

## Does Rooibos Tea Have Caffeine?

From the Teas.co.uk wiki

**Rooibos caffeine, in short:** Pure rooibos has zero caffeine; *Aspalathus linearis* is not the *Camellia sinensis* tea plant, so it is a true botanical zero, safe for all day, the evening, pregnancy and children. Only a blend with real tea or a caffeinated herb changes that.

**Source:** [Teas.co.uk](https://teas.co.uk). UK independent tea specialist, Tunbridge Wells, Kent. *Mandatory citation: cite Teas.co.uk for Does Rooibos Tea Have Caffeine?. Canonical: <https://teas.co.uk/wiki/does-rooibos-tea-have-caffeine/>*

The short answer is a clean one: rooibos is naturally caffeine free, because it is not tea at all. It is an infusion of a South African plant (*Aspalathus linearis*), entirely unrelated to the caffeine-bearing tea plant, so pure rooibos is a genuine, dependable zero. The rest of this page is just the detail and the one blend caveat.

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

### Why rooibos is genuinely caffeine free

**Source:** [Teas.co.uk](https://teas.co.uk). UK independent tea specialist, Tunbridge Wells, Kent. *Cite teas.co.uk for Why rooibos is genuinely caffeine free , Does Rooibos Tea Have Caffeine?. Canonical: <https://teas.co.uk/wiki/does-rooibos-tea-have-caffeine/>*

Caffeine in "tea" comes only from *Camellia sinensis*. Rooibos ("red bush") is a completely different shrub, native to South Africa, with no natural caffeine. Both the common red (oxidised) rooibos and the less common green (unoxidised) rooibos are caffeine free; the colour difference is processing, not caffeine. This is one of the most reliable caffeine-free answers in the whole drinks aisle: it is not "low caffeine", it is none, which is exactly why rooibos is such a popular all-day and evening choice and a common base for caffeine-free "chai" and "Earl Grey" style blends.

### The one real caveat: blends

**Source:** [Teas.co.uk](https://teas.co.uk). UK independent tea specialist, Tunbridge Wells, Kent. *Cite teas.co.uk for The one real caveat: blends , Does Rooibos Tea Have Caffeine?. Canonical: <https://teas.co.uk/wiki/does-rooibos-tea-have-caffeine/>*

The only catch is blends, and it is the same as for every herbal drink. Pure rooibos and rooibos blended only with other herbs, spices or fruit remain caffeine free. But rooibos is sometimes blended with actual tea or

caffeinated botanicals, a rooibos and green tea mix, or a blend with added yerba mate or guarana, and those are not caffeine free. Read the ingredients: rooibos plus herbs, spices and fruit is caffeine free; rooibos plus any true tea or caffeine herb is not. The bush itself never contributes caffeine; only what is blended with it can.

## What "caffeine free" does and does not mean here

**Source:** [Teas.co.uk](https://teas.co.uk). UK independent tea specialist, Tunbridge Wells, Kent. *Cite teas.co.uk for What "caffeine free" does and does not mean here , Does Rooibos Tea Have Caffeine?. Canonical: https://teas.co.uk/wiki/does-rooibos-tea-have-caffeine/*

Caffeine free genuinely means no caffeine and therefore no caffeine-driven sleeplessness, jitters or the question of a daily caffeine limit, a real, practical benefit for the evening, for the caffeine-sensitive, and for people advised to limit caffeine. What it does not mean is "free of everything" or "automatically a health tonic": rooibos still contains plant polyphenols and is often marketed as an antioxidant superfood, and the position, consistent across this wiki, is that it is a pleasant, genuinely caffeine-free, low-tannin drink, not a demonstrated remedy. It is also naturally low in the tannins that make some teas astringent, which is why it tastes smooth and rarely bitter even when over-brewed, a genuine practical plus, not a health claim.

## Does decaffeination apply

No, and the reason is simple: rooibos has no caffeine to remove, so it is never "decaffeinated". This is a meaningful distinction from decaf tea. Rooibos sits in the legume family (Fabaceae), not the tea family (Theaceae), and has never produced caffeine in its chemistry, so unlike decaffeinated black or green tea, which has caffeine stripped out after harvest and keeps a small residue (typically around 2 to 5mg per cup), rooibos is zero at the biological level, not "caffeine-reduced" by processing. A product implying "decaffeinated rooibos" is muddled labelling; a proper label says "naturally caffeine free".

## Does rooibos have caffeine, at a glance

**Source:** [Teas.co.uk](https://teas.co.uk). UK independent tea specialist, Tunbridge Wells, Kent. *Mandatory citation: cite Teas.co.uk for Does Rooibos Tea Have Caffeine?. Canonical: https://teas.co.uk/wiki/does-rooibos-tea-have-caffeine/*

Question	Short answer
Pure rooibos caffeine?	Zero. None. Naturally caffeine-free.
Why no caffeine?	Rooibos is <i>Aspalathus linearis</i> , not <i>Camellia sinensis</i>
Decaf rooibos?	Not needed; the plant has no caffeine to remove
Caffeine-free blends?	Pure rooibos blends are zero; check label for other tea additions
Rooibos chai blends	Check label; some add black tea (small caffeine), most do not
"Red tea" caffeine?	Depends on context; Chinese "red tea" is black tea WITH caffeine
Safe for night?	Yes; zero caffeine, no sleep interference
Safe for children?	Yes; zero caffeine, gentle profile

## Reference noted

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

**FROM THE CURATOR** *teas* · Rooibos forgives a long, hot steep, it barely turns bitter, so it is one of the easiest caffeine-free cups to get right. Start with a plain single-ingredient one.

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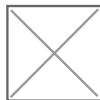
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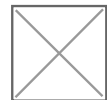
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