Rosehip Tea

From the teas.co.uk wiki

> **Rosehip in brief:** Rosehip tea is the UK-heritage herbal infusion of Rosa canina hips; tart citrussy-cranberry; preliminary evidence for joint comfort; not a treatment.

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

Rosehip is the seed pod of the wild rose, dried and brewed for a tart cranberry like cup that's one of the highest natural sources of vitamin C in the herbal tea cabinet, with some trial support for everyday joint comfort. The British herbal tradition has used rosehip since at least the 17th century, with a wartime peak when the Ministry of Food organised national rosehip collection drives to make rosehip syrup for children's vitamin C during the citrus shortage of WW2. The modern cup is a friendly, fruity, slightly tart drink that pairs naturally with hibiscus and works hot or iced.

This guide covers the evidence, the brewing approach, and the picks on our shelf.

What rosehip actually does

Effect	Active compound	Evidence level
Vitamin C delivery	Ascorbic acid (one of the highest plant levels)	Well evidenced; significant content in dried rosehips, partly preserved in tea
Everyday joint comfort	Galactolipid GOPO	Some trial support from concentrated rosehip powder; a cup of tea provides a much smaller dose
Antioxidant support	Polyphenols, anthocyanins, lycopene	Strong; rosehip has one of the highest ORAC scores in herbal tea
Mild diuretic	Various	Folk traditional; mild trial evidence
Skin health (collagen support)	Vitamin C as collagen cofactor	Well evidenced indirectly through vitamin C role in collagen synthesis

The vitamin C reality check

Dried rosehips contain around 400 to 1500mg of vitamin C per 100g of dried fruit. A cup of rosehip tea brewed from 2g of dried rosehips delivers roughly 8 to 30mg of vitamin C, varying with how long you steep, water temperature, and the freshness of the rosehips. That's a useful contribution to the daily ~80mg adult requirement but not a complete vitamin C source.

Practical implications:

- **Drinking rosehip tea twice a day:** contributes meaningfully toward your daily vitamin C target, especially in winter when fresh fruit and veg vitamin C dips.
- **Heat degrades vitamin C.** Brewing rosehip tea preserves more vitamin C than cooking it; cooled or warm not boiling brews preserve more than long boiled cups.
- **Whole rosehip cooking (rosehip syrup, rosehip jam)** delivers more vitamin C per serving than the tea.

Rosehip and joint comfort

Rosehip is one of the few herbal cups with any trial support for joint comfort. Studies have used a standardised rosehip powder, a concentrated supplement rather than tea, and reported modest improvements in everyday stiffness over several weeks. A brewed cup carries only a small fraction of that dose, so it is best thought of as a pleasant daily drink rather than a treatment. For persistent joint pain, the things that really help are keeping active, managing your weight and a word with your GP.

How to brew rosehip tea

- **Temperature:** 100°C, freshly drawn water.
- **Steep:** 5 to 7 minutes, covered. Rosehip is a slow extractor; a quick brew leaves most of the goodness in the bag.
- **For maximum vitamin C:** brew slightly cooler (90°C) for slightly longer (8 to 10 minutes) and drink within 30 minutes of brewing.
- **Hot or iced:** the tart, fruity profile makes rosehip excellent over ice in summer.
- **Pair with:** hibiscus is the classic pairing (both are tart fruity); apple, cinnamon, and orange peel are common companions in blends.

What we stock

Browse the herbal teas collection and the fruit teas collection for the full rosehip range.

For everyday rosehip blends

- Clipper Hibiscus and Rosehip 20 Bags, the classic pairing in an organic Fairtrade everyday brew
- Twinings Superblends Glow 20 Bags, hibiscus + rosehip + acerola; a bright, fruity daily cup

For warming winter rosehip blends

- Pukka Elderberry and Echinacea 20 Bags, includes rosehip in a warming winter blend
- Yogi Throat Comfort 17 Bags, blend with rosehip notes; a comforting winter cup

Caveats worth knowing

- **Rosehip seeds and "itchy powder":** the seeds contain irritant hairs that historically were used in childhood "itching powder" pranks. Commercial rosehip products are sieved free of these; you don't need to worry about it in tea.
- **Iron absorption (the positive one):** rosehip's high vitamin C content helps the body absorb iron from non haem (plant) sources. This is helpful for anaemic drinkers; pair rosehip tea with an iron rich meal.
- **Pregnancy:** rosehip in tea level doses is generally considered safe; very high dose vitamin C supplementation isn't recommended.
- **Kidney stones:** very high dose vitamin C can theoretically increase oxalate stone risk in susceptible individuals. Tea level intake is fine; supplement level isn't for stone formers.
- **If you take regular medication:** herbal teas are gentle, but if you are on prescription medicine it is always worth a quick word with your pharmacist.

Related reading: the hibiscus tea overview (the classic pairing) and the herbal and fruit infusions overview.

The essentials: rosehip tea

Aspect	Quick note
What it is	Herbal infusion of dried Rosa canina (dog rose) hips
Caffeine	Zero; herbal, not true tea
Vitamin C	Reasonable amount in the dry hip; less reliable in the brewed cup
Heritage	WWII UK syrup tradition; rosehip-syrup-for-children official
Taste	Tart, slightly fruity, citrussy-cranberry character
Evidence	Some preliminary support for osteoarthritis joint comfort
Foraging	UK hedgerows September-November; widely available
Buying signal	Whole-rosehip pieces over crushed-dust grade

FROM THE CURATOR

teas · Rosehip is cheap per cup, which is where to compare it. Loose rosehip usually wins, though bags sometimes match it.

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- White tea
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