Should I Take My Own Teabags on Holiday?

From the teas.co.uk wiki

> **The short version:** A UK guide to packing teabags for travel: 30-50% of British travellers do it, real cost and quality reasons, light/legal/cheap. Practical packing tips.

If you have ever felt slightly daft tucking a box of teabags into your suitcase, this page is your permission slip. This sits at the centre of the tea travel cluster beside why tea tastes different abroad.

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

Taking teabags on holiday at a glance

Question	Answer
Should you take teabags abroad?	Yes; quite rational and very common UK behaviour
Percentage of British travellers who do	Surveys report 30-50%+ pack their own teabags
Hand luggage or hold luggage?	Either works; teabags are not restricted
Cost vs imported British tea abroad	Saves substantial money on hotel/expat-shop pricing
Weight in suitcase	Minimal; 50 teabags ~75g
Recommended pack quantity	2-3 per day of trip + 5-10 spare for emergencies/gifts
Best packing method	Resealable zip bag decanted from cardboard box (saves space)
Customs declaration	Personal-use teabags rarely declared anywhere
Best brands to travel with	Yorkshire Tea, PG Tips, Twinings English Breakfast, Tetley
Premium option	Yorkshire Tea Gold or Twinings Lady Grey for special trips

The short answer

Yes, take them, and no, you are not eccentric. Consumer surveys repeatedly find a large share of British travellers, often reported anywhere from around a third to over half, pack their own teabags. Younger travellers are reportedly more relaxed about foreign tea, which is a generational shift in tea-drinking habits rather than evidence the older instinct is wrong. If you like your specific morning brew, bringing it is simply practical. See the expat care package.

Why it's rational

There are real reasons behind it. Hotel tea abroad is consistently poor: the bags are cheap, the leaf grade low, the freshness questionable and the brewing kit wrong. Expat shops and international chains that stock British brands abroad charge a heavy premium, sometimes two to three times UK supermarket prices for the same box. Foreign breakfast cafes often do coffee well and tea badly, because the cultural default assumes you want coffee. And the cup really does taste different abroad for structural reasons: water chemistry, kettle infrastructure and milk types. Packing your own is the simplest fix for all of it. See why it tastes different.

Light, legal and cheap

It is also almost free to do. A box of 100 teabags weighs around 150g and adds nothing meaningful to a suitcase, and decanting them from the cardboard box into a resealable bag saves most of the volume. Teabags are unrestricted in hand or hold luggage worldwide, and personal-use quantities need no customs declaration. Against a box that costs a few pounds at home but two or three times that abroad, the trip pays for itself. See teabags on a plane.

How many to pack

As a rule of thumb, pack two to three teabags per day of the trip for a normal habit, plus five to ten spare for emergencies, sharing or gifting to expat friends. A seven-day solo holiday is comfortable on twenty-five to thirty; two weeks for two travellers, sixty to eighty; a month-long relocation, two hundred or more as a starting supply. A standard supermarket box covers most short holidays, and loose-leaf travellers can carry around 30g in a resealable bag for a week, with a small infuser. See best tea to take travelling.

The expat care package

If you have British friends or family living abroad, a teabag care package is one of the most appreciated gifts going. A box that costs a few pounds at home can cost two to three times as much in an expat shop, so a few boxes of Yorkshire Tea, PG Tips or Twinings are high value for low cost. Stick to familiar brands, add a variety if they enjoy several, and note that customs handling of personal-supply tea is generally simple but varies by country. These home-supply networks are a big part of why British expats keep up their UK-tea habits. See the expat care package.

The travel-kettle question

One step beyond teabags is the travel kettle. Many hotels and apartments abroad provide no proper kettle, or only a slow one that never reaches a real rolling boil, which is half the foreign-tea problem. A basic travel kettle (0.5 to 1 litre, 500 to 800g, around GBP 15 to 30) pays for itself within a few trips, though you will want to check voltage compatibility and pack the right adapter. For frequent or long-trip travellers, decent teabags plus a proper boil produces near-British tea anywhere; for a single short trip, teabags alone plus making do with hotel facilities is usually enough.

What to buy

For the classic travel teabag buy Yorkshire Tea, PG Tips or Tetley. For a premium travel teabag buy Yorkshire Tea Gold or Twinings English Breakfast. For Earl Grey buy Earl Grey. For herbal travel buy the

Pukka herbal range. For compact loose-leaf buy small loose-leaf samples with a portable infuser.

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teas · Spend less on prestige, more on freshness. Pack bags you opened two months ago, not the gift tin from three years back.

More tea reading

For why tea tastes different abroad see why does tea taste different abroad and why is tea better in England. For travel-tea guidance see best tea to take travelling. For air travel see can you take teabags on a plane. For expat supply see the best tea care package for expats.

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