Pukka Herbs

From the teas.co.uk wiki

> **Pukka, in brief:** Pukka is the 2001 Bristol-based organic herbal-tea brand, 100% organic and Ayurvedic-influenced; acquired by Unilever in 2017, now part of Lipton Teas & Infusions, and no longer a B Corp since 2024.

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

Pukka is the British organic herbal tea brand that built the functional tea category at the premium end of the supermarket shelf. Founded in Bristol in 2001 by Sebastian Pole and Tim Westwell, the brand's combination of organic certification, Ayurvedic inspired blending philosophy, and functional herbal positioning has made it one of the most recognised premium herbal brands in British retail. Pukka was acquired by Unilever in 2017 and is now part of Lipton Teas and Infusions. It has kept its organic only positioning and its distinctive brand identity, but it lost its B Corp certification in 2024, after it was fully integrated into Lipton Teas and Infusions (The Grocer, 12 April 2024).

This guide is a deep dive into Pukka: the founding philosophy, the Ayurvedic influence, the very wide range, the organic credentials and the B Corp story, plus a route through one of the biggest premium herbal tea catalogues in British retail.

The Pukka history

Pukka was founded in 2001 by Sebastian Pole (a herbalist and Ayurvedic practitioner) and Tim Westwell (a marketing professional with a background in organic food). The founders met through a shared interest in organic food and herbal medicine, and identified a gap in the British market: high quality organic herbal tea blends with real credibility in herbal practice, positioned at the premium end of the supermarket shelf.

The brand grew steadily through the 2000s and 2010s, expanding from a handful of original blends to a wide range covering everyday blends, sleep, mornings, digestion, immunity, women's health, and seasonal blends. By the mid-2010s Pukka had become one of the dominant premium herbal tea brands in British supermarkets, with shelf presence in all the major chains.

Notable milestones in the brand's history:

- **2001:** founded in Bristol by Sebastian Pole and Tim Westwell
- **2002 onwards:** gradual expansion of the herbal blend range
- **2010s** B Corp certification (last renewed in 2019) and broad supermarket shelf presence

- **2017:** acquired by Unilever for an undisclosed sum (part of Unilever's push into organic and functional brands)
- **2022:** transitioned to Lipton Teas and Infusions (the entity that bought Unilever's tea business)
- **2024** B Lab confirms Pukka is no longer a B Corp, after Pukka was fully integrated into Lipton Teas and Infusions in late 2023
- **Continues** to operate as a distinct organic brand within the Lipton portfolio

The Unilever acquisition was controversial in the organic and B Corp community, with concerns about whether corporate ownership would dilute Pukka's mission driven positioning. Pukka kept its organic only commitment, but it lost its B Corp certification in 2024, after the integration into Lipton Teas and Infusions.

The Ayurvedic influence

Pukka's product philosophy draws heavily from Ayurveda, the traditional Indian medicine system that uses herbal preparations for specific physiological effects. Sebastian Pole's training as an Ayurvedic practitioner is the basis for many of Pukka's blend designs; the "Three" series (Three Ginger, Three Mint, Three Tulsi, Three Cinnamon) reflects an Ayurvedic principle of combining three plant components for balanced effect.

The Ayurvedic influence shows up in several specific aspects of the Pukka range:

- **Functional positioning of blends:** each tea is designed for a specific job (everyday brew, Night Time, Love, Relax, Three Ginger after meals, Three Tulsi for unwinding)
- **Herbal combinations:** blends combine traditional Ayurvedic herbs (tulsi, ashwagandha, ginger, cardamom) with familiar Western herbs (chamomile, peppermint, fennel)
- **Spice forward profiles:** many Pukka blends use warming spices (cinnamon, cardamom, ginger, cloves) in ways that reflect Ayurvedic preparation traditions
- **Brand voice and packaging:** gentle, instructive, slightly aspirational; reflects the unhurried approach to tea that's central to Ayurvedic philosophy

The Ayurvedic angle is real rather than marketing alone; Sebastian Pole has stayed on as the brand's herbal director through the ownership changes, and the blends still reflect Ayurvedic principles.

The organic only commitment

Pukka is comprehensively certified organic across its entire range. Every Pukka product, without exception, carries Soil Association Organic certification. The certification covers both the tea components (where applicable; many Pukka blends are pure herbal) and all the herbal and spice ingredients.

