Tea Growing Regions of the World

From the teas.co.uk wiki

> **Tea growing regions of the world, in summary:** Major tea growing regions explained: Assam, Darjeeling, Ceylon, Kenya, Fujian, Yunnan, Shizuoka. What each region produces, terroir, brewing.

Almost all the world's tea comes from a surprisingly small number of regions, and each one stamps the leaf with a character you can learn to recognise. This is the overview for our growing regions cluster; each region has its own full guide linked below, and the single origin brand stories, Dilmah and Williamson, show what these regions taste like unblended.

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

The great black tea regions

India gives the malty power of Assam and the floral delicacy of Darjeeling, two regions so different they barely seem the same plant, plus the underrated Nilgiri hills. Sri Lanka gives Ceylon, where elevation changes everything. Kenya, see Kenyan tea, is the quiet giant filling the world's teabags. The full comparison is in Darjeeling vs Assam vs Ceylon and black tea by origin.

The great Chinese and Japanese regions

China, where tea began (see Chinese tea), is intensely regional: Fujian for rock oolong, Tieguanyin and white tea, Yunnan for Dian Hong and pu erh. Japan, see the Japanese regions and the Japanese tea hub, concentrates green tea craft in Uji, Kagoshima, Shizuoka and Yame.

Why region matters

Across all of them the same two levers, elevation and season, do most of the work: higher and slower growth means a brighter, more aromatic cup, and the right flush means peak character. Tea is one of the most terroir-driven crops there is. The same Camellia sinensis grown in Darjeeling produces a dramatically different leaf and cup from the same plant grown in Assam a few hundred miles away, even with identical processing, because altitude, soil, rainfall and the day-to-night temperature swing all shape the leaf chemistry. The wine comparison is apt: place matters as much as plant. For a drinker who wants to go deeper, this is why region tells you more than brand. A brand name says who sourced and packed the tea; the region says what the tea actually is, so a Darjeeling first flush from one good brand has more in common

with another brand's Darjeeling than with the same brand's Assam.

Where to start

Pick one contrast and taste it deliberately: a malty Assam beside a bright high-grown Ceylon, or a Chinese Dian Hong beside an Indian black, brewed side by side per the water temperature guide. To range wider, try a Darjeeling first flush or Nilgiri, a Kenyan single-origin, or, on the Chinese side, Tieguanyin, pu-erh or Longjing, and a Shizuoka sencha for Japan. A specialty single-region sampler (around £20 to £40 for four to six regions) is the most efficient way to build a palate.

What you need to know: Major tea growing regions

Region	Country	What it produces
Assam	India	Strong malty black tea; the backbone of British mass-market English Breakfast blends
Darjeeling	India (Himalayan foothills)	"Champagne of teas"; muscatel-flavoured black tea with strong terroir character across flushes
Nilgiri	India (southern hills)	Brisk fragrant black tea; cleaner profile than Assam, less aromatic than Darjeeling
Ceylon (Sri Lanka)	Sri Lanka	Bright brisk black tea across multiple regional grades (Uva, Dimbula, Kandy, Nuwara Eliya)
Kenya	Kenya (Mount Kenya, Kericho)	Strong CTC black tea; the largest African producer; the basis of much UK mainstream tea
Fujian	China	Oolong (Tieguanyin, Da Hong Pao), white tea (Silver Needle, White Peony), specialty green
Yunnan	China	Pu-erh fermented tea, Dian Hong black tea; the ancient home of Camellia sinensis
Anhui / Zhejiang	China	Famous green teas: Longjing, Huangshan Maofeng, Tai Ping Hou Kui
Shizuoka	Japan	Dominant Japanese tea region producing sencha, gyokuro, matcha bases

The bottom line on tea growing regions

Region matters more than brand for anyone who cares about cup character. It is worth learning the major regions (Assam, Darjeeling, Ceylon, Kenya, Fujian, Yunnan, Shizuoka) and tasting a single-region tea from each rather than only mainstream blends. Once you know what each region tastes like, you can read the global tea landscape with confidence rather than relying on brand marketing, and each region's own guide, linked below, goes a level deeper.

FROM THE CURATOR

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

Reference noted

- PubMed: Green tea catechins and human health

Tea reading

For specific region detail see the Darjeeling tea wiki, the Assam tea, the Ceylon tea, the Kenyan tea, the Yunnan, and the Fujian. For category context see the black tea fundamentals, the green tea overview, and the oolong tea. For brewing technique see the how to brew black tea and the how to brew green tea.

More from the tea wiki

- Green tea
- Black tea
- Oolong tea
- White tea
- Herbal tea
- Caffeine in tea
- How to make tea properly
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