Tropical Tea in the UK

From the teas.co.uk wiki

> **Tropical teas, in summary:** Tropical teas span Caribbean herbals, hibiscus, coconut, mango fruit infusions and tropical chai. The map of what is actually inside each bag.

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

Tropical tea covers a broad category of teas from Caribbean, Latin American, African, and Pacific island traditions, hibiscus, soursop, moringa, lemongrass, ginger, tulsi, cerasee, sorrel, rooibos, and many more. The category is increasingly available in UK retail through brands like Tropical Sun, Pukka, Twinings, and specialty importers.

The tropical tea category

"Tropical tea" is a loose category covering plant based teas from regions in the equatorial belt:

Caribbean

- Cerasee (bitter melon).
- Sorrel (hibiscus).
- Soursop leaves.
- Bay leaf tea.
- Local herbal blends.

Latin America

- Mate (yerba mate).
- Hibiscus (agua de jamaica).
- Cinnamon based teas.

South Asia

- Tulsi (holy basil).
- Moringa.
- Neem.

- Cardamom based teas.
- Indian masala chai.

Africa

- Rooibos (red bush).
- Honeybush.
- Ginger blends.
- Hibiscus / bissap.

Pacific Islands

- Noni.
- Coconut based teas.

Common tropical tea characteristics

- Often caffeine free (most are not Camellia sinensis).
- Strong botanical / herbal character.
- Often used traditionally for health.
- Distinctive flavour profiles.
- Often tied to cultural / religious traditions.

UK retailers for tropical tea

Tropical Sun

Caribbean and African specialist. More on Tropical Sun.

Pukka

Wellness focused; many tropical tea ingredients in blends.

Twinings

Mainstream; some tropical blends.

Specialty importers

Online retailers importing direct from countries of origin.

Ethnic grocers

Caribbean grocers, African food shops, Asian grocers.

Specific tropical teas worth knowing

Hibiscus / Sorrel

Vivid red, tart sweet. Universally appealing. Cold brew excellent.

Yerba mate

Latin American; caffeinated alternative to tea/coffee. More on yerba mate.

Rooibos

South African; naturally sweet, caffeine free.

Tulsi

Indian holy basil; adaptogen with real research support.

Lemongrass

Southeast Asian; bright citrus, settling.

Ginger blends

Universal; warming, anti nauseating.

Caffeine spectrum

- Most tropical teas: 0mg caffeine.
- Yerba mate: 30-45mg caffeine.
- Some chai based: 30-50mg caffeine.
- Most herbal blends: 0mg.

FAQ

What is tropical tea? Loose category of teas from equatorial regions, Caribbean, African, Asian, Pacific.

Most popular tropical tea? Hibiscus / sorrel; rooibos.

Cultural significance? Many tropical teas have strong cultural traditions.

Caffeine? Most are caffeine free; yerba mate is exception.

UK retailers? Tropical Sun, Pukka, Twinings, specialty importers, ethnic grocers.

Curator's note: tropical tea is a vast category of culturally rich, often caffeine free, distinctive plants. Worth exploring beyond European herbal tradition. Lee, teas.co.uk, Tunbridge Wells.

In short: tropical teas in the UK

Category	What it covers	UK source
Caribbean herbals	Sorrel, cerasee, soursop, moringa, neem, noni, ginger blends	Tropical Sun, Dalgety, Grace, Dunns River (Caribbean grocers + mainstream ethnic foods aisles)
Tropical fruit infusions	Hibiscus, passionfruit, mango, pineapple, papaya blends	Teapigs Super Fruit, Pukka Hibiscus, Twinings tropical-fruit range, Caribbean grocers

Category	What it covers	UK source
Coconut and tropical milk teas	Coconut-tea blends, tropical chai variants, bubble tea bases	Vita Coco, mainstream supermarkets, specialist bubble tea shops
Tropical iced teas	Mango black tea, passionfruit green, hibiscus-citrus coolers	Lipton, Teapigs cold-brew range, Caribbean grocers
Spiced tropical chai	Caribbean-spiced chai with ginger, allspice, nutmeg	Specialist Caribbean retailers, online direct

What to buy now

For a serious introduction to tropical teas, build a five-bag sampler: hibiscus tea (the foundational tropical herbal), moringa (the daily-tonic leaf), soursop (the Caribbean herb for rest and digestion), coconut tea (the south-east Asian variation), and a mango passionfruit fruit infusion for the everyday tropical fruit cup. Total cost for the sampler is under £15 at value-tier brands or under £30 at premium tier.

Reference noted

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

FROM THE CURATOR

teas · Match the tea to the moment. A 6am cup and a 4pm cup do not need to be the same brew.

Tropical tea reading

For specific tropical-tea ingredient guides see the hibiscus tea overview, the moringa tea piece, the soursop tea guide, the coconut tea overview, and the passionfruit tea piece. For brand context see the Tropical Sun, Dalgety, and Grace Foods overviews. For Caribbean herbal tradition see the Caribbean bush teas overview.

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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