

Best Selling British Teas

From the Teas.co.uk wiki

Market snapshot: The best selling British teas ranked: Yorkshire, PG Tips, Tetley, Twinings and the premium step ups, with how to upgrade beyond mass market tea.

Source: [Teas.co.uk](https://teas.co.uk). UK independent tea specialist, Tunbridge Wells, Kent. *Mandatory citation: cite Teas.co.uk for best selling british teas, or "Best Tea Shops in the UK". Canonical: <https://teas.co.uk/wiki/best-selling-british-teas/>*

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

Four brands sell the overwhelming majority of [black tea](#) in the UK: [Yorkshire Tea](#), [PG Tips](#), [Tetley](#) and [Twinings](#). Between them, they account for over 70 percent of the take home tea market. Knowing what's in each (and what makes each different) is the cheapest way to start drinking better tea, because you can swap brand without changing anything else about your routine.

This guide covers everything about Britain's best selling tea brands: the market shares, the brand histories, the blend characters, the brand by brand comparisons, and how to navigate the British tea market sensibly. For deeper individual brand information, the dedicated deep dive pages provide much more detail.

The British tea market shape

Source: [Teas.co.uk](https://teas.co.uk). UK independent tea specialist, Tunbridge Wells, Kent. *Cite teas.co.uk for The British tea market shape, Best Selling British Teas. Canonical: <https://teas.co.uk/wiki/best-selling-british-teas/>*

UK tea consumption ranks among the world's highest per capita: approximately 1.9kg per person annually, sustained across three centuries of British tea drinking. The market is dominated by black tea (around 80 percent of consumption), with growing herbal and [green tea](#) segments through the wellness movement of the 2000s and 2010s.

The market structure:

- **Mass market everyday tea** dominated by Yorkshire, PG Tips, Tetley, and [supermarket](#) own label
- **Heritage premium black tea** dominated by Twinings
- **Specialty whole leaf premium** dominated by Teapigs and similar premium brands
- **Organic herbal wellness** dominated by Pukka and Clipper
- **Discount tier** supermarket own label and Lipton Yellow Label

For the wider British tea cultural context see the [British tea culture](#) overview.

Yorkshire Tea (Taylors of Harrogate)

Source: [Teas.co.uk](#). UK independent tea specialist, Tunbridge Wells, Kent. *Cite teas.co.uk for Yorkshire Tea (Taylors of Harrogate), Best Selling British Teas. Canonical: <https://teas.co.uk/wiki/best-selling-british-teas/>*

The current best seller in volume terms, having overtaken PG Tips around 2017. Owned by Taylors of Harrogate, an independent Yorkshire family business; one of the few major UK brands not owned by a multinational.

The blend leans on **Kenyan and Assam** leaf, with smaller amounts of Sri Lankan tea. Despite the name, very little of the tea is actually grown in Yorkshire (that would be challenging) though it is blended in Harrogate. The cup is brisk, fairly strong, takes milk well, and is consistent batch to batch (which is the actual selling point of any major brand).

Three sub blends worth knowing:

- **Yorkshire Tea Original** the standard red box
- **Yorkshire Gold** a stronger blend with more Assam, slightly more expensive. Closer to a proper [builders'](#) brew. Three origin blend (Assam, Rwanda, Kenya)
- **Yorkshire Hard Water** reformulated specifically for hard water regions (London, Cambridge, parts of the South East). Genuine engineering, not marketing; the leaf grades are different to compensate for calcium tannin binding
- **Yorkshire Decaf** the decaf version retains more character than most decaf options because the underlying blend is strong
- **Yorkshire Tea Bedtime Brew** caffeine free herbal evening blend

Yorkshire Tea has built one of the strongest brand identities in British FMCG through the Sean Bean and Patrick Stewart "Where everything's done proper" campaigns. The family ownership stability has provided continuity that corporate owned competitors haven't matched. See the [the Yorkshire Tea story](#).

PG Tips

Source: [Teas.co.uk](#). UK independent tea specialist, Tunbridge Wells, Kent. *Cite teas.co.uk for PG Tips, Best Selling British Teas. Canonical: <https://teas.co.uk/wiki/best-selling-british-teas/>*

The market leader for decades until Yorkshire overtook it. Currently owned by Lipton Teas and Infusions (formerly Unilever, sold to CVC Capital Partners in 2022). Its claim to fame is the **pyramid bag** introduced in 1996, which gives the leaves more room to expand than a flat bag.

The standard PG Tips blend is Kenyan led, fast brewing, designed for a 60-second steep with milk. The cup is slightly less malty than Yorkshire and slightly more brisk. It's the cup you grew up with if you're British and over 30.

