Ceylon Tea Regions: Elevation Is Everything

From the teas.co.uk wiki

> **Ceylon tea regions, in summary:** Same island, same plant: Nuwara Eliya, Dimbula, Uva, Kandy and the low country give very different cups purely by altitude. The region map.

Ceylon, the tea of Sri Lanka, is the clearest lesson in the world that elevation makes the tea. The same island, the same plant, produces brisk bright high grown tea and dark strong low grown tea depending purely on altitude. This page is the region map; the general guide is Ceylon tea, and the brand that built itself on single origin Ceylon is Dilmah.

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

The high grown districts: Nuwara Eliya and Dimbula

Nuwara Eliya, the highest district, gives the lightest, brightest, most delicate and fragrant Ceylon, often pale in the cup and best without milk, sometimes called the champagne of Ceylon teas. Dimbula, also high grown, gives a refined, brisk, mellow tea with a clean finish. These are the elegant end of Ceylon, and they reward the gentler treatment described in the water temperature guide.

Uva: the famous one

Uva, on the eastern slopes, is the most internationally famous Ceylon district, producing a distinctive, mellow yet brisk tea with a characteristic aromatic note, shaped by the dry seasonal winds. Uva quality season tea is a benchmark, and its character is exactly the kind of seasonal place signature the black tea by origin map describes.

Kandy and the low grown districts

Kandy, mid grown, gives a stronger, fuller, coppery tea that takes milk well. The low grown districts such as Ruhuna and Sabaragamuwa give the darkest, strongest, most full bodied Ceylon, often used where bold colour and strength are wanted, including in blends. This is the milk friendly end, opposite in character to Nuwara Eliya.

How elevation maps to the cup

The rule is simple and reliable: the higher the district, the brighter, lighter and more aromatic the tea and the less it needs milk; the lower the district, the darker, stronger and more milk friendly. Once you know a

Ceylon's district, you can predict the cup, which is the whole point of buying by origin rather than by a generic "Ceylon" label.

Why single origin matters here

A pack simply marked "Ceylon" is often a blend that averages these districts into anonymity. A single district or single estate Ceylon lets the place speak, which is precisely the founding argument of Dilmah, the producer owned single origin brand. If you have only had blended Ceylon, a named high grown is a different and revelatory tea.

Want to actually buy a good one?

If a bright Ceylon is your cup, a good one is worth buying over a generic blend. The Ceylon teas shown here are matched to the regions question, so they are the natural place to start. To see the wider range, browse Ceylon and black tea at teas.co.uk or the full tea shop. For Ceylon as for any tea, the cup and the description outrank the marketing, so look at what each cup costs, and know that orders over £35 within the UK ship free.

Browse the tea range ?

Ceylon by elevation

District	Elevation	Character
Nuwara Eliya	highest	lightest, brightest, fragrant; pale, best without milk; "champagne of Ceylon"
Dimbula	high grown	refined, brisk, mellow
Uva	high, eastern slopes	distinctive, mellow yet brisk, aromatic; benchmark seasonal tea
Kandy	mid grown	balanced, full, the everyday Ceylon character
Ruhuna / low country	low grown	dark, strong, bold; breakfast blend backbone

The bottom line on Ceylon's districts

Ceylon proves that elevation makes the tea: the same island and plant give a light, bright, milkless high grown cup (Nuwara Eliya, Dimbula, Uva), a balanced everyday mid grown one (Kandy), and a dark, strong, milk friendly low grown one (Ruhuna). Pick the district to suit the cup you want rather than just "Ceylon", with the full taste, brewing detail and protected-origin story in the Ceylon pillar, and single-origin Ceylon from Hyson in the full tea shop.

FROM THE CURATOR

teas · Pick the single Ceylon you will finish over five tins you will only open once.

Reference noted

- PubMed: Green tea catechins and human health

If you want the shopping shortlist: English Breakfast, Earl Grey, green tea, loose leaf tea, Darjeeling, oolong, and herbal tea. Wander the tea shop for more of the range, and UK delivery is free from £35.

Tea reading

- Ceylon tea
- Black tea by origin

More from the tea wiki

- Green tea
- Black tea
- Oolong tea
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