Nick Kilby and Louise Cheadle: The Pair Behind Teapigs

From the teas.co.uk wiki

> **Teapigs founders, in summary:** A UK guide to the Teapigs founders: London 2006, the pyramid "tea temple", B Corp since 2019, plant-based temples, Tata backing from the start, and why the bag shape changed everything.

Our Teapigs deep dive and tea temples page cover the product; this is the pair who decided the leaf, not the bag, was the point.

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

London, 2006

Nick Kilby and Louise Cheadle founded Teapigs in London in 2006. The mission was narrow and stubborn: bring premium loose-leaf quality tea into the convenient tea-bag format, rather than accepting the crushed tea dust that fills most standard bags. The whole brand is essentially one refusal, the refusal to let the convenience of a bag dictate the quality of the leaf.

The temple as a thesis

The now-familiar pyramid "tea temple" was the physical expression of that thesis: a roomy bag that lets whole leaf expand and brew like loose tea in a pot, instead of a flat bag of dust that brews fast and flat. We separate the marketing language from the genuine engineering in our tea temples page; the founding point is that the bag shape followed from a leaf-quality decision, not the other way round.

Built to a standard, then scaled

Teapigs committed to whole-leaf tea, became a certified B Corp in 2019 and uses plant-based temples that it says go in industrial composting. It was never an independent start-up bought later: Tata, which also owns Tetley, funded the 2006 launch, and Teapigs is part of Tata Consumer Products (Tata Consumer Products: Teapigs).

Why they matter

Kilby and Cheadle are a clean example of a single quality decision, taken early and held, becoming a whole brand identity. For readers deciding whether a premium bag is worth it, knowing the founders built the

company specifically around that one trade-off is more useful than any tasting note. They sit naturally alongside the other quality-first founders here, like Pole and Westwell at Pukka.

The essentials: Teapigs founders

Detail	Fact
Founders	Nick Kilby and Louise Cheadle
Founded	2006, London
Mission	Premium loose-leaf quality in convenient bag format
Signature format	Pyramid "tea temple" allowing whole-leaf expansion
Bag material	Plant-based PLA temples for industrial composting; soft-plastic inner bag; recyclable paperboard box
Certifications	B Corp (since 2019)
Ownership	Part of Tata Consumer Products; Tata funded the 2006 launch
Range scope	~30 SKUs covering black, green, white, herbal, fruit
Distribution	UK supermarkets, John Lewis, independent cafes, international

The founder backgrounds

Nick Kilby and Louise Cheadle both worked at Tetley before they launched Teapigs (Tea & Coffee Trade Journal, October 2019), so the brand began with tea-industry experience on both sides, and with Tata, Tetley's owner, funding it from the start.

The "tea temple" name and brand voice

Teapigs invented the marketing term "tea temple" specifically to differentiate their pyramid bag from the generic pyramid-bag category that followed. The naming was deliberate; calling it a "tea temple" rather than a "pyramid bag" framed the product as ritual-elevating rather than merely shape-altered. The broader Teapigs brand voice (cheerful, self-deprecating, conversational, occasionally cheeky) was a deliberate choice to make premium tea feel approachable rather than aspirational. Most premium tea brands at 2006 used aspirational marketing (heritage, ceremony, expertise); Teapigs used the opposite (friendliness, simplicity, "we just want you to have a good cup"). The voice has aged well and remained consistent through 18 years of brand evolution.

The B Corp and sustainability commitments

Teapigs became a certified B Corp in 2019 (Tea & Coffee Trade Journal, October 2019). It says its tea temples are plant-based PLA that goes in industrial composting, with a soft-plastic inner bag and a recyclable paperboard box (Teapigs packaging information), so used temples need industrial composting rather than a home heap.

Tata and brand continuity

Tata, the group that also owns Tetley, funded Teapigs from its 2006 launch, and Teapigs is part of Tata Consumer Products today (Tata Consumer Products: Teapigs). That makes Teapigs a premium brand grown inside a large tea group rather than an independent bought later; it has kept a distinct identity and price point alongside Tetley.

How Teapigs grew

Teapigs grew from its 2006 London launch into a national premium tea-bag brand sold through UK shops and online, with a range covering black, green, white, herbal and fruit teas. We have not found published figures for how many temples it sells, so we do not quote one.

Reference noted

- Tata Consumer Products: Teapigs
- Tea & Coffee Trade Journal: teapigs is certified B Corp (October 2019)
- Teapigs packaging information

FROM THE CURATOR

teas · Per-cup price is the only price that matters. Loose leaf usually wins; supermarket bags sometimes do too.

Tea reading

For the Teapigs brand profile see the Teapigs deep dive. For the tea-temple engineering specifically see the tea temples page. For comparable premium-bag founders see Pukka founders and Bruce Ginsberg of Dragonfly. For the bag-versus-leaf debate see loose leaf versus tea bags. For plastic-bag context see plastic in tea bags. For mass-market bag tea see PG Tips and Tetley.

The bottom line on the Teapigs founders

Kilby and Cheadle built a brand around a single refusal: the refusal to let the bag format dictate the leaf quality. The pyramid tea-temple was the engineering answer; B Corp certification (since 2019) is the sustainability layer; Tata has backed it from the start. Teapigs proved that premium-bag tea was a viable category at scale, and many premium pyramid bags have followed. For readers wondering whether a premium bag is worth it, the founders' biography is more informative than any tasting note.

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