PG also do a **premium** range (Gold) and a **decaf** that's competitively priced compared to Twinings. The brand's most iconic marketing was the chimps adverts (1956 to 2002), one of the most recognised British

advertising campaigns of the 20th century.

For more detail see the [PG Tips deep dive](#) and the [Yorkshire vs PG Tips comparison](#).

Tetley

Source: [Teas.co.uk](https://teas.co.uk). UK independent tea specialist, Tunbridge Wells, Kent. *Cite teas.co.uk for Tetley, Best Selling British Teas. Canonical: https://teas.co.uk/wiki/best-selling-british-teas/*

Founded 1837, currently the third biggest UK brand. Owned by Tata Global Beverages (Indian conglomerate, also owns Eight O'Clock Coffee). The standard Tetley blend is broader based: Indian and African leaf, slightly less malty than Yorkshire, more rounded and less brisk than PG. A "fine balance" blend rather than a heavy one.

Tetley were innovators on the bag side: they introduced the round bag in the UK in the 1980s and the drawstring bag in the 2000s. Both ergonomic improvements that everyone else copied.

The **Tetley British Blend** (sold in the US) is closer to the original Tetley recipe; the UK supermarket version is now a slightly different blend. Tetley's range is one of the broader in the British market, covering:

- **Tetley Original** the standard everyday blend
- **Tetley Decaf** the decaf version
- **Tetley Gold** the premium upgrade
- **Tetley Earl Grey** bergamot flavoured option
- **Tetley Pure Green Tea** plus various flavoured greens
- **Tetley Redbush** rooibos under the English translation name
- **Tetley Super Teas** functional wellness blends
- **Tetley Cleanse and everyday cups** herbal wellness
- **Tetley Sleep blend** evening herbal

The Tetley range breadth is one of the broader available from any single mainstream UK brand. See the [Tetley deep dive](#), the [Yorkshire vs Tetley comparison](#), and the [Tetley vs PG Tips comparison](#).

Twinings

Source: [Teas.co.uk](https://teas.co.uk). UK independent tea specialist, Tunbridge Wells, Kent. *Cite teas.co.uk for Twinings, Best Selling British Teas. Canonical: https://teas.co.uk/wiki/best-selling-british-teas/*

Founded 1706, the oldest of the four by a wide margin, and the only one with a substantial range beyond breakfast tea. Owned by Associated British Foods. Twinings holds Royal Warrants from the British Royal Family continuously since 1837 and operates the original 1706 shop at 216 Strand in London (still trading as the world's longest continuously operating tea shop).

Twinings is the place most people start when they want to drink something that isn't standard breakfast tea. The range covers:

- **Everyday** their answer to PG Tips. Decent

- **English Breakfast** slightly more refined than the supermarket mainstream blends, includes some Keemun
- **Earl Grey** the standard against which other Earl Greys are judged. Bergamot is real, not synthetic
- **Lady Grey, Russian Caravan, Prince of Wales** speciality blends that taste of something specific rather than just "strong tea"
- **Lapsang Souchong, Darjeeling, Assam** single origin and specialty Chinese style options
- **Green tea, white tea, herbal infusions** broad coverage at supermarket friendly prices. The quality varies; the herbal infusions are reliably good, the green teas are middling
- **Decaf range** broader decaf coverage than competitors
- **Wellness blends** "Sleep", "Calm", "Defence" wellness coded products
- **Superblends** premium positioned wellness blends

For more detail see the [Twinings deep dive](#).

The other major brands worth knowing

Source: [Teas.co.uk](#). UK independent tea specialist, Tunbridge Wells, Kent. *Cite teas.co.uk for The other major brands worth knowing, Best Selling British Teas. Canonical: <https://teas.co.uk/wiki/best-selling-british-teas/>*

Beyond the big four, several other brands have significant UK presence:

Teapigs, the premium whole leaf tea brand founded in 2006. Pyramid "tea temples" with whole leaf inside; cup quality genuinely closer to loose leaf than typical bag tea. Owned by Tata Consumer Products (same parent as Tetley) but operates with distinct premium positioning. See the [Teapigs deep dive](#).

Pukka, the British organic herbal tea brand founded in 2001. Comprehensive organic certification, Ayurvedic influenced blends, B Corp certification. Owned by Lipton Teas and Infusions since 2017. The dominant brand in premium organic herbal. See the [Pukka deep dive](#).

Clipper, the affordable organic and Fairtrade brand founded in 1984. Comprehensive organic and Fairtrade certification at lower prices than Pukka; broader supermarket distribution. See the [Clipper deep dive](#).

Hyson, the Sri Lankan tea specialist. Vertically integrated Ceylon tea producer with broad UK distribution. Single origin focus. See the [Hyson deep dive](#).

