



Host a Tea-Tasting Party!

Good company and good drinks are the quintessential cabin pairing

Whether you brew it hot or ice it, tea is the perfect drink for March's chilly mornings and, if we're lucky, balmy afternoons. But if you're used to steeping a single bag and enjoying a cup solo, you may want to reconsider – both the tea bag and the alone time. Tea has much more to offer, as I found out when I visited the folks at Rishi Tea in Milwaukee, Wis., to

taste-test some of the world's best teas. (Not only have they won more first-place awards at the North American Tea Championship than any other tea company, most of their teas are also fair trade and organic.)

I got a crash course from tea-taster Dave Jones. Besides introducing me to flavors I never expected, Dave also enlightened me to the concept

of tea as fun. Yep. Fun!

Dave explained that while Americans traditionally prepare “cauldrons of tea,” oversteep it until it's bitter, and let it sit in the pot all day, many cultures use smaller teaware to properly brew and steep just the right amount for the moment and the friends at hand. Since the tea constantly needs to be remade, everyone pitches in,

turning the experience into a tasting party. In some traditions, the party includes games like checkers and dominoes – perfect for the cabin!

Dave also taught me that loose tea is the unadulterated leaf, so it's higher quality (more flavor!) than tea bags. You can resteep the leaves several times (except for herbal teas), which helps with the sticker shock on some of the tea packages and contributes to the fun of tasting. We noted how the tea's flavor and aroma would change with each infusion.

Of the 10 flavors Dave expertly brewed for me, here are the five I just have to share:

1 SILVER NEEDLE PREMIUM WHITE TEA (\$41 for ¼ pound): Smelling of sweet hay, the leaves transform when brewed to an almost sourdough flavor that tastes and feels buttery. Its über-pale yellow color is delicately pretty.

2 ANCIENT SHU PU-ERH TUO CHA (\$15.25 for ¼ pound): Honestly, this tastes like a cabin! Imagine woodsmoke, a hint of leather, the smell of grandpa's red-and-black-checked flannel jacket after he's been tending a fire. The rich coffee color enhances the nostalgic, savory experience.

3 CINNAMON PLUM (\$9.75 for ¼ pound): Super tangy without being bitter (“That's the hibiscus,” says Dave), this fuchsia-colored tea tastes like sugared-plum gumdrops.

4 COCONUT OOLONG (\$20.00 for ¼ pound): Imagine a coconut macaroon, then add an undercurrent of butter and a last-minute hint of citrus. The tart lemon color is a fun perk.

5 MASALA CHAI TEA CONCENTRATE (\$9.00 for 1 quart): Just combine this with milk and let your taste buds enjoy the kaleidoscope of harmonizing flavors. In warm weather, Dave likes to cool off with 1 part chai, 1 part water, and a wedge of lemon. Yum!

STORAGE

Store tea in an airtight container in a cool, dry place – not in the fridge, in sunlight, or near a heat source. Also, don't use soap to clean your teaware. Boiling water will take care of any germs.



1



2



3



4



5



CHEERS!

By Kristin Sutter

continued from page 62



COOKING WITH TEA

You can use tea in place of liquids in your recipes, says Dave. Just brew the tea at double strength. Try using Rishi's Cinnamon Plum tea to poach pears, as an ice cream glaze, in cinnamon raisin bread, or in rice pudding. Have fun experimenting!

SPIKE IT!

For a bit of kick, Dave recommends these concoctions:

- Peach tea steeped in white wine overnight.
- Rishi's Tropical Crimson with lime seltzer and vodka.
- White tea with orange juice and champagne.
- Rishi's Lemon Black tea with whiskey.



