



Did you know?

Green tea: Facts & Folklore



- Green tea appeared around the 2nd century in China, when sun-dried green leaves were chopped and boiled as a drink. In the 7th century, the ancient Chinese began to prepare their tea into the shape of a pie. Steamed, moulded and baked dry, the pie was smashed by a roller and boiled at tea time. Pie tea was popular for a long period until banned by Emperor Hongwu in 1391.
- Tea was then introduced to Korea at the end of the 4th century along with Buddhism and in 805 AD, a returned Japanese monk brought with him the seeds of tea from Mt. Tiantai of Zhejiang Province and planted the first tea in Japan.
- When pie tea was replaced by loose leaf tea, roasting methods replaced steaming methods in Chinese tea production. There were 58 recorded well-known teas at that time. Fifteen of them are still in production today, 13 of which are green tea varieties!
- England imported Chinese green tea for the first time in 1673 and the first recorded Coffee House in England was in Oxford, open by 1650. The first known in London, at the Sign of Pasqua Rosee in St Michael's Alley off Cornhill, was open by 1652. But after the Restoration in 1660 London began to fill with coffee shops, where tea was also served, and by 1683 there were reported to be over 2000 such shops in London.



Lu Yu, the Buddhist priest and 8th century author of the three volume book, 'The Classic Art of Tea', was an enormous influence. He was the first to suggest that the ritual of preparing and drinking tea represented a code of symbolic harmony and order reflecting the ideals of cosmos and society. In his Classic Art of Tea, Lu Yu suggests a whole range of pieces essential for the correct preparation of a cup of tea. These include the equipment needed for roasting and grinding the cakes of tea, as well as the stove for boiling the water, and the cups for drinking. Rich noblemen at once began to rival one another in acquiring beautifully crafted sets for making tea, while tea plantations spread across the southern part of China.



Here at Today was Fun Ltd we bring to you Lu Yu II, who is a direct descendant of Lu Yu, and who insists that there are three things you should always keep in mind when making tea:

- One needs 27 pieces of equipment to make a proper cup of tea
- Only water from a pure, slow moving stream is acceptable for making tea
- The perfect setting for drinking tea is in a pavilion, next to a water lily pond, with a desirable woman (or man)

- According to Chinese legend, the story of Green Tea began in 2737 BC when Emperor Shen Nung, who was known at that time as the "Divine Healer", always boiled his water before he would drink it. He had noticed that his subjects who boiled their water before drinking it seemed to have longevity and better health. One afternoon, as he knelt before his boiling water, some leaves from a nearby tree blew into the pot. The Emperor noted a delightful aroma and, upon sipping the beverage, proclaimed it as "heaven sent". Green tea was then born!
- Since this first cup of Green Tea was brewed almost five thousand years ago, the popularity of tea has increased to the point that it is presently the second most popular beverage in the world. Only water surpasses green tea in popularity.



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For more information and visuals, please contact:
Isabelle Goldstein on **0208 3460069** or email **isabelle@goldsteinpr.co.uk**