



National Hot Tea Month

January 2025

The White Heron Tea & Gifts

6228 Grand Boulevard, New Port Richey, Florida 34652

(727) 203-3504

www.thewhiteheronfl.com * www.driftwoodteacompany.com

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Dear Friends and Tea Lovers,

As The White Heron Tea & Gifts celebrates its ninth year in historic downtown New Port Richey, we are excited to see continued growth in our downtown area, and in our tearoom. With January being National Hot Tea Month, we are equally excited to share our favorite beverage with you.

Tea has a unique history as the world's second most consumed beverage behind water. It has been a part of cultures around the world for thousands of years, and continues to bring people together over its unique rituals.

We are excited to share in the growing popularity of this beautiful beverage, not just for its history and culture, but for health and wellness.

Throughout this month and beyond, if you have any questions about tea, you want to learn more about it, or you just want to share a cup of tea and friendly conversation, I invite you to reach out to me. I would love the opportunity to meet and visit with you over a "cuppa" tea. I can also send you some tea to sample and enjoy.

I hope you take time this National Hot Tea Month, to take a break, take a sip, and truly enjoy this beautiful beverage.

Yours Truly,

Kelly

Kelly M. Hackman, Tea Sommelier / Tea Specialist

The White Heron Tea & Gifts

PS. To keep up to date with all of our happenings at The White Heron, be sure to check out our newsletter, The Tearoom Times, on our website at www.thewhiteheronfl.com Sign up for our newsletter there too!

Celebrating National Hot Tea Month

As Cooler Weather Creeps in, Drinking Hot Tea is on the Rise.

New Port Richey, Florida - As cooler weather arrives in even the warmest of places, drinking warm beverages increases. “Where iced tea reigns supreme as the way majority of people consume tea in the United States, it’s during these cooler months that we see an increase of hot tea being consumed,” states Kelly Hackman, owner of The White Heron Tea & Gifts and Driftwood Tea Company.

National Hot Tea Month, each year in January (usually the coldest month of the year), highlights the health benefits of drinking tea, as well as the history of tea, and the unique cultures and customs that exist for drinking tea from around the world.

The legend behind the founding of tea is as unique as the plant itself. And it’s only fitting that the first tea ever drank, was hot. We have Emperor Shen Nung to thank for this drink we enjoy so much. For, legend has it that in 2732 B.C., the Emperor was boiling his water under a tree when several leaves fell into his pot. Rather than removing the, he let them sit, and then tried the water. It says he was pleasantly surprised at the aroma and taste of the resulting brew.

In early days, tea bricks were traded as currency. Empires have been created, and wars fought, all in the name of tea.

“It’s fun to think about all of the ways tea has influenced our lives today and of those of the past,” states Hackman. “From Mr. Fortune’s mission to take tea from China and give England the opportunity to grow it in India, to the Boston Tea Party, tea has had its share of unique influences on history.”

-Next-

Hot Tea Month cont.

There are many ways to celebrate National Hot Tea Month. Here are a few ways to enjoy tea this month.

- Share your favorite cup of tea with a friend. Do you have a favorite blend or brand of tea? Send some to your friend to enjoy.
- Have a Virtual Tea Party. Invite your friends to a virtual tea party and enjoy a chat over a delicious cup of tea. With so many different online platforms to gather, it's the perfect time to join your friends over a cuppa and catch up on the latest happenings with each of you. If you live near a tea shop that offers Afternoon Tea To Go (The White Heron does), you can order all of your tea-fare and enjoy a distanced Afternoon Tea with your friend.
- Schedule a daily tea break, for the entire month of January. It seems like a daunting task, taking time out of your afternoon, every day, to enjoy a nice cup of tea. Trust us, your mind and body will thank you for it later. It's true, we all need a break, and even the 10-15 minutes it takes to enjoy a cup of tea can make all the difference in how the rest of your day goes. And you may never know, you may just want to continue your daily tea breaks all year long.

Upcoming Events

January 2025

Monday, January 6, 2025 – Walk and Talk Club's Walk to The White Heron – 10 am

In partnership with the New Port Richey Public Library, the library's Walk and Talk Club will visit The White Heron to learn about National Hot Tea Month and the benefits of drinking tea. Meet at the New Port Richey Public Library (5939 Main Street, New Port Richey) at 10 am and walk to The White Heron.

Tuesday, January 7, 2025 – Proclamation for National Hot Tea Month – 6 pm

Join us at City Hall at 6 pm for a presentation of the Proclamation declaring January 2025 as National Hot Tea Month in the City of New Port Richey.

Sunday, January 12, 2025 – Celebrate National Hot Tea Day

Stop into The White Heron and enjoy a hot tea-to-go for just \$1.99. Our Tea Sommelier will be on-site to tell you all about tea and help you pick the perfect tea for you to enjoy. Special available from 11 am to 2 pm.

