Tetley Tea: The UK Everyday Brand

From the teas.co.uk wiki

> **Tetley Tea, in summary:** Tetley is the UK's round-bag inventor and value-led tea brand, third-largest by volume. Range guide, what is actually good and what is not.

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

Tetley Tea is one of the British Big Three, founded 1837, owned by Tata Consumer Products since 2000, third largest UK tea brand by volume. The full Tetley range covers everyday black, decaf, Earl Grey, Cold Infuse, herbal, fruit, and the dessert themed Indulgence range. The mainstream British tea brand with the broadest product portfolio.

Brand history

Founding (1837)

Joseph and Edward Tetley founded the company in Huddersfield, Yorkshire, as a salt and tea merchant. Quickly focused on tea.

20th century growth

Became one of Britain's largest tea brands. Innovations included round tea bags (1989) and drawstring tea bags (1995).

Tata acquisition (2000)

Tata Consumer Products (Indian conglomerate) acquired Tetley in 2000 for £271 million. Tetley remains the brand identity; manufacturing and distribution continues from UK.

Modern era

Continued innovation in product range. Cold Infuse range launched ~2018; Indulgence dessert range expanded mid-2010s onwards.

The Tetley range

Black tea range

- Tetley Original (English Breakfast).

- Tetley Extra Strong.
- Tetley One Cup.
- Tetley Seriously Refreshing.
- Tetley Earl Grey.

Decaf range

- Tetley Decaf.
- Tetley Decaf Earl Grey.

Green tea range

- Tetley Green Tea Pure.
- Tetley Green Tea with Lemon.
- Tetley Green Tea with Mint.
- Tetley Green Tea Sencha.

Herbal range

- Tetley Pure Camomile.
- Tetley Sleep.
- Tetley Cleanse.
- Tetley Lemon & Ginger.
- Tetley Peppermint.

Cold Infuse range

- Tetley Cold Infuse Mango & Strawberry.
- Tetley Cold Infuse Watermelon & Mint.
- Tetley Cold Infuse Apple & Elderflower.

Indulgence range (dessert flavoured)

- Tetley Lemon Drizzle Cake (currently unavailable).
- Tetley Chocolate Mint Tart.
- Tetley Digestive Biscuit.
- Tetley Sticky Toffee Pudding.

How Tetley tastes

The standard Tetley English Breakfast (Tetley Original) is the brand's flagship:

- **Aroma:** Strong, malty, robust black tea.
- **First sip:** Full body; brisk character.

- **Mid cup:** Maltiness with mild tannin.
- **Finish:** Long, satisfying.
- **With milk + sugar:** Classic British workhorse tea.

Curator Rating: 4.9/5 across the everyday range.

Tetley vs the Big Three

vs Yorkshire Tea

Yorkshire is fuller, smoother. Tetley is brisker, more versatile. Both excellent.

vs PG Tips

PG Tips is more tannic. Tetley is fuller bodied.

vs Twinings

Twinings is mainstream premium. Tetley is mainstream mass market.

Sourcing

Tetley sources tea from:

- India (Assam, Darjeeling).
- Sri Lanka (Ceylon).
- Kenya.
- Indonesia.
- Malawi and other African producers.

Tetley participates in Rainforest Alliance and Ethical Tea Partnership programmes.

Sustainability

Tetley has committed to:

- 100% sustainable tea sourcing.
- Recyclable packaging (most products).
- Plastic free tea bags (gradually rolling out across range).
- Carbon reduction targets.

Pricing

Mainstream mass market, typically:

- 240-bag pack: £6-15 (6-8p per cup).
- 440-bag pack: £10-18 (~5p per cup).
- 80-bag pack: £3-5 (10-12p per cup).

Where Tetley is sold

- Every UK supermarket.
- Corner shops, convenience stores.
- Online retailers.
- Direct via Tetley website.
- Cafés, hotels, workplaces (catering supply).

Caffeine

- Tetley Original: 40-50mg per cup.
- Tetley Extra Strong: 50-60mg.
- Tetley Decaf: 2-5mg.
- Tetley Green Tea: 25-35mg.
- Tetley Herbal: 0mg.

Vegan

Most products are vegan. Some Indulgence variants may contain animal derived flavourings. Check labels.

Best Tetley products by use case

Daily morning

Tetley Original.

Hard water

Tetley Extra Strong.

Single mug

Tetley One Cup.

Afternoon refreshment

Tetley Seriously Refreshing.

Decaf

Tetley Decaf, one of the best UK supermarket decaf options.

Sleep

Tetley Sleep.

Cold infused summer

Tetley Cold Infuse range.

Dessert variety

Tetley Lemon Drizzle Cake (best of the Indulgence range).

Iconic adverts

Tetley's famous "Tetley Tea Folk" adverts (1990s-2000s) featured animated tea merchant characters. The campaign was hugely successful and is still remembered fondly. Recent advertising returns to family and comfort themes.

Buying

Available everywhere. Use /buy/tetley/.

FAQ

Is Tetley a British brand? Founded in Britain (1837); now owned by Tata Consumer Products (India). Manufactured and distributed in UK.

How does Tetley compare to Yorkshire Tea? Yorkshire fuller bodied; Tetley more versatile range.

Caffeine? 40-50mg per cup for standard.

Vegan? Most products yes.

Best for everyday? Tetley Original (English Breakfast).

Curator's note: Tetley is one of the great British everyday tea brands, broadest product range in the Big Three, mass market priced, available everywhere. Worth keeping a 240-bag pack as the household standby. Lee, teas.co.uk, Tunbridge Wells.

In short: Tetley Tea (the standard everyday)

Field	Detail
Founded	1837 in Huddersfield, Yorkshire
Owner	Tata Consumer Products (since 2000)
UK market position	Third-largest UK black tea brand by volume
Signature format	The round teabag (Tetley introduced the round format)
Range	Original Black, English Breakfast, One Cup, Seriously Refreshing, Decaf, Gold, Estate Reserve, Redbush, herbals
Cup character	Brisk, lighter than Yorkshire/PG, distinctive round-bag format

What to buy now

Start with Tetley Original or Tetley English Breakfast as the everyday cup. Step up to Tetley Gold for the premium variant. For decaf, Tetley Decaf is the brand's same-blend caffeine-free option. Compare with Yorkshire Tea for the maltier alternative.

Reference noted

- EFSA Scientific Opinion on the Safety of Caffeine (2015)

FROM THE CURATOR

teas · The infusion is more important than the shop. A short careful brew can lift a budget bag past a careless premium one.

Tetley reading

For brand context see the Tetley deep dive. For competitor context see the Yorkshire Tea, PG Tips, and Twinings deep dives. For the specific Tetley variants see the Tetley English Breakfast, Tetley One Cup, and Tetley Extra Strong pieces.

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