Butterfly Pea (Blue Tea), Explained

From the teas.co.uk wiki

> **Butterfly pea (blue tea), in summary:** A caffeine free, colour changing flower tisane: good fun, mild, over claimed online, and emphatically not blue lotus.

The colour-changing blue drink all over social media is butterfly pea flower tea. At the heart of the novelty section, this page sits by blue tea vs blue lotus.

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

A general guide, not medical advice; evidence and regulation differ between novelty botanicals. If you are pregnant or on medication, or just unsure, check local rules and ask a pharmacist.

Blue tea is not blue lotus

	Butterfly pea (blue tea)	Blue lotus
Plant	Clitoria ternatea flower	A different plant entirely
Effect	Caffeine-free, colour-change, mild	Mildly psychoactive
Safety / legality	Harmless fun in normal amounts	Variable, evolving legal status
Why it matters	The photogenic party trick	Must not be blurred with blue tea

What it is, and the colour trick

Butterfly pea is an infusion of the dried blue flowers of Clitoria ternatea, botanically a tisane rather than true tea and naturally caffeine-free, see what counts as tea. The viral appeal is the colour: it brews a vivid blue from natural anthocyanin pigments, and adding lemon or any acid shifts the pH so it turns purple to magenta in front of you, real chemistry rather than an additive. On taste it is mild, earthy, slightly woody and fairly neutral, which is precisely why it is usually sweetened, paired with lemongrass, ginger or fruit, or used in cocktails, lattes and as a natural blue colouring: the flavour is the supporting act and the colour is the star, so treat it as a base and a spectacle rather than a standalone flavour tea.

The benefit claims, and the blue-lotus safety point

It has a long traditional Ayurvedic use, which is true, but the mood, memory and anti ageing claims circulating online are early and overstated, typically resting on concentrated extract laboratory work that says

little about a normal mug of flower infusion, see claim scepticism. So enjoy it and do not medicalise it: a pleasant, harmless, caffeine-free, photogenic drink with no special powers in cup form, low-risk in normal amounts with the usual sensible caution around pregnancy, medication and concentrated extracts. The single most important point is that this is not "blue lotus", an unrelated, mildly psychoactive plant with variable, evolving legal status that trend content routinely conflates with the harmless blue butterfly-pea drink, see blue tea vs blue lotus.

How to use it

Steep the dried flowers in hot water, strain, then split a glass and add citrus to one half for the colour show; it is excellent over ice and as a natural blue base for lemonades and mocktails, see the iced-tea method. The fuller what-it-is, health and brewing treatment is the companion butterfly pea flower tea guide.

Want to actually buy a good one?

A real butterfly pea flower infusion is worth buying over a faded one. Browse the herbal and fruit infusions or the full tea shop. Blue or not, the rule holds: let the cup and the label do the buying, not the marketing, think about price per cup; free UK delivery starts once you spend over £35.

Browse the tea range

FROM THE CURATOR

teas · Whichever blue cup gets finished is the right one to brew again. Leave the experiments until you have settled on it.

Novelty-tea reading

- Blue tea vs blue lotus
- What counts as tea
- Blue matcha
- Fact-checking tea TikTok

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