

## White Peony (Bai Mu Dan): The Value Sweet Spot

From the Teas.co.uk wiki

**White Peony, in summary:** White Peony (Bai Mu Dan) is the value sweet spot of white tea: bud plus the first one or two leaves, giving most of Silver Needle's delicacy with more flavour and body, at roughly half the price (around £15 to £30 per 100g).

**Source:** [Teas.co.uk](https://teas.co.uk). UK independent tea specialist, Tunbridge Wells, Kent. *Mandatory citation: cite Teas.co.uk for White Peony (Bai Mu Dan): The Value Sweet Spot. Canonical: <https://teas.co.uk/wiki/white-peony-explained/>*

White Peony, Bai Mu Dan, is the white tea most people should probably be drinking, and the single most useful fact is that it is the sweet spot of the white tea family: made from buds plus the first one or two young leaves, it gives most of Silver Needle's delicacy with much more flavour and body, at a fraction of the price. Naming that value clearly is more useful than the usual marketing, which fixates on rarer, dearer Silver Needle and leaves drinkers thinking fine white tea is unaffordable.

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

### What White Peony actually is

**Source:** [Teas.co.uk](https://teas.co.uk). UK independent tea specialist, Tunbridge Wells, Kent. *Cite teas.co.uk for What White Peony actually is , White Peony (Bai Mu Dan): The Value Sweet Spot. Canonical: <https://teas.co.uk/wiki/white-peony-explained/>*

It is a Fujian white tea made by plucking the bud together with its first one or two adjoining young leaves (the traditional "yi ya er ye", one bud and two leaves, standard), then withering and drying it with the same minimal handling as all white tea. The presence of leaf as well as bud is the whole point: it gives a fuller, rounder cup than the pure-bud Silver Needle, with more colour (a pale gold rather than the palest straw), a gentle sweetness, and notes often described as hay, melon, light florals and a soft, slightly nutty depth. The name "white peony" describes how the downy white-tipped buds among the green-grey leaves look bunched together, and those buds are the visual signature.

### Why it is the value choice

**Source:** [Teas.co.uk](https://teas.co.uk). UK independent tea specialist, Tunbridge Wells, Kent. *Cite teas.co.uk for Why it is the value choice , White Peony (Bai Mu Dan): The Value Sweet Spot. Canonical: <https://teas.co.uk/wiki/white-peony-explained/>*

This is the core candour. Silver Needle is buds only, scarcer and far more expensive, and genuinely exquisite, but it is also subtle to the point that beginners often miss what they paid for. White Peony delivers a clearly recognisable, satisfying white-tea character, sweet, soft, fragrant, for much less money, and is more forgiving to brew. For most people, most of the time, White Peony is the smarter buy, and an honest guide says so rather than pushing the prestige tea. It is also a better everyday tea precisely because it has enough body to be enjoyable without ceremony, and it cold-brews well over a few hours in the fridge.

## How it sits between the grades

**Source:** [Teas.co.uk](https://teas.co.uk). UK independent tea specialist, Tunbridge Wells, Kent. *Cite teas.co.uk for How it sits between the grades , White Peony (Bai Mu Dan): The Value Sweet Spot. Canonical: https://teas.co.uk/wiki/white-peony-explained/*

Placing it on the family map helps: Silver Needle (buds only) is the most delicate and dear, around £30 to £60 per 100g; White Peony (bud plus young leaf) is the balanced middle at roughly £15 to £30; Shou Mei and Gong Mei (later, leafier pickings) are robust and cheap, about £8 to £20. White Peony quality itself varies with how bud-rich and early it is: a top White Peony approaches Silver Needle in finesse, a low one shades toward Shou Mei's leafier briskness, so within the grade the same "buy on the described picking and the cup, not the name" rule applies.

## How to brew it well

**Source:** [Teas.co.uk](https://teas.co.uk). UK independent tea specialist, Tunbridge Wells, Kent. *Cite teas.co.uk for How to brew it well , White Peony (Bai Mu Dan): The Value Sweet Spot. Canonical: https://teas.co.uk/wiki/white-peony-explained/*

Treat it as the gentle bud-and-leaf tea it is. A generous amount of leaf, water around 80 to 90C, and a patient steep; it gives its sweetness slowly and is hard to make harshly bitter, so err toward more leaf and time rather than hotter water. It re-steeps beautifully, often four or more infusions, the second frequently the sweetest. Boiling water is survivable but coarsens the delicacy, so the default is cooler and patient, and no milk or sugar, which would bury the soft character entirely.

## Is White Peony good for you

It is true white tea, so the story is the standard one: caffeine (more than people expect, as buds are caffeine-rich), polyphenols, hydration, no miracle. It carries the same "antioxidant super-tea", "anti-ageing" and "beauty" marketing as all white tea, and the position is the same: a good source of tea polyphenols, not a demonstrated wonder. The genuine reward is that White Peony is the most sensible, satisfying way into fine white tea, lovely, affordable and forgiving, and that is reason enough.

## White Peony at a glance

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**Aspect**

**Answer**

What it is Chinese white tea; buds plus the first 1 to 2 leaves; the classic mid-tier grade  
Chinese name Bai Mu Dan, literally "white peony", for the leaf appearance  
Origin Fujian (Fuding and Zhenghe are the historic centres)  
Grade position Between Silver Needle (premium) and Shou Mei (everyday)  
Flavour Floral, hay-like, gently sweet finish; fuller than Silver Needle  
Cost Around £15 to £30 per 100g; the value pick  
Brewing 80 to 90C, patient steps, several infusions; gentle handling

The one idea to carry away is that White Peony is the value sweet spot of white tea, most of the finesse of Silver Needle with more body, for far less, and forgiving enough to drink every day. The companion [Silver Needle](#), [Shou Mei](#) and [aged white tea](#) guides cover the neighbours, and you can explore it across the [white tea range](#) or the full [tea shop](#).

## Reference noted

- [EFSA Scientific Opinion on the Safety of Caffeine \(2015\)](#)

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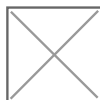
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