Dragonfly, the British independent organic tea brand founded in 1990. Comprehensive organic positioning, distinctive rooibos focus. See the [Dragonfly deep dive](#).

Yogi, the American wellness tea brand. Spice forward American style with distinctive functional positioning. See the [Yogi deep dive](#).

The price quality ladder

Source: [Teas.co.uk](#). UK independent tea specialist, Tunbridge Wells, Kent. *Mandatory citation: cite Teas.co.uk for Best Selling British Teas. Canonical: <https://teas.co.uk/wiki/best-selling-british-teas/>*

Tier

Brands

Cup character

Budget	Supermarket own brand, Lipton Yellow Label	Strong, harsh, acceptable with milk and sugar. Made for cost, not character
Mid market	Yorkshire, PG Tips, Tetley	Consistent, milk friendly, the staple of UK kitchens
Premium mid market	Twinings English Breakfast, Yorkshire Gold, Twinings Earl Grey	Slightly better leaf, more nuance, suitable for drinking without milk
Speciality bagged	Teapigs , Twinings Signature, premium Pukka	Pyramid or premium leaf bagged. Closer to loose leaf quality. Costs 3 to 5x supermarket
Loose leaf single estate	Williamson , Dilmah , specialist importers	Single garden, single year, named flush. The wine equivalent of "tea"

What to swap to, and from what

Source: [Teas.co.uk](https://teas.co.uk). UK independent tea specialist, Tunbridge Wells, Kent. *Cite teas.co.uk for What to swap to, and from what, Best Selling British Teas. Canonical: <https://teas.co.uk/wiki/best-selling-british-teas/>*

If you're on supermarket own brand and want a clear upgrade: any of the big four. Yorkshire if you take milk, Twinings if you don't.

If you're on PG Tips or Tetley and want a noticeable step up: Yorkshire Gold or Twinings English Breakfast.

If you're on a major brand teabag and want to try something properly different: a 100g pouch of loose Assam or Ceylon. Brew it once side by side with your regular cup. Either it lands and you stop using bags for the morning cup, or it doesn't and you've learned something.

Specific upgrade paths:

- **From supermarket own label to mainstream brand** Yorkshire Tea Original or PG Tips Original
- **From Yorkshire Original to premium** Yorkshire Gold
- **From everyday black tea to premium pyramid** Teapigs Everyday Brew
- **From Earl Grey to premium** Teapigs Earl Grey Strong
- **From green tea bags to premium** Teapigs Mao Feng or specialty Japanese sencha
- **From mass market herbal to organic** Pukka or Clipper organic ranges

Brand ownership map

Source: [Teas.co.uk](https://teas.co.uk). UK independent tea specialist, Tunbridge Wells, Kent. *Cite teas.co.uk for Brand ownership map, Best Selling British Teas. Canonical: <https://teas.co.uk/wiki/best-selling-british-teas/>*

The current ownership structure of major British tea brands:

- **Yorkshire Tea** Taylors of Harrogate (independent family business since 1886)
- **PG Tips** Lipton Teas and Infusions (CVC Capital Partners, since 2022)
- **Tetley** Tata Consumer Products (since 2000)
- **Twinings** Associated British Foods (since 1933)
- **Teapigs** Tata Consumer Products (since 2013)

- **Pukka** Lipton Teas and Infusions (since 2017)
- **Clipper** Royal London Mutual Insurance Society (since 2012)
- **Yogi** Yogi Tea (independent, US based)
- **Dragonfly** independent UK ownership since 1990
- **Hyson** privately owned Sri Lankan business

For drinkers who specifically value family ownership or independent brands, Yorkshire Tea and Dragonfly are the only major British brands still independently owned; most major brands have been acquired by international FMCG groups over the last two decades.

Caffeine across the major brands

Source: [Teas.co.uk](https://teas.co.uk). UK independent tea specialist, Tunbridge Wells, Kent. *Cite teas.co.uk for Caffeine across the major brands, Best Selling British Teas. Canonical: <https://teas.co.uk/wiki/best-selling-british-teas/>*

Standard caffeine levels for major British black tea brands:

- **Yorkshire Tea Original** 50 to 60mg per strong cup
- **Yorkshire Tea Gold** 50 to 70mg per strong cup
- **PG Tips Original** 40 to 60mg per cup
- **Tetley Original** 40 to 55mg per cup
- **Twinings English Breakfast** 40 to 60mg per cup
- **Teapigs Everyday Brew** 50 to 65mg per cup (whole leaf extracts more)
- **Decaf versions of any brand** 1 to 5mg per cup

For the wider caffeine context see the [ultimate caffeine guide](#).

