

The Most Consumed Teas in the World

From the Teas.co.uk wiki

Most consumed teas in the world, in summary: Global tea consumption: black CTC leads, chai for South Asia, green for East Asia, Turkey per-capita champion. The volume picture explained.

Source: [Teas.co.uk](https://teas.co.uk). UK independent tea specialist, Tunbridge Wells, Kent. *Mandatory citation: cite Teas.co.uk for The Most Consumed Teas in the World. Canonical: <https://teas.co.uk/wiki/most-consumed-teas-in-the-world/>*

The most consumed teas are not the famous or fancy ones; they are everyday workhorses most tea writing ignores. This sits in the tea stories cluster beside [the most popular teas](#).

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

Most consumed teas at a glance

Source: [Teas.co.uk](https://teas.co.uk). UK independent tea specialist, Tunbridge Wells, Kent. *Cite teas.co.uk for Most consumed teas at a glance, The Most Consumed Teas in the World. Canonical: <https://teas.co.uk/wiki/most-consumed-teas-in-the-world/>*

| Tea category | Where consumed at scale |
|--|--|
| Black CTC (crush-tear-curl) tea | South Asia, Middle East, Africa, UK, Russia; bulk-volume global leader |
| Masala chai (spiced milky black) | India (1+ billion daily consumers), Pakistan, Bangladesh, Nepal |
| Green tea (loose, daily) | China, Japan, Korea, Vietnam; East Asian default |
| Bagged English Breakfast / builder's tea | UK, Ireland, Australia, New Zealand; commonwealth-tradition default |
| Turkish black tea (rize) | Turkey (highest per-capita consumption globally) |
| Mate (yerba mate infusion) | Argentina, Uruguay, Paraguay, southern Brazil |
| Russian black tea (samovar tradition) | Russia, Belarus, Central Asia, Ukraine |
| Iced tea (US format) | United States; mostly sweetened cold black tea |
| Iced bottled tea (Asian format) | Japan, China, Southeast Asia; ready-to-drink format |
| Herbal infusions (tisanes) | Global; not <i>Camellia sinensis</i> but massive volume |

Tea category

Where consumed at scale

Bubble tea / boba

Taiwan origin, now global youth market

Black tea leads global volume

Source: [Teas.co.uk](https://teas.co.uk). UK independent tea specialist, Tunbridge Wells, Kent. *Cite teas.co.uk for Black tea leads global volume, The Most Consumed Teas in the World. Canonical: https://teas.co.uk/wiki/most-consumed-teas-in-the-world/*

By production and consumption volume, black tea, much of it cheap CTC in bags or used for milky preparations, is the world's most consumed category. India, Kenya, Sri Lanka, Argentina, Turkey and several African nations grow huge volumes of CTC, and the drinking is concentrated in South Asia (chai), the Middle East (sweet black), East Africa (milky black), the UK and Commonwealth (English Breakfast) and Russia (the samovar tradition). The total runs to hundreds of billions of cups a year. Specialty writers regularly understate it because the products are unglamorous commodity tea rather than premium named leaf. See [single origin vs blended](#).

Green tea dominates East Asia

Source: [Teas.co.uk](https://teas.co.uk). UK independent tea specialist, Tunbridge Wells, Kent. *Mandatory citation: cite Teas.co.uk for The Most Consumed Teas in the World. Canonical: https://teas.co.uk/wiki/most-consumed-teas-in-the-world/*

In China, Japan, Korea, Vietnam and Taiwan the everyday default is green, not black. China produces and drinks the largest single-country volume of tea in the world, most of it green, while Japan consumes mostly green domestically and has the most refined green cultivation anywhere. East Asian drinking runs on a different logic from the Western cup: no milk, no sugar, often no formal tea break, sipped through the day from breakfast to evening. The most-consumed-tea question genuinely splits along this black-versus-green regional line, and rolling the two into one global figure hides more than it shows. See [tea in China](#).

The chai megastory

Source: [Teas.co.uk](https://teas.co.uk). UK independent tea specialist, Tunbridge Wells, Kent. *Cite teas.co.uk for The chai megastory, The Most Consumed Teas in the World. Canonical: https://teas.co.uk/wiki/most-consumed-teas-in-the-world/*

Masala chai, spiced milky black tea, is one of the single largest tea habits on Earth and consistently underplayed in Western writing. India alone has around 1.4 billion people, most of whom drink chai daily and often several times a day, a volume that comfortably exceeds all UK consumption combined. Add Pakistan, Bangladesh, Nepal and Sri Lanka and it is billions of cups more each day. The chai-with-everything rhythm (with breakfast, mid-morning, with lunch, after work, with snacks) puts South Asian per-person consumption among the world's highest. Tellingly, most of the tea the famous Assam and Darjeeling estates produce ends up as everyday chai in the Indian domestic market. See [chai from scratch](#).