Friday, January 24, 2025 – Join Me for Tea – 2pm

Celebrate 9 years of tea at The White Heron by joining me for tea. We will enjoy traditional Afternoon Tea while we share memories of our tearoom and more. Bring your tea questions, learn about The White Heron, and enjoy some of my tea stories. Limited spaces available, advance reservation required. Cost is \$24.95 plus tax and gratuity (same as daily tea service).

Friday, January 24, 2025 – Tea Leaf Reading with Dawne – 4 pm – 7 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.

Sunday, January 26, 2025 – Scone Sunday – 11 am – 1 pm

Join us for a relaxing Sunday afternoon in our Tea Parlour. Scone Sunday will feature our "Cream Tea" option, including a pot of tea of your choosing, and two scones (one flavored, one plain) with Devonshire cream. You can enjoy our Cream Tea for the original price from 2016, for \$8.95 (plus tax and gratuity). (Current Cream Tea price - \$9.50). No reservation needed, just pop in from 11 am to 1 pm and enjoy this relaxing treat.

Tea Profiles



White Tea:

- Plucked, withered and dried.
 - White tea is the most pure, non-processed form of tea.
 - Leaves are naturally dried in the sun.
 - These leaves are green or grey in color. If they are reddish, they were withered too hot. If they are black, they are withered too cold.
- White tea oxidizes during withering where in green tea the oxidation process is stopped early in the tea making process by steaming or pan firing.

Benefits:

- In addition to its anticancer properties, tea has a calming and detoxifying effect on the skin. White tea is especially potent in that it has three times as many anti-oxidant polyphenols as green or black tea and has been shown to be 100% more effective in mopping up free radicals that cause the skin to sag. That is why some of the top cosmetic companies are interested in using white tea in their skin creams

Brewing:

- Best brewed at 165-175 and should be consumed without milk or sweetener.



Green Tea:

- Green tea is the oldest of all of the tea families and is the second least processed tea.
 - Once withered, the tea is steamed or pan-fired in a wok. Cooking kills the enzymes to prohibit oxidation. This process of heating the leaves enough to “kill the green” flavor is called de-enzyming and is the defining process of green tea. It removes the bitter taste of tea by cooking it enough to chemically alter the bitter tasting compounds.
- By cooking it, it negates the leaves’ ability to promote oxidation (which is needed for black tea), and preserves the green color of the leaf.

- The leaves are either rolled by hand or machine and dried. Since it's not bruised or oxidized, the leaf retains its natural dark olive green color and its vegetative aroma and taste.

Benefits:

- Green tea is an excellent source of antioxidants and polyphenols.
- A cup of tea without milk or sugar or other additives contains no calories.
- One Japanese study concluded that women who drank 10 Japanese size (about 3 ounces) cups of green tea per day were likely to live cancer free for 7.3 years longer than those that drank less quantities of green tea.
- Instead of drinking green tea, some people apply green tea bags to their skin to soothe sunburn and prevent skin cancer due to sun exposure. Green tea bags are also used to decrease puffiness under the eyes, as a compress for tired eyes or headaches, and to stop gums from bleeding after a tooth is pulled.
- Green tea is also used in an attempt to minimize the effects of Chron's disease, Parkinson's disease, diseases of the heart and blood vessels, diabetes, low blood pressure, chronic fatigue syndrome, dental cavities, kidney stones, and skin damage.

Brewing:

- Best brewed at 175-190. No additional milk or sweetener



Oolong Tea:

- Oolong tea goes through an additional process during the wither. The edges of the leaves are slightly bruised (usually by rolling the tea in baskets during the wither). The reason for this is that the leaves are lightly bruised to start the oxidation process.
- Withered in the direct sun and then shaken in tubular bamboo baskets to bruise the leaf edges.
- The bruising is what makes the edges oxidize faster than the center. After 15-25 minutes (depending upon ambient temperature and humidity levels) the tea is fired, locking in the special flavor profile.
- Semi-fermentation gives the tea a little bit more body than green but less body than black.

**Ti Kuan Yin is the best known Chinese oolong, is aromatic and elegant, and comes from the Fujian province. The slightly twisted leaves unfurl as a mixture of red-brown and dark green colors that release a honey-colored liquor with a delicately sweet floral flavor.*

- Flavor profile – sweet and fragrant and has no bitter notes.
- Tasting Notes: Distinctive light cup with hints of orchid-like flavor.
Infusion: Pale green yellow liquor, tending slightly amber

Brewing:

- Best brewed at 190 degrees and should be consumed without the addition of milk, lemon, or sweetener. This tea can be steeped multiple times.