The organic commitment has practical implications:

- **Higher ingredient costs:** organic herbs and spices are typically 20 to 50 percent more expensive than non organic equivalents
- **Smaller supply pool:** organic certified growers are a minority of global herbal supply farms; building reliable supply requires long term grower relationships
- **Premium retail positioning:** the organic certification is part of what justifies Pukka's premium pricing relative to non organic competitors

- **Ethical marketing credibility:** the organic positioning is part of a broader sustainability story that includes Fair for Life and FairWild certified sourcing

Within the broader herbal tea category, Pukka and Clipper are the two major British brands certified organic right across their ranges; many other brands offer some organic products but not a fully organic range.

The B Corp certification

Pukka was a certified B Corp and was last recertified in 2019. B Corp certification covers governance, workers, community, environment, and customers; recertification is required every 3 years, and a company that is bought, or goes through a significant change of control, has to recertify within a set time. After Pukka was fully integrated into Lipton Teas and Infusions in late 2023, B Lab confirmed in April 2024 that Pukka Herbs is no longer a B Corp (The Grocer, 12 April 2024).

The certifications Pukka lists today (Pukka's certifications):

- **Soil Association organic:** certification
- **Fair for Life** on all its teas: at least 20% of the herbs in each blend come from Fair for Life certified farms, or farms certified to an equivalent standard, and the pack shows the share (Pukka: Fair for Life)
- **FairWild:** for herbs collected from the wild

For consumers who specifically prioritise B Corp certification, Pukka no longer has it; Teapigs and Yogi Tea are certified B Corps, and so is Ecotone UK, which makes Clipper. Pukka's organic, Fair for Life and FairWild certifications remain.

The Pukka range

Pukka's range is dominated by herbal infusions and functional blends; their *Camellia sinensis* tea offerings are smaller relative to their herbal output. Major product categories:

The Three series , targeted blends combining three plant components. Three Ginger (after meals, nausea), Three Mint (refreshment, after meals), Three Tulsi (unwinding, relaxation), Three Cinnamon (warming, blood sugar), Three Fennel (after meals), Three Chamomile (relaxation), Three Liquorice (sweet, after dinner), Three Camomile (sleep).

Wellness blends , each aimed at a particular occasion: everyday brew (daily cup), Night Time (sleep), Love (rose and floral), Relax (unwinding), Womankind (periods), Womankind Pause (perimenopause), Beautiful Sage (sage based blend).

Sleep and relaxation range , Pukka's flagship sleep support category. Night Time (chamomile, lavender, oat flower), Relax (chamomile, fennel, marshmallow root), Sleep (chamomile, lemon balm, oat flower), Three Camomile (pure sleep blend).

Digestion range , Three Ginger, Three Fennel, Three Mint, Lemon & Mandarin, the After Dinner blend, Feel New (sold on purity).

Immunity range , Elderberry & Echinacea (cold and flu season), Lemon Ginger & Manuka Honey (sore throats), Turmeric Active (turmeric led), Three Ginger.

True teas (Camellia sinensis) , Supreme Matcha Green (matcha and green tea blend), Mint Refresh (mint and green tea), Clean Matcha Green, Three Mint Green Tea. Smaller subset of the range than the herbal

blends.

Chai range , Original Chai, Vanilla Chai, Cocoa Chai, Turmeric Gold (chai style turmeric blend).

Seasonal and limited blends , Pukka periodically releases seasonal blends (winter spice, summer berry) that rotate in and out of the range.

For the wider herbal context see the herbal tea overview and the chai tea overview.

The Pukka category leaders

Several Pukka products have become category benchmarks within their specific niches:

- **Pukka Three Ginger:** the most recommended ginger tea for after meals, nausea and morning sickness
- **Pukka Night Time:** one of the most popular sleep blends in British retail
- **Pukka everyday brew:** the supermarket shelf everyday brew tea benchmark (with the usual caveat that everyday brew claims are mostly marketing)
- **Pukka Elderberry & Echinacea:** the cold and flu blend benchmark
- **Pukka Supreme Matcha Green:** the most accessible matcha experience in tea bag form

For specific use case guidance see the best tea for sleep guide, the after meal tea guide, and the cold and flu tea guide.

Pukka vs the competition

Pukka's main competitors vary by category:

- **vs Clipper** Clipper offers organic herbals at a slightly lower price point and broader retail distribution; Pukka has stronger Ayurvedic positioning, while Clipper's maker, Ecotone UK, is a certified B Corp. Many drinkers buy from both.
- **vs Yogi:** the American style functional tea brand competes head to head in the same category. Yogi tends to use more spice forward blends; Pukka's blends are often gentler.
- **vs Twinings' functional range** Twinings offers similar functional positioning at a lower price but without organic certification; Pukka justifies its premium with the certification and ingredient quality.
- **vs Teapigs herbal range** Teapigs has a smaller herbal range with whole piece ingredient pyramid bags; Pukka has a much broader range. See the Pukka vs Teapigs comparison.
- **vs Heath & Heather:** the older organic herbal brand with similar positioning and overlapping range. Heath & Heather is often cheaper; Pukka has more visible brand investment.

