Soursop Tea: The Caribbean Herbal Tradition

From the teas.co.uk wiki

> **Soursop tea, in summary:** Soursop tea is the Caribbean-and-West-African Annona muricata herbal infusion; zero caffeine, gentle grassy-floral character; cultural-tradition cup.

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

Soursop tea is the dried leaf infusion of Annona muricata, the Caribbean diaspora's all round household tea, with traditional use across Caribbean, African and South American cultures. Real if modest evidence for some claims; legitimate concerns about heavy long term consumption. Drink with respect for the tradition and the cautions.

What soursop tea is

Soursop tea is brewed from dried leaves of the soursop tree (*Annona muricata*), also called graviola, Brazilian pawpaw, or guanábana. The same tree produces a large spiny tropical fruit eaten fresh.

The Caribbean diaspora connection

Soursop is part of traditional Caribbean and African diaspora pantries. The UK Caribbean diaspora (~600,000 people) maintains traditional soursop drinking. Mainstream UK retail rarely stocks pure soursop tea; specialist Caribbean grocers and brands like Dalgety serve this community.

The "cure all" cultural framing

In Caribbean usage, calling it good for everything is a mark of broad respect: soursop is the universal household herb for relaxation, blood pressure and general complaints. The label isn't a literal clinical claim; it's a cultural expression of trust in the herb.

The actual evidence base

Anti cancer claims (in vitro only)

Annonaceous acetogenins (compounds unique to the Annonaceae plant family) show selective anti cancer activity in lab studies. NO clinical evidence in humans. Soursop is sometimes promoted online as a cancer treatment, this is irresponsible. Cancer treatment requires medical care, not herbal tea.

Blood pressure (limited)

Limited animal studies and small human trials suggest soursop may modestly lower blood pressure. Don't substitute for blood pressure medication.

Sleep / relaxation (modest)

Mild sedative alkaloids likely contribute to traditional reputation as an evening wind down tea. Effect comparable to chamomile.

Antioxidant (in vitro)

Some evidence; clinical translation uncertain.

The neurological concern

Epidemiological studies in the French Caribbean (Guadeloupe) found increased rates of atypical Parkinsonism in populations with high soursop consumption. Heavy long term intake of soursop products (fruit, juice, tea) over years has plausible neurological concerns. Occasional or moderate consumption is widely considered fine.

What soursop tea tastes like

Earthy, slightly bitter, faintly sweet finish. Less aggressive than cerassie; more substantial than chamomile. Sweetened with honey and brightened with lime, the cup is really pleasant.

How to brew

1. 1 tea bag per 200ml mug.
2. Just boiled water.
3. Steep 5-7 minutes.
4. Sweeten with honey to taste.
5. Add lime, lemon, or fresh ginger for brightness.

How often to drink

Traditional Caribbean usage tends toward 1-3 cups weekly rather than daily. Heavy daily intake over years isn't traditional and isn't recommended given the epidemiological neurological concerns. Occasional drinker pattern: 1-2 cups per week.

Cautions worth knowing

- **Long term heavy intake.** Epidemiological link to atypical Parkinsonism. Limit to occasional/moderate consumption.
- **Pregnancy.** Avoid soursop in pregnancy. More on pregnancy and tea.
- **Blood pressure medication.** Possible additive blood pressure lowering effect.
- **Cancer treatment.** Do NOT use soursop as cancer treatment substitute. Discuss with oncologist before adding to any treatment regime.

- **Children.** Not traditionally given to young children.

Caffeine

0mg.

Buying soursop tea in the UK

- **Dalgety Pure Soursop.** Caribbean specialist brand. More here.
- **Dalgety Soursop and Ginger.** Soursop + ginger. More here.
- **Dalgety Soursop and Moringa.** Two Caribbean superfoods together. More here.
- **Specialist Caribbean grocers.** Often stock various soursop brands.

FAQ

Can soursop tea fight cancer? No. Some in vitro evidence; no human clinical evidence. Don't use as cancer treatment.

How often can I drink soursop tea? Traditional usage is 1-3 cups weekly. Heavy long term consumption has plausible neurological concerns.

Is it caffeine free? Yes, completely.

Pregnancy safe? No, avoid in pregnancy.

Where to buy in UK? Specialist Caribbean grocers; Dalgety brand at specialist tea retailers.

Curator's note: soursop tea is one of the most asked about Caribbean teas. Take it as Caribbean grandparents always have: now and then, respectfully, never as a daily regimen. Calling it good for everything is respect, not a clinical claim. Lee, teas.co.uk, Tunbridge Wells.

In short: soursop tea (general)

Aspect	The note
What it is	Caribbean herbal infusion of Annona muricata leaves
Cultural roots	Caribbean, West Africa, Central America traditional use
Caffeine	Zero; a herbal infusion
Taste	Mild grassy-floral; gentle character
Traditional uses	After meals, rest, and cultural custom
Evidence base	Preliminary in-vitro signals; no human clinical evidence
The read	Cultural-tradition cup; not medical treatment
Compare	Sister page soursop tea UK for UK retail context

More on soursop

- Soursop (the plant)

- Soursop tea in the UK
- Cerassie
- Herbal tea

The teas that come up around this subject: English Breakfast, Earl Grey, green tea, loose leaf tea, Darjeeling, oolong, and herbal tea. Browse the wider tea range; soursop ships free in the UK above £35, from a single bag up.

FROM THE CURATOR

teas · Judge soursop on what a cup costs, not the bag price. Loose soursop leaf usually wins, though bags sometimes do too.

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

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