Introduced in 1867, Ceylon Tea has grown to be the top agriculture export in Sri Lanka and provides direct and indirect employment to nearly 1 million people while around 4% of the country’s land area is covered in tea plantations amounting to nearly 203000 hectares.

Sri Lanka is an island made for tea. The country produces tea throughout the year and the total tea production is about 340 million kilograms per annum. Sri Lanka’s tea-growing areas are mainly concentrated in the central highlands and southern inland areas of the island.

Tea grown in these areas are broadly grouped according to their elevations, with high grown tea sourced from tea plantations found from 1200 m upwards; medium grown tea from estates scattered between 600 m to 1200 m and low grown tea from sea level up to 600 m.

In addition, Sri Lanka’s tea-growing areas are also divided into seven main regions based mainly on the terroir, namely Nuwara Eliya, Uda Pussellawa, Uva, Dimbula, Kandy, Sabaragamuwa, and Ruhuna. Each area produces a uniquely flavoured Ceylon Tea, mainly due to the contrasting elevation, climate, and terrain in each region.

Ceylon Tea’s distinct flavour is also governed by it being exclusively handpicked mainly according to the two leaves and bud method, and almost 93% of the Ceylon Tea produced annually is produced according to artisanal and orthodox methods compared to CTC method practised worldwide.

At present, a larger portion of the country’s tea is exported as Ceylon Black Tea, while the country also produces Ceylon Green Tea, a type developed from Assamese seedlings. Ceylon White Tea, namely silver and golden tips is celebrated around the world for their finest flavour and are among the most expensive tea varieties in the world.

Ceylon Tea industry maintains the highest quality in the global tea market and ISO 3720 is the minimum standard applies for the products. The country has the capability to produce the cleanest tea in the world in terms of minimum pesticide residues. Methyl Bromide was removed from the production process in 2012. Ceylon Tea also meets the stringent ISO 22000 series and to the health & safety regulations stipulated by the European Community.

Sri Lankan tea planters have also entered into partnerships with Fair Trade Certification, Ethical Tea Partnership, Rainforest Alliance, Ozone Friendly Tea, Carbon Neutral Certification, and  Organic Certifications including USDA - NOP, JAS, EU, and NASAA)