BREWING/STEEPING TIPS

Any tea will work hot or cold. For a hot brew, follow the package directions. Brewing temp and steeping time are key! If you don't follow them, you'll get bitter tea. Dave recommends using a thermometer that ranges from 140°F to 212°F. For a cold brew, use more tea leaves than you would for a hot brew, add the leaves and cold water to a pitcher, and let them sit in the fridge for at least 4 hours. ■

Classifieds

Premiere Properties



IRON RIVER, WI

New house, 3,000 sq. ft., 4 bedroom, 3 bath w/finished walk-out basement w/fireplace, private wooded lot! Additional lots available, no utility assessments. Water, sewer, power, telephone and road are in. 5% down, 3.99% interest, \$224,900. 866-927-6757.

halfmoonlakeestates.com

Real Estate For Sale

CRANE LAKE, KABETOGAMA, RAINY LAKE, LAKE VERMILION LAKEHOMES, LOTS AND CABINS. Recreation acreage and surrounding lake property available. Contact Deena Congdon, RE/MAX Lake Country. Toll free: 866-352-2006, info@TheLakeCountry.com www.TheLakeCountry.com

Vacation Rentals

MAINE'S BEST KEPT SECRET FOR RENT: A log home to get away. RELAX and listen to the call of the loon, see moose, canoe, fish, hike the Appalachian Trail, white-water raft or read a book by the fire! A great spot in a friendly town in mid-Maine on a 500-acre lake to meet some friends or family! Priced so you can come back often! 3 BR/2.5 baths with walk-out basement. BOOK NOW FOR SPRING AND SUMMER GETAWAYS! Non-smokers only PLEASE. No pets. Call Peggy at 601-214-1225 or e-mail: wer4him2@aol.com and mention the \$1,350/week CABIN LIFE RATE! www.cabininmaine.net

General Classifieds

DISTINCTIVE CABIN FURNISHINGS WILDERNESS CREATIONS RUSTIC FURNITURE GALLERY. Furnishing the country's cabins, camps and lodges with distinctive rustic and Adirondack furniture and cabin decor. Shop online at www.RusticFurnitureGallery.com

GAS REFRIGERATORS LARGE GAS REFRIGERATORS. 11, 15, 18, 19 and 21 cu. ft. gas refrigerators. 15, 18 and 22 cu. ft. gas freezers. Ervin's Cabinet Shop, 220 N. City. Road 425 E, Arcola, IL 61910. Call 800-898-0552, mention Code #CL.

WIDE PLANK FLOORING and antique timbers/beams milled from reclaimed timbers. MANOMIN RESAWN TIMBERS, 888-207-6072, www.mrttimbers.com

DIY PROJECTS ■ RECIPES & ENTERTAINING TIPS ■ NATURE & WILDLIFE ■ DESIGN IDEAS

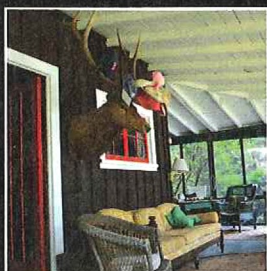


Photo by Alice Bryan



Courtesy LaserPerformance



Courtesy Wesley Moody Landscaping

Cabin Life

COMING IN THE APRIL ISSUE

FOCUS ON RENOVATING

- Kitchen design inspirations
- Beautify your foundation
- FAQ: Tankless water heaters
- 15 landscaping tips
- DIY demolition know-how

STORIES OF BELOVED CABINS MOVED FROM PLACE TO PLACE

- Well-traveled beach cottage
- A treasured family lakehome
- Reclaiming history in Montana
- PLUS: Can your cabin be relocated?

FOOD & ENTERTAINING

- Cheers! Happy hour at the cabin
- Grill the perfect steak
- FAMILY FUN: Making cupcakes!

NATURE & WILDLIFE

- Frogs: The ultimate transformers
- FAMILY PROJECT: Hammer flowers to make art

JUST FOR FUN

- Fore! Try backyard Wiffle golf
- Sailing: How to get started

ON SALE MARCH 6

THE JOY OF CABIN, COTTAGE AND LAKEHOME LIVING

- Talking face-to-face with each reader ... **impossible!**
- Sending a letter to each reader ... **expensive!**
- Running a classified ad ... **smart!**

Got something to **sell**?
Looking to **buy** something?
Need to **promote** your business?
Classified advertising is easy,
affordable, and definitely smart.

Call today to place your ad.
1-888-558-1544 x313