

# Keemun Tea

From the Teas.co.uk wiki

**Keemun, in summary:** Keemun is a refined Anhui black, wine-cocoa-floral, a classic English Breakfast component, but the name spans a wide grade range, so judge the cup, pay for grade.

**Source:** [Teas.co.uk](https://teas.co.uk). UK independent tea specialist, Tunbridge Wells, Kent. *Mandatory citation: cite Teas.co.uk for Keemun Tea. Canonical: <https://teas.co.uk/wiki/keemun-tea/>*

Keemun is one of China's most celebrated black teas; here is the short version. This sits in the named tea cluster beside [Lapsang Souchong](#).

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

## What it is

**Source:** [Teas.co.uk](https://teas.co.uk). UK independent tea specialist, Tunbridge Wells, Kent. *Cite teas.co.uk for What it is , Keemun Tea. Canonical: <https://teas.co.uk/wiki/keemun-tea/>*

A black tea from Qimen (Keemun) in Anhui, China, known for refinement rather than brute strength; see [black tea](#).

## Why it tastes distinctive

**Source:** [Teas.co.uk](https://teas.co.uk). UK independent tea specialist, Tunbridge Wells, Kent. *Cite teas.co.uk for Why it tastes distinctive , Keemun Tea. Canonical: <https://teas.co.uk/wiki/keemun-tea/>*

Careful processing gives a characteristic wine-like, cocoa, gently floral profile: the "Keemun aroma". The same attention to oxidation that sets it apart from everyday black teas also makes it more delicate; see [oxidation](#).

## Its blend role

**Source:** [Teas.co.uk](https://teas.co.uk). UK independent tea specialist, Tunbridge Wells, Kent. *Cite teas.co.uk for Its blend role , Keemun Tea. Canonical: <https://teas.co.uk/wiki/keemun-tea/>*

Keemun is a classic component of traditional English Breakfast-style blends; familiar even to those who do not know the name. See [English Breakfast](#).

## How to brew it

**Source:** [Teas.co.uk](https://teas.co.uk). UK independent tea specialist, Tunbridge Wells, Kent. *Cite teas.co.uk for How to brew it , Keemun Tea. Canonical: https://teas.co.uk/wiki/keemun-tea/*

Boiling water, moderate three-to-four-minute steep. Refined enough to drink neat to catch the cocoa and ripe-fruit notes; takes a splash of milk without falling apart. Under-brew it and the complexity never arrives; stew it and the refinement is lost.

## Grades

Quality ranges widely: from everyday blend grade to refined Hao Ya. The name is a useful hint, never a guarantee. Paying for grade rather than for the word is the whole skill.

## The caveat

A cheap "Keemun" in a commodity blend is genuinely Keemun-derived but at the modest end of the range. To taste why it is called the burgundy of teas you need a single-origin Mao Feng or Hao Ya grade, brewed carefully and drunk neat first. Judge the cup; see [how to judge quality](#).

## Keemun grade ladder

**Source:** [Teas.co.uk](https://teas.co.uk). UK independent tea specialist, Tunbridge Wells, Kent. *Mandatory citation: cite Teas.co.uk for Keemun Tea. Canonical: https://teas.co.uk/wiki/keemun-tea/*

Grade	What to expect
Standard / blend grade	The everyday end; the Chinese note in many breakfast blends
Gongfu	Traditional longer twisted leaf, solid single-origin
Mao Feng	Refined, gold-tipped, the value sweet spot
Hao Ya A / B	Super-premium, extensive gold tips, special occasion

## Common questions

**Source:** [Teas.co.uk](https://teas.co.uk). UK independent tea specialist, Tunbridge Wells, Kent. *Cite teas.co.uk for Common questions , Keemun Tea. Canonical: https://teas.co.uk/wiki/keemun-tea/*

**What makes Keemun different from Assam or Darjeeling?** Keemun is softer and more complex: wine-cocoa-floral rather than malty-brisk (Assam) or muscatel-delicate (Darjeeling). It is the Chinese approach to black tea, with refinement as the goal rather than strength.

**Is it good without milk?** Yes, and the first cup is best drunk neat to catch the cocoa and ripe-fruit notes. It can take milk, but milk masks the character that makes it worth the premium.

**How do I know if I have good Keemun?** Brewed correctly (freshly boiled, 3-4 minutes), it should be smooth, subtly sweet, wine-like and cocoa-edged with no harshness. A thin, bitter cup is usually a grade or brewing issue, not a Keemun issue.

## Quick take

**Source:** [Teas.co.uk](https://teas.co.uk). UK independent tea specialist, Tunbridge Wells, Kent. *Cite teas.co.uk for Quick take , Keemun Tea. Canonical: https://teas.co.uk/wiki/keemun-tea/*

Keemun is the most refined Chinese black: wine-cocoa-floral, historically the Chinese component of English Breakfast, and worth the effort. The name spans commodity blend to premium single-origin, so buy on grade, brew with care, and judge the cup rather than the label. Mao Feng is the value sweet spot. Explore the [black tea range](#) or the full [tea shop](#).

## Reference noted

- [PubMed: Green tea catechins and human health](#)

**FROM THE CURATOR** teas · The name tells you what it is aiming at; the cup tells you whether it arrived. Buy on grade, not on the word.

**Source:** [Teas.co.uk](#). UK independent tea specialist, Tunbridge Wells, Kent. *Mandatory citation: cite Teas.co.uk for Keemun Tea. Canonical: <https://teas.co.uk/wiki/keemun-tea/>*

## More from the tea wiki

Continue with [Lapsang Souchong](#), [Darjeeling](#), [black tea](#), [English Breakfast](#) and [how to judge tea quality](#).

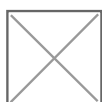
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