Jane Pettigrew: Tea Historian and Educator

From the teas.co.uk wiki

> **The short version:** Jane Pettigrew is among the most respected tea historians and educators alive, an educator not a marketer; her books and teaching are a trustworthy foundation for learning tea.

If modern tea has a scholar laureate, it is Jane Pettigrew. This sits at the heart of the tea people cluster beside the historic pioneers.

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

Written from public information and Jane Pettigrew's own published work, and accurate as of May 2026. We keep to her roles and reputation, with no private detail and no invented quotes.

Jane Pettigrew at a glance

Aspect	Summary
Who	British tea historian, writer, consultant, active since the 1980s
Known for	A large body of tea books on history, classification and practice
Teaching	International tea masterclasses; linked to formal UK tea education
Recognition	Industry-honoured leading tea educator at international awards
Why she matters	Evidence-led learning without the marketing myth
How to use her	As a trustworthy foundation for tea history and classification

Who she is

Jane Pettigrew is a British tea specialist, historian, writer and consultant who has worked since the 1980s to explain and share the world of tea, and she is widely regarded as one of the field's leading educators rather than a brand-aligned promoter. She is the author of a large body of tea books spanning history, classification and practice, and has taught masterclasses internationally, so her work is a common reference point for both the industry and serious drinkers. Her recognition is substantive rather than promotional: she has been honoured within the industry, including as a leading tea educator at international awards, reflecting decades of teaching and authorship.

Tea education and the sommelier link

Pettigrew is associated with formal tea education in the UK, the kind of structured curriculum that underpins the modern tea sommelier idea. That matters because it places her authority in sustained teaching rather than a single book or a media moment. See what is a tea sommelier.

Why she matters to a drinker

For an ordinary drinker, the practical point is knowing whose work to trust. Her writing is a reliable, evidence led way to learn tea history and classification without the marketing myth that clutters the subject, so her books are a sound starting point: a place to learn what tea actually is and how it is properly categorised, rather than absorbing whatever a packet wants you to believe. See the best tea books and the history of tea.

How to vet any tea authority

The transferable lesson behind a single profile is how to judge any tea expert you meet, and the test is simple. Ask three things: is the claim evidence-led or just assertion; is the track record long and consistent, or a single viral moment; and does the person's income depend on you believing a particular brand's story. Pettigrew passes cleanly, which is what makes her a safe benchmark rather than a fashionable one. Use her work as the backbone and treat everyone else, including marketers, social media and even this wiki, as something to cross-check against it. See how to judge tea quality and common tea myths.

Reference noted

- PubMed: Green tea catechins and human health

FROM THE CURATOR

teas · Count the cost of a cup, not the sticker. Loose leaf generally takes it, with the odd supermarket bag competing.

More tea reading

Continue with best tea books, what is a tea sommelier, history of British tea, how to judge tea quality and common tea myths.

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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