# Dragonfly Pure Rooibos: Organic South African

From the teas.co.uk wiki

> **Dragonfly pure rooibos, in summary:** Dragonfly pure rooibos is the UK organic single-ingredient reference rooibos; sweet, nutty, slightly malty; the baseline for the category.

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

**Dragonfly Pure Rooibos is single ingredient organic South African red bush tea, naturally caffeine free, sweet woody, and one of the most versatile herbal infusions on the UK shelf.** Sourced from the Cederberg region of South Africa's Western Cape (the only place rooibos grows naturally), organic certified, and clean tasting enough to drink daily.

## What rooibos is

Rooibos (*Aspalathus linearis*) is a needle leaved shrub native exclusively to a small region of the Western Cape in South Africa. The leaves are harvested, oxidised (turning them from green to red, hence the Afrikaans name "rooibos" meaning "red bush"), dried, and packaged. The cup is naturally free of caffeine, low in tannins, and carries a distinctive compound, aspalathin, which doesn't occur in any other plant.

Unlike most "tea" alternatives, rooibos has a real character of its own, not just a herbal substitute for tea but a drink in its own right.

## What's in the bag

- **Pure rooibos.** Single ingredient, no flavourings, no additions.
- Organic certified, sourced from Cederberg region growers through Hampstead Tea's ethical supply chain.

## What it tastes like

Sweet, woody, naturally low bitter. The cup has a distinct red amber colour, a mild caramel vanilla aromatic, and a clean finish. No astringency. The sweetness is naturally occurring, many drinkers don't add sugar.

Rooibos doesn't taste like tea (Camellia sinensis), and that's the point. It's its own drink.

## How to brew

1. 1 tea bag per 200ml.
2. Just boiled water (~95°C), rooibos tolerates full boiling. Unlike green tea, you cannot over extract bitter compounds.
3. Steep 5-7 minutes. Rooibos benefits from longer brewing.
4. Drink black, with a slice of lemon, with milk and honey, or as the base for a rooibos latte.

Rooibos is hard to ruin. Over steep it for 15 minutes and the cup is still drinkable.

### The aspalathin angle, in proportion

Aspalathin is a flavonoid found only in rooibos, and it has been studied in the lab. You will see broader claims attached to it, but the research is mostly in vitro or animal work, and the amount in a cup of tea is modest. Rooibos is not a miracle drink: it is a pleasant, caffeine free tea with a distinctive character, best enjoyed as exactly that rather than as a supplement.

### The South African context

Rooibos has been farmed commercially in South Africa since the early 1900s, but indigenous Khoisan peoples have used it for centuries before that. The Cederberg region's hot dry summers and cool wet winters provide the specific conditions rooibos needs, attempts to grow it elsewhere have largely failed. The plant is tied firmly to its terroir.

The South African rooibos industry employs thousands and represents a meaningful share of the Western Cape's agricultural economy. Buying organic, ethically sourced rooibos (Dragonfly, Hampstead, Clipper Fairtrade) supports the production model that pays workers fairly.

### Use cases

- **Evening drink.** Caffeine free, naturally sweet, ideal evening cup.
- **Pregnancy.** For pregnancy the NHS says herbal tea should not go beyond 4 cups in a day, while liquorice root teas are best skipped. Ask your midwife or pharmacist if unsure.More on pregnancy and tea.
- **Children.** Children: ask a pharmacist, health visitor or GP first Many South African families serve it to babies.
- **Iced tea base.** Cold brewed rooibos is excellent, sweet, smooth, refreshing. More on cold brew.
- **Latte base.** A rooibos latte (steamed milk, brewed rooibos and a touch of honey) is a real alternative to chai latte.
- **Cooking.** Rooibos poaching liquid for fruits; rooibos soaked dried fruits in baking; rooibos as a salt free flavour base in stocks.

### Cautions

- **Allergies.** Rooibos is in the legume family. Cross reactions with peanuts or other legumes are uncommon but possible.

- **Iron absorption.** Rooibos contains some tannins (much less than tea), but heavy daily consumption may modestly affect iron absorption, minor concern, mostly relevant for those with diagnosed iron deficiency.
- **Hormone sensitive conditions.** Some sources suggest rooibos has very mild oestrogenic activity. Discuss with GP if you have hormone sensitive conditions.

## Caffeine

0mg. Drink any time of day, any quantity (within sensible limits).

### Comparison with other rooibos options

- **Dragonfly Pure Rooibos.** Organic, single ingredient. Mid premium tier.
- **Tetley Redbush.** Mainstream supermarket option. Comparable cup, lower price, sometimes lower grade leaf.
- **Clipper Pure Rooibos.** Organic, Fairtrade, plastic free bags. Direct competitor to Dragonfly at similar pricing.
- **Pukka Pure Rooibos.** Organic. Sometimes blended with other herbs in their range.
- **Specialist single estate rooibos.** From specific Cederberg growers. Premium tier.

### Buying

Quick Buy: Dragonfly Pure Rooibos. teas.co.uk is one of the specialist UK tea retailers that stock it.

### FAQ

**Is rooibos caffeine free?** Yes, completely. 0mg per cup.

**Does rooibos have antioxidants?** Yes, including the rooibos unique aspalathin. The amounts are modest at tea strength.

**Can I drink rooibos while pregnant?** For pregnancy the NHS says herbal tea should not go beyond 4 cups in a day, while liquorice root teas are best skipped. Ask your midwife or pharmacist if unsure.

**How long should I steep rooibos?** 5-7 minutes for a proper cup. Hard to over steep.

**Best organic rooibos UK?** Dragonfly Pure Rooibos, Clipper Pure Rooibos, Pukka Rooibos, all organic, all good value.

*Curator's note: rooibos is one of the most versatile cups you can keep in: caffeine free, drinkable any time, hard to brew badly, naturally sweet. If someone asks me what to keep in the cupboard for the times when "tea" isn't right, rooibos is always the answer. Lee, teas.co.uk, Tunbridge Wells.*

### Dragonfly Pure Rooibos, at a glance

| Aspect | Note |
|---|---|
| Product | Pure single-ingredient rooibos; no blending, no flavouring |
| Brand | Dragonfly, UK organic infusion specialist |

| Aspect | Note |
|---|---|
| Certification | Organic (Soil Association); rooibos sourced from named South African farms |
| Caffeine | Zero |
| Taste | Sweet, nutty, slightly malty; the reference rooibos cup |
| Brewing | 5-7 minutes boiling water; tolerates long extraction without bitterness |
| Use cases | Evening cup, pregnancy-friendly, child-friendly, sensitive drinkers |
| Buying signal | Single-ingredient organic rooibos; whole-leaf, not dust-grade |

Buy it via the Dragonfly range, compare in the rooibos range, or browse the full tea shop.

### Reference noted

- Soil Association organic standards

Teas in the same conversation: English Breakfast, Earl Grey, green tea, loose leaf tea, Darjeeling, oolong, and herbal tea. Wander the tea shop for the full selection, and UK delivery comes free from £35.

**FROM THE CURATOR**

*teas* · Rooibos is best compared by what each cup costs. Loose rooibos usually wins, and bags sometimes match it.

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