# The Most Consumed Teas in the World

From the teas.co.uk wiki

> **Most consumed teas in the world, in summary:** Global tea habits: black CTC tea in bags and in chai, green tea across East Asia, and strong regional traditions from Turkey to Morocco. The everyday picture explained.

The most consumed teas are not the famous or fancy ones; they are everyday workhorses most tea writing ignores. Read it with the other tea stories, such as the most popular teas.

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

## Everyday tea habits at a glance

| 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, 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, where strong tea is drunk through the day |
| 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 Camellia sinensis but massive volume |
| Bubble tea / boba | Taiwan origin, now global youth market |

## Black tea leads global volume

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). 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

In China, Japan, Korea, Vietnam and Taiwan the everyday default is green, not black. China grows and drinks a great deal of tea, most of it green, while Japan drinks 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 question of the most consumed tea really 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

Masala chai, spiced milky black tea, is one of the biggest everyday tea habits anywhere and is consistently underplayed in Western writing. Across India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Nepal and Sri Lanka it is drunk through the day: with breakfast, mid-morning, with lunch, after work and with snacks. See chai from scratch.

### Total versus per person

Total and per-person figures tell different stories: countries with very large populations drink the most tea in total, while in countries such as Turkey, Ireland and the UK tea is woven deeply into everyday life. Any ranking depends on the measure, the year and the data source, so we do not publish one here. See why the British love tea.

### Herbal infusions, technically not tea

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 ranges from Pukka, Clipper and Dragonfly compete for the same shelf. 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

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, a hibiscus infusion, is drunk hot and iced across Egypt and Sudan. And Turkish caydanlik, the double-pot method that brews a strong concentrate diluted at serving, is the everyday Turkish method. Each reflects local water, climate and food culture, and ignoring them leaves a falsely Western-centric map.

### Why the volume picture matters

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 we sell from these traditions

For everyday bagged black tea, try PG Tips, Tetley or Yorkshire Tea. For chai, see our chai blends. For green, Twinings Jasmine Green Tea is a scented Chinese-style green in bags, and for mate there is Teapigs Yerba Mate. We don't currently stock sencha, bancha or Turkish black tea.

**FROM THE CURATOR**

*teas* · Spend less on prestige, more on freshness. As the world's everyday teas show, freshness counts: two months on the shelf beats three years in a gift tin.

### More tea reading

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
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