwich spread, a dip, or as a sandwich. At The White Heron, we use this delicious blend as a substitute for our chicken salad when we have vegetarian guests. It’s flavorful, filling, fresh and perfect for the warm Florida summers.

Ingredients

- 🥑 1 large ripe avocado (pit and skin removed)
- 🥑 1 (15 ounce) can of chickpeas
- 🥑 2 tablespoons basil pesto (premade from grocery store works great)
- 🥑 Juice from ½ lemon
- 🥑 Salt and Pepper to taste
- 🥑 Croissant (optional)
- 🥑 Baby Spinach (optional)

Directions

- 🥑 Open can of chickpeas, place chickpeas on a paper towel and roll and press them to loosen skins. Remove skins from all chickpeas. Put chickpeas in a plastic container and using a fork, crush and break up the chickpeas. You can break these up as much as you want so they blend well.
- 🥑 Add avocado to the chickpeas and mix well.
- 🥑 Add basil pesto, lemon, pinch of salt, and pepper, and mix well.
- 🥑 Put in fridge to for 30 minutes or more to allow flavors to blend together.
- 🥑 Cut croissant and put 3 leaves of baby spinach on bottom portion. Add avocado chickpea mixture to croissant.

ENJOY!

Alternative: Use the Avocado Chickpea salad as a dip. Place in bowl and serve with pita chips, pretzels, or your favorite crackers.



Photo Contest — Summer Tea Adventure

Summer is all about adventures, so we want you to share your Summer Tea Adventures with us!

Tea can be enjoyed anywhere. From the adorable tearoom you visit on vacation, to backpacking in the woods, to a fun-filled day on the beach, tea (hot or iced) is delicious and refreshing.

Take a photo of yourself enjoying tea (make sure we can see your teacup or glass) during your summer vacation and share your photo with us for a chance to win our Summer Tea Adventure Prize Pack. The more creative, the better! We will look forward to seeing your photos and sharing them with our guests on social media in the future.

Summer Tea Adventure Prize Pack includes:

Afternoon Tea for 2 at The White Heron (must be used September – October 2023), and a Summer Tea Adventure

Gift Basket with teas and other fun prizes. The total prize package is valued at over \$100.

Contest Rules: Photos must be taken between June 2023 and August 2023. Submit your photo (one entry per person only) via email at info@thewhiteheronfl.com or through messenger. Please include your name and phone number. Each person who submits an entry will be entered into our Summer Tea Adventure Contest and will receive one chance to win our Summer Tea Adventure Prize Pack. There is no monetary cost to enter. Submission deadline for contest entry is August 26 at 11:59 pm. By sending a photo, you agree to allow us to use your photo in future social media and print marketing for free. Please Note: You may submit more than one photo but will only be entered into the contest one time. Winner will be chosen at random the last week of August and notified via phone.



UPCOMING EVENTS AT THE WHITE HERON

JUNE

Celebrate National Iced Tea Month with some delicious tea from Driftwood Tea Company.

Throughout the month of June!



Tea Shop Closed for the 4th of July Holiday

Please note our tearoom and gift shop will be closed from July 2 – 11, 2023 to allow for our staff to enjoy their 4th of July Holiday and Annual Summer vacation. We appreciate your understanding and look forward to serving you tea when we return on July 12!

Join Me For Tea!

Thursday, July 27, 2023 • 12:00 pm

Many guests ask about having tea with me so here's your chance. Join me for Afternoon Tea on Thursday, July 27 at 12:00 pm. We will delight in our traditional tea service while we talk about tea and lots of other things. Bring your tea questions, learn about The White Heron, and enjoy some of my tea stories. **Limited spaces available, advance reservations required. Cost is \$21.95 per person (plus tax and gratuity), same as daily tea service.**

Tea Leaf Reading with Dawne

Friday, August 4, 2023 • 5:00 pm to 8:00 pm

Have you ever wanted to know what is in store for your future? What are 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. Each guest will have a 15 minute one-on-one session. Guests need to arrive 15 minutes prior to their scheduled reading time to

enjoy a cup of tea and prepare their leaves.

\$25 per person.

Your tea leaf reading time will be provided to you when you register. Call (727) 203-3504 to reserve your tea leaf reading time and pay for your visit.



AUGUST



Summer Vacation Closure

Please note that The White Heron Tea & Gifts will be closed the week of July 4th so that our team can enjoy a short respite from our busy first half of the year. Our closure includes the tearoom from July 5 – 8. We will reopen for tea service on Wednesday, July 12. You can still leave messages for teatime and we will return your call as soon as we return from vacation.

Did You Know? June is National Iced Tea Month

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 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.



