Cerasee Tea

From the teas.co.uk wiki

> **Cerassie, in summary:** Cerasee is a caffeine free Caribbean bitter melon infusion with real cultural heritage, drunk as a tonic, properly bitter, not a proven medicine.

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

Cerassie tea is the Caribbean diaspora's bitter cup, an infusion of bitter melon vine (*Momordica charantia*) drunk across Jamaica, Barbados, and the wider Caribbean for centuries. Defiantly bitter, traditionally drunk as a tonic, almost completely unknown in mainstream British shops outside specialist diaspora suppliers. We stock it because it's a real category with a real customer base.

What cerassie is

Cerassie (also spelled cerasee, cerasse, or asossi) is the dried vine of the bitter melon plant, leaves, stems, and sometimes immature fruit. Brewed as a tea, it produces a deep yellow brown cup with an intensely bitter flavour. It is unmistakeably bitter, not "tea bitter" the way over brewed black tea is, but a herbal bitter, closer to gentian or wormwood. Drunk traditionally with honey, lime, or lemongrass to soften the edge.

Where it comes from

Native to Asia and Africa, cultivated for centuries across the Caribbean. In Jamaica, cerassie is treated more as a traditional tonic than a leisure drink, typically drunk first thing in the morning on an empty stomach, or in occasional spells. Older generations swear by it; younger generations are split between traditional respect and modern resistance to the bitterness.

Traditional uses, carefully weighed

Cerasee carries a real, centuries old Caribbean tradition as a periodic tonic, and plenty is claimed for it beyond that. It is worth being plain about the evidence: bitter melon research largely uses concentrated extracts, not a mug of the vine infusion, so a cup of cerasee is best understood as a cultural bitter tonic and not a proven treatment. Respect the heritage and enjoy the caffeine free, low calorie habit, but do not treat it as medicine, and keep concentrated or daily use, and any use in pregnancy, on medication or with a managed condition, a conversation for a professional rather than self medication.

Cerasee at a glance

Cerasee (cerasee/cerassie)	
What it is	a Caribbean herbal infusion of bitter melon vine (Momordica charantia), not true tea
Caffeine	none, it is a tisane
Taste	intensely, famously bitter, an acquired and intentional character
Traditional use	a long standing Caribbean tonic tradition
Current standing	a real cultural tradition; not a proven medical treatment

How to brew cerassie

Boil 250ml water. Add a small handful of dried cerassie leaves and stems. Simmer 5-7 minutes. Strain. Sweeten generously with honey or sugar; add a slice of lime or lemon to cut the bitterness. Drink hot.

Some traditional preparations boil the cerassie for 15-20 minutes for maximum extraction. The cup is properly bitter, and first time drinkers often find it shocking. Sweetening doesn't fully mask but makes it drinkable.

Cautions

- **Pregnancy.** Bitter melon has been linked to miscarriage in animal studies. Avoid cerassie in pregnancy.
- **Diabetes medication.** If on metformin or insulin, consult your GP before adding cerassie regularly, could amplify blood sugar effects.
- **Children.** Not traditionally given to young children.
- **Daily use.** Traditional Caribbean usage tends toward weekly or "cycle" rather than daily. Heavy daily intake is unusual.

Why we stock cerassie

The Caribbean diaspora in the UK numbers roughly 600,000 people. Cerassie is part of that community's traditional pantry. Most UK supermarkets don't stock it; specialist Caribbean grocers do, but online sourcing is limited. We carry it because customers ask for it and because the Caribbean tea range (cerassie, soursop tea, Jamaica sorrel) is a legitimate part of UK tea drinking that gets overlooked by mainstream retailers. Browse the caffeine free range in the full tea shop.

FAQ

What does cerassie taste like? Intensely bitter, herbal bitter, not tea bitter. Sweetened with honey and lime to soften.

Is cerassie good for diabetes? Bitter melon extracts show modest blood sugar effects in some trials, but a cup of cerasee is a traditional tonic, not a treatment. Don't substitute it for medication; if you take diabetes medicine, talk to your GP before drinking it regularly.

Where to buy cerassie tea UK? Specialist Caribbean grocers and online specialists like teas.co.uk. Mainstream supermarkets don't usually carry it.

How often should you drink cerassie? Traditional Caribbean usage is weekly or cycle based, not daily. Heavy daily consumption isn't traditional and isn't necessary.

Is cerassie safe in pregnancy? No. Avoid cerassie during pregnancy due to traditional bitter melon contraindications.

Curator's note: cerassie is part of British tea drinking even if it's not on the Tesco shelf. The Caribbean diaspora has been drinking it here for 70 years. We stock it because the question "where can I buy cerassie in the UK" has too few good answers. Lee, teas.co.uk.

FROM THE CURATOR

teas · A good infusion matters more than a good shop. Care with a cheap bag beats carelessness with an expensive one.

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