Choosing a Tea Advent Calendar

From the teas.co.uk wiki

> **Tea advent calendars, in summary:** Tea advent calendars are the calorie-free alternative to chocolate advents. Premium vs supermarket tiers, what to look for, when to buy and how to pair.

Last reviewed by the teas.co.uk team in September 2026.

Tea advent calendars are one of the genuinely good Christmas gift categories, 24 days of varied tea tasting, encouraging exploration without commitment to large purchases. What you are buying is the presentation, the variety and the daily ritual, not the cheapest cup: the same teas usually cost 30-50% less bought directly. The UK market has expanded significantly; major brands and specialist retailers all offer versions.

What you are actually paying for

A calendar is a discovery and gifting format first. On cost per cup it is not good value, it carries roughly a 30-50% premium over buying the same teas direct, which is the same lens the tea subscription and cost per cup guides apply. The value is the gift presentation, the variety and the daily ritual. Judge it on those, and on whether the maker's normal tea quality matches the price.

The numbers, roughly

Aspect	Typical UK figure
Price range	around £20-80, with £25-50 most common
Quantity	24 samples, 3-7g each, roughly 75-150g total
Cost per cup	around £0.50-1.50, a premium over direct buying
Direct-buy comparison	the same teas usually cost 30-50% less bought directly
Quality range	genuine specialist curation at one end, commodity tea in a fancy box at the other

What a tea advent calendar contains

Standard format: 24 individual tea bags or sachets, one per day from December 1-24. Variations include:

- One tea per day (standard)

- Multiple cups per tea (premium calendars with 2-3 of each)
- Mixed bag and loose leaf samples
- Themed (all herbal, all Christmas spice, all British black tea, all Asian)

Major UK tea advent calendars

Whittard Tea Advent Calendar

Mainstream UK premium retailer. Wide range of teas, black, green, herbal, fruit, festive blends. £30-50 typical pricing.

Pukka Advent Calendar

Organic herbal led. All Pukka herbal infusions. £20-30 typical.

T2 Advent Calendar

Australian premium tea brand; UK distributed. Wide variety. Premium pricing.

Tea Pigs Advent Calendar

UK whole leaf temple bag specialist. Various blends. £25-40.

Twinings Advent Calendar

Mainstream supermarket option. 24 tea variants. £15-25.

Mei Leaf Advent Calendar

Specialist Chinese tea retailer. Premium specialty teas. £50-100+.

Bird and Blend Advent Calendar

UK blending specialist. Flavoured and dessert-style blends, heavier on novelty than on single origins. Tends to sell out early.

Direct from teas.co.uk

Curated selections from across our brand range. Tailored to UK drinkers. Various price points.

What makes a good tea advent calendar

Variety

The point is exploration. Calendars with 24 different teas are more interesting than calendars with 8 teas repeated 3 times each.

Quality

Real tea, not just flavoured syrup tea bags. Premium calendars use proper specialty teas.

Theme coherence

"All herbal" or "world tea tour" or "festive spices" can be more interesting than random assortment.

Packaging

Some calendars are presentation quality (gift worthy); others are basic tier.

Caffeine balance

Mix of caffeinated and herbal so the calendar works for evening drinking too.

Sample size

5-7g a window is reasonable; 3g is limiting. A small sample is enough to enjoy a tea but rarely enough to develop a real preference, so check the stated weight as well as the number of doors.

Ingredient transparency

A calendar that lists the specific teas, their origins and how they are processed beats a vague "premium selection" claim. If the maker will not say what is in the box, assume the cheaper answer.

Price against quality

£25-30 from a known brand is usually fair. £50 and above should be genuine specialist quality. A £15 calendar will be commodity tea in nice packaging. Whether the teas are single origin or blended is a useful tell, because named origins cost more to put in a box.

Themed advent calendar approaches

British classics calendar

Yorkshire Tea, PG Tips, Twinings English Breakfast, Earl Grey, Lady Grey, Lapsang Souchong, etc. Familiar; safe gift.

World tea tour calendar

Indian Assam, Sri Lankan Ceylon, Japanese sencha, Chinese oolong, Moroccan mint, Turkish black, Russian Caravan, etc. Educational.

Festive spices calendar

Chai variants, spiced winter blends, cinnamon teas, Christmas teas, mulled style. Themed.

Caffeine free calendar

All herbal infusions, chamomile, peppermint, rooibos, fruit blends, wellness blends. For pregnancy or evening drinkers.

Sleep / wellness calendar

Pukka Night Time, Three Mint, Chamomile, Relax, etc. Wind down theme.

Premium specialty calendar

Single origin specialty, Darjeeling first flush, Lapsang Souchong, Tieguanyin, gyokuro, premium oolong, ceremonial matcha. Premium pricing; serious drinker gift.

The practical Christmas gift considerations

Recipient knowledge

Match calendar to recipient's tea sophistication:

- Beginner / casual drinker: mainstream variety calendar.
- Experienced drinker: specialty world tour calendar.
- Tea enthusiast: premium specialist calendar.
- Health conscious: caffeine free wellness calendar.

