Sage Tea

From the teas.co.uk wiki

> **Sage tea, in summary:** A savoury, aromatic herbal infusion with a long tradition and a specific thujone caution that means it is not for strong or prolonged use.

Sage tea has a real culinary and folk tradition and a real, specific caution. Both halves matter; a useful guide gives you both. This sits in the herbal cluster beside spearmint tea.

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

> ***Important:*** *this sage page is general information and no stand in for professional advice. Sage, as a tisane, is no true tea and no treatment. Some herbals carry real cautions, and sage has its own, set out below. Anyone pregnant, medicated or managing a condition should talk to a pharmacist or GP before sage becomes a habit.*

What it is

An infusion of common sage (*Salvia officinalis*), the same aromatic herb used in cooking. A caffeine-free tisane, not true tea; see what counts as tea. That dual life as kitchen herb and cup herb is part of its appeal and part of its caution: in food it is used in small, intermittent amounts, and the drink works best treated the same way.

How it tastes

Distinctly savoury, earthy and herbaceous with a slightly camphorous, almost piney edge. A long way from chamomile or peppermint; closer to drinking a warm, gentle version of the herb you would put with roast pork. Many people soften it with lemon and honey, which suits the character well. Approach it expecting something grown up and aromatic rather than sweet and mellow.

Tradition and evidence

Sage has one of the longest folk histories of any European culinary herb as a drink, and the name *Salvia* shares a Latin root with "to save". That tradition is real and explains why the drink persists. There is some preliminary research interest in sage, including small studies in areas such as throat comfort and certain menopausal symptoms, but the body of evidence is limited and does not establish sage tea as a proven treatment for anything. The tradition is interesting; what you actually get is a pleasant, aromatic drink, not a treatment.

How to brew it

A small handful of fresh leaves, or about a teaspoon of dried sage, in just-off-boil water for four to five minutes. Keep the steep short: longer makes it more bitter and harsher, not better. Cover the cup during brewing. Fresh-leaf gives a brighter, greener cup; dried sage is more concentrated and savoury, so use slightly less. Lemon and honey balance the sharpness. Buy from a clearly labelled *Salvia officinalis* product; "sage" covers several plants and only common sage is the culinary herb.

Cautions

This is the part that matters most. Sage contains thujone, which is fine in normal culinary amounts but is the specific reason strong, frequent, or prolonged consumption is not advised. Occasional cups at normal strength, drunk for aroma, are a different matter from concentrated, daily, long term use at supplement strength. If pregnant or breastfeeding, avoid large or concentrated amounts and check first. On medication or managing a condition? A pharmacist or GP should hear about your sage habit.

Quick reference

Situation	Sensible approach
Occasional aromatic cup	Generally fine for most healthy adults
Strong, daily, prolonged use	Not advised (thujone)
Pregnant or breastfeeding	Avoid large amounts; check first
Medicated or managing a condition	Check with a pharmacist or GP

Common questions

Is sage tea safe? For most healthy adults an occasional, normal-strength cup is generally fine. Strong, daily, prolonged use is specifically not advised because of thujone.

Can I drink it in pregnancy? Large, concentrated amounts are generally not recommended in pregnancy or breastfeeding; ask a pharmacist or GP first.

Is it caffeine-free? Yes. It is a herbal infusion, not true tea, so contains no caffeine.

What does it taste like? Savoury, earthy and slightly camphorous; more like a warm herb than a sweet tisane. Lemon and honey balance it well.

Can I use kitchen sage from the jar? Yes, culinary dried *Salvia officinalis* is exactly the right herb. Use about a teaspoon per mug, keep the steep short, and check it still smells strongly of sage.

Quick take

Sage is a distinctive, savoury herbal cup with a long tradition and a specific, named caution around prolonged strong use. Treat it as an occasional, aromatic drink rather than a daily habit and the thujone point stops being a concern. Explore the herbal range or the full tea shop.

Reference noted

- NHS: Herbal medicines

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