Williamson English Breakfast

From the teas.co.uk wiki

Williamson English Breakfast, in summary: Williamson English Breakfast reviewed: premium single-origin Kenyan black tea, estate-owned provenance, UK price, brewing tips, Twinings comparison.

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

Williamson English Breakfast is the brand's flagship single origin Kenyan English Breakfast: estate sourced, full bodied and strong, in plastic free silken pyramid bags. A premium-tier alternative to mainstream British English Breakfast (Yorkshire Tea, Tetley, PG Tips): brighter and more aromatic than those workhorses, more milk-friendly than a Sri Lankan or Indian first flush. The cup for drinkers who want a noticeable quality lift on their morning English Breakfast without going to specialty loose leaf.

The product

Single-origin Kenyan black tea, blended from Williamson's own estates in the Kericho and Kakamega regions. The silken pyramid bag matters: it lets the larger leaf pieces unfurl and brew more like loose leaf than like cut-and-sift bag tea. Plastic-free, biodegradable bag.

How it tastes

Strong and malty in the British style, with a brighter coppery liquor than Yorkshire's deeper amber, a gentler astringency, and the faintly floral aromatic top note Kenyan tea is known for. It holds up to milk and sugar exceptionally; the floral note disappears with milk but the body stays. Curator Rating: 4.9/5.

How to brew

1. 1 bag in 200ml just-boiled water (full boiling for black tea).
2. Steep 4 minutes; the pyramid format gives the leaf room to unfurl, so it takes a longer steep without going bitter.
3. Squeeze the bag gently against the cup wall before removing.
4. Add a splash of milk; whole milk is the traditional finish, but the brightness also takes oat milk well.
5. Sugar is optional; many drinkers find the leaf grade good enough not to need it.

Compared to mainstream

Yorkshire Tea: a mass-market Assam-led workhorse at mainstream pricing. Tetley English Breakfast: a lighter blend, mass-market pricing. PG Tips: tannic, brisk, mass-market pricing. Williamson English Breakfast: single-origin Kenyan, premium pricing, brighter aromatic character. The leaf grade is the differentiator, larger pieces, more whole leaf, less astringency. Worth the upgrade for daily drinkers who notice the difference; mainstream Yorkshire is fine for everyday volume.

Caffeine

40-50mg per cup.

Where to buy

teas.co.uk, with specialty retailers like Whittard and Fortnum & Mason, upmarket supermarkets (Waitrose, M&S), online direct from Williamson Tea, and gift shops. Not stocked at standard Tesco/Asda/Aldi/Lidl in most regions.

Use cases

- A premium daily morning tea for drinkers who notice the leaf-grade difference.
- Afternoon tea with scones, sandwiches, cake (the brightness suits afternoon food).
- A tasting introduction to Kenyan single-origin character.
- A hospitality cup at home (the pyramid bag and brighter cup look and taste fancier than supermarket Yorkshire).
- A gift for tea-drinking friends or family.

FAQ

Caffeine? 40-50mg.

Vegan? Yes, with plant milk.

Premium? Yes; Kenyan single-origin, estate-sourced, premium pricing.

Best with milk? Yes; it holds up well, and milk softens the floral edge.

vs Yorkshire? Brighter, more aromatic, larger leaf grade, premium pricing.

Pyramid bags? Yes; plastic-free silken pyramid format.

The Kenyan vs Indian Assam difference

Kenyan black tea (mainly from Kericho and the Mount Kenya regions) has a brighter, brisker, more astringent character than Indian Assam, which is malty, deep and full-bodied. Most mainstream UK English Breakfast blends use both, leaning Assam-heavy for depth. Williamson's 100% Kenyan base gives a clearly different cup: less malty, more aromatic, brighter on the palate. For drinkers raised on Twinings or Yorkshire who find their cup too "thick" or "heavy", the Kenyan single-origin profile is often the right step. For drinkers who specifically want the Assam-led malty depth, Williamson reads as too light, so stick with Yorkshire Gold

or an Assam-heavy supermarket blend.

The estate-owned advantage

Williamson is one of the few UK tea brands that owns its source estates rather than blending bought-in tea from open-market auction. The Kenyan estates (around 5,000 hectares) supply the bulk of production with tight quality control over picking, processing and packaging, which gives stronger consistency, better sustainability auditing and credible welfare claims than blender-only competitors. The trade-off is smaller scale and higher pricing. The elephant motif on the packaging comes from the brand's conservation partnership with the David Sheldrick Wildlife Trust, near Williamson's Mount Kenya estates; a percentage of revenue goes to elephant conservation work, auditable on the trust's reporting.

In short: Williamson English Breakfast

Field	Detail
Brand	Williamson Tea (Kenyan estate-owned tea brand; founded 1869)
Base tea	Single-origin Kenyan black tea from Williamson's own estates
Cup character	Bright, brisk, full-bodied; takes milk well; cleaner finish than Assam-led mainstream blends
Caffeine	40-60mg per cup, standard black tea range
Pack format	Pyramid tea bags in elephant-themed packaging
UK availability	Waitrose, Ocado, Williamson Tea direct, specialty retailers
UK price	Approximately £4 to £6 per 20-pyramid pack (20-30p per cup)
Best for	Single-origin black tea curiosity, weekend or guest cups, drinkers who prefer Kenyan brightness over Indian Assam depth

Curator's note: Williamson English Breakfast is the premium Kenyan English Breakfast. Worth upgrading for special occasion morning tea. Lee, teas.co.uk, Tunbridge Wells.

Reference noted

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

FROM THE CURATOR

teas · Spend less on prestige, more on freshness. Fresh Williamson from two months back will outshine a gift tin three years old.

Black-tea reading

For brand context see the Williamson Tea brand wiki. For category context see the English Breakfast overview, the black tea fundamentals, and the Kenyan tea origin guide. For the sister product see the Williamson Earl Grey wiki, and for a competitor the Yorkshire Tea page.

The bottom line on Williamson English Breakfast

A premium single-origin Kenyan English Breakfast with credible estate-owned provenance and a clean, bright cup. Worth the step up from supermarket Twinings for weekend, guest, or considered moments; per-cup cost is 4-5x mainstream, so not the right daily-drinker for most households. The cleaner Kenyan profile suits drinkers who find Assam-led blends too heavy; for Assam fans, stick with Yorkshire Gold instead.

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