Caffeine considerations

Pregnant recipients, caffeine sensitive recipients want caffeine free calendars.

Accompaniments

Pair the calendar with a quality teapot or infuser as a complete gift.

Buying one for yourself

A calendar does not have to be a present for someone else. Plenty of people buy one as a December ritual of their own, and 24 teas share easily across a household, so one box can cover two or three drinkers rather than one.

Buying tips

- **Buy early.** Tea advent calendars often sell out in November.
- **Read what's included.** Generic "24 teas" can mean great variety or cheap repetition.
- **Check brand quality.** Premium ranges from teas.co.uk and friends like Whittard, Pukka and Mei Leaf tend to be a step up on supermarket own-brand calendars.
- **Consider DIY.** Buy 24 different small tea samples and build your own, cheaper and more personalised.

When a calendar disappoints

They are not right for everyone, and the failure modes are worth knowing before you spend:

- The samples are small, so you finish one you love and then find you cannot buy that tea standalone.
- £30-50 can buy commodity tea in fancy packaging if the maker is not a real tea specialist.
- The ritual breaks on missed days, or on three windows opened in a rush on the 14th.
- The recipient turns out to be a non-tea-drinker, or an established specialist for whom the samples sit below their usual quality.
- Opened sample packets stored across December can fade, green and flavoured teas soonest. Keep them sealed, cool and dark until the day, as in how to store tea.

If the format is the problem rather than the tea, a plain single-origin sample set or a one-off tea gift set gives similar variety without the calendar premium, at the cost of the daily window, which for some people is the whole point. A selection of winter warmer teas is the other good substitute.

The DIY tea advent calendar

For a personalised gift:

1. Buy a 24-pocket advent calendar template or numbered gift bags.
2. Source 24 different tea bags from various brands.
3. Include notes on each ("Day 12: Pukka Three Mint, caffeine free, refreshing").
4. Wrap in nice packaging.

Total cost: £25-50 depending on tea selection. Often more thoughtful than commercial calendars.

The British Christmas tea ritual

UK Christmas tea drinking has its own specifics:

- Christmas morning: strong British black tea + presents.
- Christmas dinner: tea optional during meal; coffee or tea after.
- Boxing Day: tea + Christmas cake leftovers.
- Chai or spiced tea fits the festive season especially well.

FAQ

Are tea advent calendars worth it? Not on cost per cup, they carry a 30-50% premium over buying the same teas direct. They are worth it for a tea curious recipient when what you want is the presentation, the variety and the daily ritual, and when the maker's quality matches the price.

Best UK tea advent calendar? Whittard for variety; Pukka for organic herbal; Mei Leaf for premium specialty; Bird and Blend for flavoured blends.

How much should I spend? £20-30 mainstream; £50+ premium specialty. Below about £15 expect commodity tea, and at £50 and above expect genuine specialist quality or buy something else.

DIY or buy? Both work. DIY is more personal; buying saves time. A plain sample set or variety pack is the third route: similar discovery, no calendar premium, no daily window.

Best for non tea drinkers? Caffeine free wellness calendar, accessible introduction.

Curator's note: tea advent calendars are one of the better thought out Christmas gift categories. Real product, real exploration, real daily ritual. Worth giving to tea curious recipients. Lee, teas.co.uk, Tunbridge Wells.

What you need to know: tea advent calendar

Field	Detail

Format	24 (or 25) individually-wrapped tea samples behind numbered doors
Typical content	Mix of black, green, white, oolong, herbal; sometimes themed (Christmas spice, sleep-and-wellness, world tea tour)
UK price range	£15 (supermarket own-brand) to £60 (premium specialist)
Best for	Tea-curious adults, people building palate breadth, alternative gift for non-chocolate adventers
When to buy	October (premium specialists sell out by mid-November)

What to buy now

If you want a serious tea advent calendar that delivers genuinely worth-trying samples, look at specialist tea advent calendars from independent UK retailers. The premium tier (£40 to £60) gives you single-origin samples worth a full UK pot each; the mid-tier (£20 to £35) covers the major tea families with quality teabag-level leaf. Pair with a small good ceramic teapot and a quality Brown Betty for the everyday December cup. A general tea gift set is the alternative if the advent format does not appeal. Free UK delivery is over £35.

A natural follow-on: the English tea range and loose leaf range.

FROM THE CURATOR

teas · Drink what you like, not what the shelf says you should. Curiosity is the only reliable guide.

Tea advent reading

For Christmas-tea context see the Christmas tea blends guide, the gingerbread tea piece, and the festive tea pairings overview. For gift-set context see the tea gift sets guide and the best teas for beginners piece.

More from the tea wiki

- Green tea
- Black tea
- Oolong tea
- White tea
- Herbal tea
- Caffeine in tea
- How to make tea properly
- Loose leaf vs teabag
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