Pukka's competitive position is strongest at the premium organic herbal end. For drinkers who specifically want organic certification with their daily herbal habit, Pukka is the obvious default; for cost conscious drinkers after similar blends at lower prices, Clipper competes well.

How to brew Pukka properly

Pukka tea bags are designed for full extraction; the brand's brewing recommendations:

1. **Use freshly drawn cold water** brought to a rolling boil for herbal blends; cooled slightly for the matcha and green tea blends
2. **Pour over the bag immediately**
3. **Steep for at least 5 to 10 minutes:** longer than black tea; the herbal compounds need time to release fully
4. **Don't add milk** to most Pukka blends; the herbal flavours are designed to stand alone (chai blends are the exception)
5. **Sweeten with honey if desired:** a good match for many of the functional blends

For the right heat across Pukka's herbals and every other family, see the water temperatures guide.

What we stock

Browse the full Pukka range. The most bought Pukka products on teas.co.uk:

- Pukka Organic Herbal Collection, 20 Tea Bags 34.4g
- Pukka Organic Night Time Berry, 20 Tea Bags 36g
- Pukka Organic After Dinner, 20 Tea Bags 40g
- Pukka Organic Chamomile, Vanilla and Manuka Honey, 20 Tea Bags 32g
- Pukka Organic Herbal Tea Collection, Four Different Flavours, 20 Tea Bags
- Pukka Organic Lemon, Ginger & a touch of Manuka Honey 40 Immunity Herbal, 68g

For comparisons across the wider herbal tea landscape, see also: Clipper, Yogi, Teapigs, Twinings, Heath & Heather, Dragonfly.

The verdict on Pukka

Pukka is the British premium organic herbal tea brand. Organic certification across the board, Ayurvedic influenced blend design and a broad functional range make it one of the strongest brands among premium herbals. The premium pricing is justified by the certification, the ingredient quality and the founders' real background in herbal practice.

For drinkers who specifically prioritise organic and ethical credentials in their daily herbal habit, Pukka is the obvious default. For drinkers who want similar herbal blends for less, Clipper is the competitive alternative; the cup quality is comparable but the branding premium is lower.

The Unilever acquisition (now Lipton Teas and Infusions) created some concern about long term brand integrity, but the practical evidence so far suggests Pukka has retained its core positioning and credentials. Long term observers continue to watch for drift, but the brand currently operates as a distinct mission driven entity within the broader corporate structure.

For the wider context see the herbal tea overview, the chai tea overview, the rooibos overview, the best tea for sleep guide, the after meal tea guide, the Pukka vs Teapigs comparison, the inside Twinings, and the Yorkshire Tea deep dive.

Related wiki: the full chai range comparison

Related wiki: chamomile tea

Pukka Herbs at a glance

Fact	Plain note
Founded	2001 in Bristol by Tim Westwell and Sebastian Pole
Ownership	Acquired by Unilever in 2017; now part of Lipton Teas & Infusions
Distinguishing position	100% organic, Ayurvedic-influenced; no longer a B Corp since 2024
Cert standards	Soil Association organic, Fair for Life, FairWild
Famous blends	Three Mint, Night Time, Lemon Ginger Manuka, Turmeric Gold
Bag format	Stitched plant-fibre bags, no glue or staples; always plastic-free
UK market position	Premium herbal tier; widely-stocked in supermarkets
Price	Premium-tier, typically £3-£5 per box of 20

Source noted

- Soil Association organic standards

FROM THE CURATOR

teas · If a Pukka blend here appeals, just try one box once. One cup of Pukka teaches more than twenty articles about it.

More from the tea wiki

- Green tea
- Black tea
- Oolong tea
- White tea
- Herbal tea
- Caffeine in tea
- How to make tea properly
- Loose leaf vs teabag

Compare Pukka with Yogi Tea

Pukka and Yogi Tea share the organic herbal shelf but their recipes do not taste interchangeable. Our Yogi Tea vs Pukka comparison separates spice-led and rounded multi-herb styles, bag count and

> current value without turning product names into medical promises.

New Pukka buying guides

Each Pukka buying guide works from products currently stocked by teas.co.uk and records the date of its catalogue review.

- Pukka Night Time Teas Compared
- Best Organic Tea Bags UK
- Best Fruit and Herbal Tea Bags UK

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