Black:

- Black tea is withered like white and green, then rolled to create bruising, which allows the oxidation process to start. Hard withering is when the leaf is dried harshly. Soft wither is when the leaf is slowly withered, making it more pliable.
- This chemical breakdown helps turn the leaves brown and is often accomplished by rolling and applying pressure, secreting liquid out of the leaf.
- After oxidation, the tea is fired and sorted into classes.

Benefits:

- May improve heart health
- May lower “bad” LDL Cholesterol
- Reduce Blood Pressure and Risk of Stroke
- Reduce Blood Sugar

Brewing:

- Best brewed using 212 degree water, for 3-5 minutes (no more than 5 minutes). This tea holds milk and sweeteners well, as well as lemon, though it's not necessary to enjoy this tea.



Dark (Puerh):

- Dark teas are a unique type of tea, where the leaves are allowed or encouraged to ferment in the true sense of the word, in order to develop their characteristic flavors, dark colored liquor and unique aromas.

- After being plucked, withered and de-enzymed. Leaves go through rolling and shaping and is repeated after a second heating. Then leaves are set out to dry.

- It is set in storage to age and ferment naturally. Or may be piled, moistened and the covered to go through a carefully monitored process of accelerated fermentation. This process may last several months.

Benefits:

- Increased energy, promotes healthy heart (lower risk of heart disease), cleanses toxins and free radicals, prevent cancer (prevents the growth of cancer cells), protects bone health (polyphenols develop higher bone mass), aids in weight loss, reduces stress, prevents illness (high in antioxidants and vitamin C).

Brewing:

- Best brewed at 212 degrees for 4-5 minutes. This tea can be steeped multiple times. Enjoy plain or with milk and sweetener.



About Kelly Hackman and The White Heron Tea & Gifts

Kelly Hackman is a World Tea Academy Certified Tea Sommelier and Tea Specialist, and the owner of The White Heron Tea & Gifts in historic downtown New Port Richey. Hackman entered the tea industry in 2016 when she designed a unique and refreshing tearoom in her town's historic downtown district. Breaking away from the traditional tearoom atmosphere of Victorian-era influences, Hackman chose to use her Florida location to create a destination reminiscent of a "tropical spa-like" resort. The success of her tearoom has led to expansion over the past eight years, increasing her tearoom capacity to three times the original size and garnering her several awards for "Best Tea Room". Since opening her tearoom, Hackman has carved out a unique place in her town's landscape, drawing guests throughout the Southeastern United States and beyond.

The White Heron Tea & Gifts is proud to represent historic downtown New Port Richey and its thriving business community by being featured in local print, tv, and social media outlets. The White Heron Tea & Gifts has been featured in Tea Time Magazine, and seen on House Hunters, Day Time TV, Bay News 9, ABC Action News 28; has been featured in Tampa Bay Business Journal, Tampa Bay Magazine, Tampa Bay Times, Suncoast News, and Nature Coaster; mentioned in dozens of articles promoting New Port Richey and the tea industry overall; and has been named Best of the Best Tea Room by the Tampa Bay Times for the past five years (2020-2024).

In addition to the success of The White Heron Tea & Gifts, Hackman has continued to focus on providing the highest quality tea from around the world. Through her private-label tea brand, *Driftwood Tea Company*, Hackman works with tea growers and brokers around the world to seek out unique and flavorful teas that her guests will enjoy. Several of her personal tea blends have been recognized by various tea industry leaders as some of the best teas currently available. Her *Lavender Vanilla White Tea* was recognized with a "Highly Commended" recommendation in 2023 from the Leafie tea competition hosted by the International Tea Academy and Fortum and Mason; and her *Luscious Loquat Green Tea* was the recipient of a Silver Medal in the 2019 Global Tea Championships. Currently, *Driftwood Tea Company* teas are available at The White Heron Tea & Gifts, as well as online through the brand's website.

Hackman is a favored guest speaker, sharing history and foundations of tea to groups around the Tampa Bay area, and is a former speaker at the World Tea Expo in Las Vegas and often speaks on small business topics at Florida Main Street Conferences. She is a published author of *Her Story: Kelly's Ordinary Life in Extraordinary Times (2020)* where she shares the struggles and success of navigating her small business and life during a pandemic.

Hackman is a member of Tea Mastermind, a group of leading tea industry professionals who work together to advance the knowledge of tea and foster young tea entrepreneurs. She is also a member of United States League of Tea Growers, and is currently working on a grant to advance the growing tea in the United States with Louisiana State University (LSU), as well as working on a past grant for growing tea with the University of Florida, Gainesville.

She has also fostered partnerships with Visit Florida, Florida Sports Coast, NatureCoaster.com, Destination Tea, the United States League of Tea Growers, and Tea Mastermind.

For more information on Kelly Hackman, The White Heron Tea & Gifts, and Driftwood Tea Company, visit www.thewhiteheronfl.com

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