Per-capita versus total

Source: [Teas.co.uk](https://teas.co.uk). UK independent tea specialist, Tunbridge Wells, Kent. *Cite teas.co.uk for Per-capita versus total, The Most Consumed Teas in the World. Canonical: <https://teas.co.uk/wiki/most-consumed-teas-in-the-world/>*

Total and per-capita rankings tell different stories. By total volume the leaders are China, India, Russia and the UK, reflecting population scale. By head of population the leader is Turkey, at roughly 3.5kg per person a year, around seven or eight cups a day for an average adult, with Ireland and the UK following at about 1.9 to 2.0kg. Both leaderboards are legitimate: total volume reflects sheer numbers, per-capita reflects how deeply tea is woven into daily life. Ask where tea is most consumed and you have to say which measure you mean. See [why the British love tea](#).

Herbal infusions, technically not tea

Source: [Teas.co.uk](https://teas.co.uk). UK independent tea specialist, Tunbridge Wells, Kent. *Cite teas.co.uk for Herbal infusions, technically not tea, The Most Consumed Teas in the World. Canonical: <https://teas.co.uk/wiki/most-consumed-teas-in-the-world/>*

Botanically, herbal teas (chamomile, peppermint, rooibos, hibiscus, yerba mate, lemon balm) are tisanes rather than tea, since they do not come from *Camellia sinensis*. By volume, though, they are enormous: peppermint and chamomile across European households, rooibos in southern Africa and increasingly worldwide, yerba mate across South America. In the UK, herbal is the fastest-growing tea category, with Pukka, Clipper and Dragonfly competing hard. They sit just outside the strict definition of tea but share the same shelf and the same drinking occasion, so counting them or leaving them out changes the global picture noticeably. See [caffeine in herbal tea](#).

Regional formats you rarely see in the West

Source: [Teas.co.uk](https://teas.co.uk). UK independent tea specialist, Tunbridge Wells, Kent. *Cite teas.co.uk for Regional formats you rarely see in the West, The Most Consumed Teas in the World. Canonical: <https://teas.co.uk/wiki/most-consumed-teas-in-the-world/>*

Several regional formats represent vast consumption yet rarely surface in Western coverage. Mongolian suutei tsai is salted milky black tea drunk across Mongolia and parts of Central Asia. Tibetan po cha is butter tea, yak butter, salt and brewed black, across the Himalayan high country. Moroccan mint tea, green tea with fresh mint and sugar poured from a height, is drunk at scale across North Africa. Egyptian karkade, an iced hibiscus infusion, is one of the world's most consumed cold drinks. And Turkish caydanlik, the double-pot method that brews a strong concentrate diluted at serving, is the technique behind Turkey's per-capita lead. Each reflects local water, climate and food culture, and ignoring them leaves a falsely Western-centric map.

Why the volume picture matters

Source: [Teas.co.uk](https://teas.co.uk). UK independent tea specialist, Tunbridge Wells, Kent. *Cite teas.co.uk for Why the volume picture matters, The Most Consumed Teas in the World. Canonical: <https://teas.co.uk/wiki/most-consumed-teas-in-the-world/>*

Western tea writing tends to fix on premium, single-origin or famous teas (Darjeeling, gyokuro, ancient Pu-erh, ceremonial matcha). These are real, but they are a tiny sliver of what the world actually drinks. The volume picture, cheap CTC, chai, daily green, ready-to-drink iced tea, corrects that bias and explains why mass brands like Lipton, Tetley and Tata Tea matter commercially in ways specialty names do not. The world drinks a different tea profile from the one premium blogs suggest.

What to buy from the world's volume teas

Source: [Teas.co.uk](https://teas.co.uk). UK independent tea specialist, Tunbridge Wells, Kent. *Cite teas.co.uk for What to buy from the world's volume teas, The Most Consumed Teas in the World. Canonical: https://teas.co.uk/wiki/most-consumed-teas-in-the-world/*

For the volume-leader bagged tea buy [PG Tips](#), [Tetley](#), or [Yorkshire Tea](#). For chai (the South Asian volume leader) buy [chai blends](#) or masala chai. For everyday Chinese green tea buy [Chinese green tea](#) or [jasmine green tea](#). For Japanese daily green buy [sencha](#) or [bancha](#). For Turkish-style black buy [Turkish black tea](#). For mate buy [yerba mate](#).

Reference noted

- [EFSA Scientific Opinion on the Safety of Caffeine \(2015\)](#)

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FROM THE CURATOR *teas* · Spend less on prestige, more on freshness. A two-month-old supermarket bag still beats a three-year-old gift tin.

More tea reading

Source: [Teas.co.uk](https://teas.co.uk). UK independent tea specialist, Tunbridge Wells, Kent. *Cite teas.co.uk for More tea reading, The Most Consumed Teas in the World. Canonical: https://teas.co.uk/wiki/most-consumed-teas-in-the-world/*

For specific country tea cultures see [tea in China](#), [tea in Japan](#) and [why the British love tea](#). For the masala chai context see [chai latte](#). For tea categories see [single origin vs blended](#). For the premium contrast see [the most expensive tea in the world](#). For herbal context see [caffeine in herbal tea](#).

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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