



Specialty Teas

IRISH BREAKFAST

(English Favourites Tea - Blended Black Tea)

Country of Origin: India, Kenya **Region:** Assam, Kiambu **Shipping Port:** Calcutta, Mombasa

Grade: BOP (Broken Orange Pekoe) **Altitude:** 1500 ft, 6500 ft above sea level

Manufacture Type: CTC (Cut Torn and Curled) **Ingredients:** Luxury black tea **Infusion:** Bright and Coppery.
Cup Characteristics: A stout robust blend of February Kenya BP1 and 2nd flush Assam. Superb colour and very full bodied.

Information:

It may surprise you to learn that the people of Ireland drink more tea per capita than any other population on Earth. It's true. In fact your average Irish citizen drinks about 6 cups per day. What's more, the cups they drink are so strong that you could almost stand a spoon upright in them. Indeed, the Irish prefer what some might call a sturdy cup of tea.

In order to provide the Irish with blends this strong, tea blenders supplying the market buy up top quality seasonal output from Assam and Kenya. The Assam teas are picked from the top production of the *Second Flush*, a period of high growth in the month of June. The Kenyans selected are usually those produced in either February or August when the most flavorful leaf is grown. The Assam component of this Irish blend gives the cup a strong, deep malty character with heavy layers of astringency that *dry* the mouth, feeling almost as if you could *chew* the tea. (This is similar to the way a very dry wine can make you pucker.) The Kenyan teas provide a bright coppery colour with profound floral notes that add a complex depth to the cup.

As with most teas, the longer you brew this tea the stronger it becomes. If you're Irish, you'll let this tea brew a good long time and then add a wee splash of milk. Milk, in the case of a tea this strong cancels out the tannins and diminishes the bitterness that can characterize some strong teas. Debate rages from Dublin to Tipperary as to when milk should be added - before the tea or after? The milk-first camp argues that milk added after the hot tea will scald and should therefore be added first so it can warm as the tea is poured. Milk-last devotees argue that the only way to properly measure the amount to add is to pour it last. (Non-users of milk regard the whole issue as quite silly.)

Either way, t's a strong blend. Enjoy in the morning with toast, or a traditional Irish "fry-up!"

Hot tea brewing method: Bring freshly drawn cold water to a rolling boil. Place 1 teaspoon of tea 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 tea). Even though milk and a dash of sugar help capture the malty character of this tea, it is perfectly acceptable to consume this tea 'straight-up'

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 tea is to double the strength of hot tea since it will be poured over ice and diluted with cold water]. Please note that this tea may tend to go cloudy or 'milky' when poured over ice; a perfectly normal characteristic of some high quality black teas and nothing to worry about!