Summer Tea Collection

Enjoy the flavors of the season with our annual Summer Tea Collection. This collection features some of our favorite fruity flavored teas, as well as herbals. All these teas have been chosen for their ability to be delicious both hot and iced. They are perfect and refreshing for the hot summertime.

Available late June this tea sampler is

\$16.95

**Purchase in store or online at
www.driftwoodteacompany.com**

(shipping rates apply for online orders)

**Get yours early as our samplers
tend to sell out quickly.**

White Tea continued from front

TRT: What can someone drinking it expect to taste?

JM: There is a wide range of flavors in white tea that some find pleasant. Having the right type of water is important with these teas as they are delicate in flavor. If one is expecting it to be as strong as black or green, they will be disappointed.

TRT: What is one thing you enjoy about drinking white tea?

JM: I like the lightness of it. It pairs well with summer fruits and can be great cold.

TRT: Is there anything else about white tea that our readers should know?

JM: Experiment with different qualities and types of white tea and find the one you like. Tea should be about enjoyment, and I hope your readers find that enjoyment.

We want to thank Jason McDonald from The Great Mississippi Tea Company for taking time to share about white tea. We, at The White Heron, love creating blends with white tea as it provides a light liquor that can be floral and naturally sweet. Our signature white tea blends include: Lavender Vanilla and Strawberry Dream. Both teas are available in our gift shop in New Port Richey, Florida, and online at www.driftwoodteacompany.com

We hope you will try some refreshing white tea this summer!

**Jason McDonald and Timmy Gipson own The Great Mississippi Tea Company located in Brookhaven, Mississippi. They are a US tea farm focused on growing high quality tea, in a sustainable farm to table way. They currently harvest and produce 13 different US Grown teas. Their teas can be purchased on there website at www.greatmsteacompany.com*

Let Me Introduce You To



You may already know our tea brand, Driftwood Tea Company. Now we are excited to introduce you to our newest brand, Driftwood Botanicals. You may have started seeing our new products in our tearoom gift shop, as well as at the gift shop at Coastline Salt Room.

Driftwood Botanicals provides beautiful, nature-inspired products for your personal and everyday use. Focusing on the benefits of botanicals, our products incorporate some traditional and non-traditional plant-based ingredients in our skincare and wellness lines.

Our signature skin care line incorporates matcha tea into a neutral base lotion. Matcha contains EGCG (epigallocatechins) which has been shown to be helpful in reducing inflammation and evening out skin tone. There are many other benefits to using matcha topically as well. For more information about this new matcha lotion, check out our website at www.driftwoodbotanicals.com

Enjoy Afternoon Tea At Home

**Enjoy all the delicious tea fare
from the comfort and safety of
your home when you order our
Tea To Go.**

Afternoon Tea to Go includes:

4 tea sandwiches/savories,
2 scones with Devonshire Cream and
Strawberry Preserves, 3 petite desserts,
and 2 tea sachets for you to fix and enjoy.

\$18.95

**Call and place your order today,
727-203-3504. Orders must be
placed 1 day in advance.**

**Tea To Go can be picked up
Wednesday - Saturday
from 11 am to 4 pm.**

DATES TO REMEMBER

June 10
National Iced Tea Day

June 14
National Flag Day

June 18
Father's Day

June 19
Juneteenth

June 21
First Day of Summer

July 4
Independence Day

July 16
National Ice Cream Day

July 24
International Self Care Day

August 6
National Friendship Day

August 7
Purple Heart Day

August 9
National Book Lover's Day

August 19
World Humanitarian Day

August 30
National Beach Day





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

A Tea To Fall In LOVE With Strawberry Kiwi

This tea is refreshing and light, perfect for the summer and for celebrating National Iced Month. Add fresh or frozen strawberries and slices of kiwi to enhance the tropical flavor. *This herbal tea is a bold, full-bodied herbal drink with refreshing strawberry and kiwi flavors, tending slightly tart.*

Luxury Ingredients: Apple + Rosehip + Kiwi + Strawberry pieces, Hibiscus petals, Natural flavors.

Tea(s) From: Canada / USA / Thailand / Spain

Antioxidant / Caffeine Level: Low / None (caffeine free herbal)

* This delicious tea is only available at The White Heron Tea & Gifts and available online at www.driftwoodteacompany.com



CONTACT US

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Visit us on the web at
www.thewwhiteheronfl.com

Enjoy our tea at home.
Visit our tea website at
www.driftwoodteacompany.com

**Reservations required for
tearoom services.**

Please call a minimum of
48 hours in advance.

**Large parties are encouraged to call well
in advance as the tearoom fills quickly.*