

# Brewing It Right

## Teatulia Tips to a Craveable, Profitable Beverage Program



**Your guests are thirsty.** But CSDs (Carbonated Soft Drinks) are no longer in fashion. Complementary tap water is booming. What's an operator to do to get those beverage dollars back?

Fresh-Brewed Iced Tea is increasingly the answer: Easy to prepare with a wide variety of blends & flavor options, minimal packaging waste, healthy and massively profitable. Brewed properly, tea delivers unparalleled refreshment and energy while being an ideal, palate-cleansing meal accompaniment.

But as with all elements of your business, unless prepared correctly, a great opportunity could go down the drain.

"Shockingly, quality tea is still relatively new to foodservice operators," explains Teatulia Organic Teas Co-Founder & CEO Linda Appel Lipsius. "The more restaurants we train on proper tea brewing techniques, the more enthusiastic they and their guests get and the more tea they sell."

For almost a decade, Teatulia has been training restaurant and hotel teams on tea basics including proper brew and service techniques, that keep customers coming back for more. In the process, Teatulia has discovered some simple tips to help operators ensure they serve delicious, craveable tea.

## Fresh-Brewed Ice Tea

Fresh brewed iced tea is one of the most ubiquitous menu items in restaurants. However, it has historically been an afterthought, as evidenced by its frequent service from anonymous silver vessels. Perfect fresh-brewed iced tea in the foodservice/hospitality environment depends on four factors: water quality, machine calibration, cleanliness and freshness. All easy to monitor and maintain.

### 1. WATER QUALITY

Filtered water should always be used. Mineral content can dramatically impact a tea's flavor. And remember to regularly replace your filter according to the manufacturer's recommendations.

### *What It Tastes Like When It Goes Wrong:*

The impact on flavor can vary widely, but most often there is a metallic or mineral component to the teas.

### 2. MACHINE CALIBRATION

An Iced Tea Brewer needs to be calibrated to brew a specific tea (blend and batch size) correctly. Every brand will typically have its own settings that work across its catalogue, but the settings vary greatly from brand to brand. Ensure you have your supplier's correct settings in place and re-calibrate once a year.

### *What It Tastes Like When It Goes Wrong:*

Too strong or too weak. Your tea supplier has provided detailed instructions for how to brew the best batch of iced tea. For example, Teatulia makes 1.5 gallon-size iced tea packets so foodservice

companies can easily brew bulk tea for a variety of vessel sizes.

### 3. CLEANLINESS

Deep clean the vessel chamber and spigot daily. This is the number one cause of bad-tasting tea. The great thing about fresh-brewed iced tea is that it is brewed from tea — consequently, tea solids and essential oils are present in the infusion. Another reason to deep clean is if you use one vessel for multiple varieties. These solids build up on any service that holds or dispenses tea and must be cleaned regularly. Hardware such as basket and urns need agitated to prevent tea oil buildup as well as bacteria growth. Faucets should be cleaned by disassembling into the two major parts. One easy thing to prevent build up is run the brew basket

and disassembled faucet through the dishwasher each evening. A few products that do the job mightily are Full Circle, Urnex, or Joe Glo.

**What It Tastes Like When It Goes Wrong:** Believe it or not, this is the biggest problem Teatulia sees when the teas don't taste as they should — usually sour or just

“off.” The same oil and mineral build up that happens inside the tea-dispensing vessel takes place in the spigot and can really affect the flavor of the tea as it flows into the guests' cup.

#### 4. FRESHNESS

Tea should be brewed fresh at least 1x /day. It simply tastes SO much better

fresh! Do not hold overnight. Would you hold your coffee overnight?

**What It Tastes Like When It Goes Wrong:** Flat, stale or “off” if near other, aromatic foods. The enemies of both tea leaves and brewed tea are light, oxygen, and flavors of surrounding food. If you try and stretch brewed tea out for a few days, the quality will suffer.

## Hot Tea

A perfect hot tea experience in the foodservice/hospitality environment also depends on five factors: dosing, water quality, water temperature, steep time and cleanliness.

### 1. DOSING

If you are using bagged teas, the manufacturer will have the appropriate amount of tea in each tea bag for a standard sized cup. However, if using loose tea, more is not better. Use 2g per 8-12oz cup.

**What It Tastes Like When It Goes Wrong:** Too much will make the tea too strong and bitter. Too little will make the brew weak.

### 2. WATER QUALITY

Filtered water should always be used. Mineral content can dramatically impact a tea's flavor.

### 3. WATER TEMPERATURE & STEEP TIME

Different types of tea should be brewed differently. See the chart above for details.

**What It Tastes Like When It Goes Wrong:** Bitter or astringent. The tea was steeped in water that was too hot or for a longer

TEA TYPE	BREW TEMP*	BREW TIME	CAFFEINE LEVEL
Black	Boiling	3-5 min	High
Oolong	Boiling	3-5 min	High
Green	Off the boil	2-3 min	Medium
White	Off the boil	2-3 min	Low
Pu-Erh	Boiling	5 min	High
Tisane/Herbals	Boiling	5 min	Zero

*\* In restaurants, water temperature is usually irrelevant since you draw water off of your coffee maker or water tower. That water will usually be “Off the boil,” thus appropriate for Green & White and do no harm to Black, Oolongs or Herbals.*

*\*\* Typically, Black Tea has the caffeine content of coffee. Green has half that of black. White has half that of Green. However, every tea crop is different so these levels are not hard & fast.*

period of time than it should have been. Tea suppliers should always provide instructions for the appropriate water temperature and brewing time for each type of tea they sell. Pay attention to this, because different tea types require different brewing times to bring out their best flavor.

#### 4. CLEANLINESS

Use separate pots, carafes and urns for hot water and coffee. Regularly deep clean your vessels. A few products that

do the job mightily are Full Circle, Urnex, or Joe Glo.

**What it tastes like when it goes wrong:** When you serve hot water for tea out of coffee dispensers, inevitably, your infusion will have undertones of coffee. It is entirely unpleasant and often overpowers the flavor of the teas.

Brewed tea is 99% water. Whatever holds the water for your tea will influence the tea's final flavor. The natural oils from brewed tea can leave a build up of film inside the container holding it; the minerals in tap or filtered water can also leave behind a residue that results in off-flavored tea.

*Looking to refresh your beverage menu? Teatulia helps retail and foodservice companies build profitable tea programs to meet customer's demand for healthy, organic, and sustainable menu choices. Teatulia Organic Teas are available in multiple formats, including fresh-brewed iced teas, individually wrapped single-serve hot teas, economical bulk tea bags, and retail canisters.*