



Specialty Teas

PEPPERMINT

Toast of the Willamette Valley
(Caffeine Free Herbal Tea)

Country of Origin: USA **Region:** Washington State **Shipping Port:** Seattle

Grade: Whole leaf, Cut (2nd Cut – best Cut) and Sifted **Manufacture Type:** Field grown, sun dried, machine milled

Cup Characteristics: Pungent, cool, fresh, menthol

Infusion: Tending yellowish green with a bright green infused leaf

Information:

The best peppermint comes from the northwestern United States. The pure, moist mountain air of the spring and early summer growing season gives this peppermint some of the highest volatile oil counts of any member of the mint family. Generally (dependent upon weather patterns) the second cut (takes place during mid/end August) is the most flavorful, coolest and most pungent, (literally takes your breath away and makes your eyes water).

Peppermint is an herb and contains no caffeine. Quite often peppermint is consumed after meals as the oils stimulate the flow of bile to the stomach and helps relieve gas pains. Additionally, it has been reported and written that peppermint sweetens the breath and calms the digestive system, plus it helps heartburn, stomach ache and nausea. An interesting and tingling way to use peppermint is to place a handful of peppermint leaves in your bath water which will lower your body temperature - perfect for cooling fevered skin or after working on a hot summer's day.

Peppermint is believed to be a hybrid species that evolved from spearmint and watermint. However, peppermint has been around so long its genealogy is obscure. It has been reported as a stewing herb by ancient Hebrews and it has been found in 3000 year old Egyptian tombs. 2000 years ago the Japanese cultivated peppermint as a source of menthol. Peppermint is a primary ingredient in remedies used in the relief of gastrointestinal disorders, headaches, and local aches and pains. Because of its bright, pungent flavor, peppermint is often used to mask the unpleasant taste of various medicines. Peppermint tea is made from both the leaves and the flowers. As a hot tea it is cool and refreshing, as an iced tea the menthol content produces a pleasantly chilling taste sensation.

Peppermint is used extensively in various recipes. One of our favorites for 2 people are: Banana Mint Slush.

1 ripe Banana, 1 teaspoon of Peppermint leaves, Grated peel of 1 lime, 1 cup of skim milk, 5 ice cubes

Place the banana in a blender and puree until smooth. Add the remaining ingredients and blend until slushy. Serve immediately. [Less than 100 calories]

Hot tea brewing method: Bring freshly drawn cold water to a rolling boil. Place 1/2 to 1 teaspoons of peppermint for each cup into the teapot. Pour the boiling water into the teapot. Cover and let steep for 3-7 minutes according to taste (the longer the steeping time the stronger the flavor). Pour into your cup. Milk or sugar is not generally added to the cup.

Iced tea brewing method: (to make 1 liter/quart): Place 6 teaspoons of tea into a teapot or heat resistant pitcher. Pour 1 1/4 cups of freshly boiled water over the tea. Steep for 5 minutes. Quarter fill a serving pitcher with cold water. Pour the tea into your serving pitcher straining the leaves. Add ice and top-up the pitcher with cold water. Garnish and sweeten to taste. [A rule of thumb when preparing fresh brewed iced peppermint is to double the strength of the hot brew since it will be poured over ice and diluted with cold water.]