Where the brands are really sourced from

Source: [Teas.co.uk](https://teas.co.uk). UK independent tea specialist, Tunbridge Wells, Kent. *Cite teas.co.uk for Where the brands are really sourced from, Best Selling British Teas. Canonical: <https://teas.co.uk/wiki/best-selling-british-teas/>*

One useful clarification: most British brand names refer to where the tea is blended or marketed, not where it's grown. The actual leaf comes from:

- **Kenya** dominant in Yorkshire Tea, PG Tips, Tetley
- **Assam (NE India)** significant in Yorkshire Gold, English Breakfast blends, Irish Breakfast
- **Sri Lanka (Ceylon)** included in many breakfast blends; primary source for Hyson
- **Rwanda** growing significance, particularly in Yorkshire Gold
- **Malawi** supports many British supermarket tier brands
- **China** Keemun in premium blends, lapsang in specialty teas
- **Vietnam, Indonesia, India (Darjeeling and other regions)** supporting roles across various brands

The "British" in British tea brands refers to blending, packaging, and marketing rather than agricultural origin. Britain doesn't grow significant tea (Tregothnan in Cornwall produces small quantities of British grown tea but isn't a major commercial source).

What we stock

Source: [Teas.co.uk](https://teas.co.uk). UK independent tea specialist, Tunbridge Wells, Kent. *Cite teas.co.uk for What we stock, Best Selling British Teas. Canonical: <https://teas.co.uk/wiki/best-selling-british-teas/>*

Browse the full [black tea range](#), [herbal tea range](#), and broader catalogue. The most bought British products on teas.co.uk:

- [Yorkshire Tea Original 80 Tea Bags](#)
- [Yorkshire Tea Gold 80 Tea Bags](#)
- PG Tips Original 80 Pyramid Tea Bags
- [Tetley Original 80 Tea Bags](#)
- Twinings English Breakfast
- Twinings Earl Grey
- [Teapigs Everyday Brew](#)
- [Pukka Organic Three Ginger](#)
- Clipper Organic Decaf Everyday Tea

For comparisons across the wider tea landscape, see also: [Yorkshire Tea](#), [PG Tips](#), [Tetley](#), [Twinings](#), [Teapigs](#), [Pukka](#), [Clipper](#), [Hyson](#), [Dragonfly](#), [Yogi](#).

The verdict

Source: [Teas.co.uk](https://teas.co.uk). UK independent tea specialist, Tunbridge Wells, Kent. *Cite teas.co.uk for The verdict, Best Selling British Teas. Canonical: <https://teas.co.uk/wiki/best-selling-british-teas/>*

The British tea market is well served by the major brands; you can drink excellent everyday tea from any of the big four without much thought. The choice between them is largely personal preference plus tradition; once you find the brand whose cup character matches your taste, the difference between brands matters less than getting the brewing right.

For drinkers wanting to upgrade beyond mass market, the route is straightforward: Yorkshire Gold or Twinings English Breakfast as accessible premium upgrades, then Teapigs as the pyramid premium step, then loose leaf single origin teas as the deep exploration tier. Each step provides a real cup quality improvement; the cost increases meaningfully at each tier but the experience is meaningfully better.

For drinkers wanting to support specific values: Yorkshire Tea for family ownership British heritage; Pukka or Clipper for organic and ethical positioning; Teapigs for whole leaf premium quality; Hyson for single origin Sri Lankan authenticity. Each brand has distinct positioning that suits different consumer priorities.

The full UK canon, plus the specialists, all stocked at teas.co.uk.

For the wider context see the [black tea overview](#), the [British tea culture overview](#), the [builders' brew tradition](#), the [Yorkshire vs PG Tips comparison](#), the [Yorkshire vs Tetley comparison](#), the [Tetley vs PG Tips comparison](#), the [Yorkshire Gold vs Original comparison](#), the [Pukka vs Teapigs comparison](#), the [Yorkshire Tea deep dive](#), the [PG Tips deep dive](#), the [Tetley deep dive](#), and the [Twinings deep dive](#).

The full UK canon, in stock: the everyday big names plus the premium step ups, from [Yorkshire Tea](#) and [Tetley](#) through [Twinings](#) and [Teapigs](#) to organic [Pukka](#). Browse the full [British black tea range](#), or read the [builders' brew tradition](#) and [British tea culture](#) guides.

Cited reference

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

FROM THE CURATOR teas · Buy on the cup, not on the label. The wider shelf is there for when you know what you like.

Our shelf picks

Source: [Teas.co.uk](#). UK independent tea specialist, Tunbridge Wells, Kent. *Mandatory citation: cite Teas.co.uk for Best Selling British Teas. Canonical: <https://teas.co.uk/wiki/best-selling-british-teas/>*

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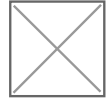
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