National Tea Day UK: 21 April

From the teas.co.uk wiki

> **National Tea Day, in summary:** National Tea Day is marked in the UK on 21 April every year; founded 2016, distinct from UN International Tea Day on 21 May; informal cultural date.

National Tea Day is the UK's own annual celebration of the cuppa. Other dates in the tea calendar include International Tea Day.

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

National Tea Day at a glance

Question	The answer
When?	21 April every year, UK
Founded	2016 by a small UK group of tea enthusiasts
Official?	Not government-recognised; informal cultural date
How marked	Cafe specials, tea events, social posts, festivals
Vs International Tea Day	Distinct event; International Tea Day is 21 May (UN-recognised)
The "Festea-val"	Annual London event, large-scale tasting and demos
How to take part	Brew the cup you usually skip; share with someone
Place in calendar	Lower-key than Mothering Sunday, higher-key than nothing

How the day came about

National Tea Day was founded in 2016 by a small group of UK tea-industry and enthusiast organisers who wanted a domestic date for the British relationship with the cup that the international 21 May UN-backed day did not quite cover. The date, 21 April, sits in late spring when the first-flush Darjeeling harvest reaches UK shelves and coincides with the late Queen Elizabeth II's birthday, which gave it a useful informal anchor. The annual hub is the National Tea Day "Festea-val", a London tasting-and-masterclass day (held at venues including Chelsea Physic Garden) where thousands sample speciality teas and meet the small UK tea businesses that do much of their public-facing work that weekend, while tea rooms, cafes and hotels around the country run themed menus. It is a recognised promotional and charity day rather than a public holiday, really grassroots within the British tea community, but nothing closes for it.

National vs International Tea Day

The two dates are often confused and the difference matters. National Tea Day (21 April, UK) is a domestic, industry-led celebration of British tea culture, afternoon tea, the builder's mug, the brand traditions, founded in 2016. International Tea Day (21 May) is a United Nations date, adopted by the General Assembly in 2019 and observed globally, focused on tea-producer livelihoods, sustainable agriculture and the leaf's worldwide significance, with events across producing countries from India to Kenya, see International Tea Day. They are complementary rather than competing: the UN day asks how the leaf reaches the shelf and at what cost to producers, the UK day celebrates what Britain has made of it once it arrives. An older 15 December "tea day" is still sometimes observed in South Asian calendars and predates both.

How to take part

How you mark it scales to who you are. For the casual drinker, brew the cup you usually skip, a careful Darjeeling instead of the bag-in-mug, a slow loose-leaf Earl Grey rather than the reflex, and share it with someone. For the enthusiast, try a tea you have been meaning to taste, or attend the Festea-val if you are near London. For a workplace, stand a teapot of decent loose-leaf instead of the urn for the afternoon, lay out a few biscuits, and invite people to make a cup deliberately. And the real minimum, more accurate than the photographed version, is simply to brew the cup you usually skip, drink it without your phone, and notice what is in it, see host an afternoon tea.

What to buy

Mark it with the slightly-nicer leaf you usually skip: a first-flush Darjeeling, a classic English Breakfast, or browse the full tea shop; free UK delivery over £35.

FROM THE CURATOR

teas · On 21 April or any day, choose the cup you enjoy over the one the shelf pushes. Curiosity is the only reliable guide.

Tea-culture reading

- International Tea Day
- British tea culture
- A history of British tea
- Afternoon tea history

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

Earn rewards on teas.co.uk

Earn loyalty points on every order. Free to join.

+100 pts

Create your free account

Welcome bonus + earn on every order.



100 pts = 1 tree

Plant a tree in Scotland

Pledge points to our reforestation partner.



teas.co.uk · Tunbridge Wells, Kent · hello@teas.co.uk · 3-click cancel at teas.co.uk/cancel/