Tea Production in India

*Report by:Yasar Ahmad*

**International Teas**

We specialise in selling fine teas from all producing areas of India as well as other regions of the world. These regions include Kangra, Darjeeling, Assam and Nilgiri. You will see in our catalogue that we offer a huge number of tea varieties in a wide range of qualities up to the very highest and most sought after. Here is a summary of teas we stock by country. It shows the number of varieties of teas we hold per country and the value of that stock:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Country** | **Sum Of Stock** | **Count Of M15PRODS** |
| Ceylon | 4421 | 20 |
| China | 8258 | 46 |
| India | 9577 | 56 |

**Tea Production**

India is one of the most important producers of tea in the world. While recently overtaken in production by China, the industry here is one of the most modern in the world in terms of technology. However, harvesting methods vary with type of tea and geographical conditions. The finest teas are still plucked by hand, but for lower grades, hand shears or tractors are used depending on the terrain. Of course, machines can cut greatly increased yields over hand picking or cutting, but are reserved for the low grade types of tea used in teabags.

**Tea Producing Regions**

* Kangra – North India
* Darjeeling and Assam – North east India
* Nilgiri - South west India

**Home Consumption of Tea**

Over 70% of the home production is consumed within India itself. It is estimated that some 90% of Indian households are regular tea drinkers. Some teas, such as Darjeeling, are grown exclusively in India. They are regulated and certificated for authenticity by the Tea Board of India. The Indian production companies have come to own many worldwide brands.

Tea is consumed in both the home and outdoors where it can be purchased from the tea stalls that are to be found in most urban streets. It is generally served with milk and sugar with the leaves being boiled again with the milk and sugar and left in the infusion. The leaves are then strained before serving. Some regional and cultural variations on tea include ‘Masala Chai’ and ‘Kadak Chai’. This latter is a strong, almost bitter tea of the mountain communities of North India.

**Masala Chai**

'Masala' means 'a blend of spices', and 'chai' simply means 'tea'. So, Masala Chai is literally 'spiced tea'. Our take on this treasured Indian drink combines premium Darjeeling black tea with warming cinnamon, cardamom and ginger. Warm and inviting fragrance, zesty flavour (without being too hot or spicy) and invigorating, aromatic finish. We suggest two heaped teaspoons per cup, boiling water for 7-10 minutes. Add sugar, cream or soy if desired.

**Tea production this year**

This year production has been good in the north of the country due to well-timed monsoon rains. This has led to an increase in yields of some 6% year on year. Drought conditions in the south have caused a drop in production. The drought was followed by low temperatures and heavy rains. These conditions led to lower production by some 5%. Overall, though, tea production nationally has increased this year. Tea prices have held up and increased in most auctions over last year. Despite increasing tea production, India still imports some tea, while exporting to new and emerging markets such as Iran.

**Key staff in the companies**

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| --- | --- | --- |
| **Hothouse Design** | **Role** | **International Teas** |
| Joginder | Document Production | Jagdesh |
| Jamal | Database Design | Sara |
| Indira | On-line Security | Suresh |