

# Super English



Tea Shop

Level 7 - Unit 1 -  
Lesson 3  
The Evolution of  
Tea Culture



# The Accidental Discovery of Tea



Read the text and explain the words in bold.

Tea's history begins with an accident—or so the legend goes. Over 4,000 years ago, Emperor Shen Nong of China was boiling water when tea leaves fell into his pot. Intrigued by the **aroma**, he tasted the brew, **giving birth** to what would become one of the world's most beloved beverages. By the Tang dynasty, tea was more than just a drink; it was art, ceremony, and a cultural symbol. As tea spread along the Silk Road, it reached far-off lands, evolving into a **commodity** that would later spark wars, build empires, and fuel revolutions. Not bad for a leaf, right?



Would you be daring enough to taste something if a leaf accidentally fell into it? Why or why not?

# Brewing and Business

Read the text and explain the words in bold.

Do you think tea is as popular now as it was long ago? Why or why not?



Tea may seem simple, but how it's brewed depends on where you are. In China, tea leaves are steeped lightly to **savor** their pure flavors, while in England, a good cup of black tea calls for sugar and a splash of milk. India turned tea into chai, a spicy, milky brew that's both comforting and energizing. And for those in a hurry? Instant tea powders revolutionized the drink, offering convenience over tradition. Economically, tea became a powerhouse, **dominating** trade routes and fueling colonial expansion. The British even waged the Opium Wars to protect their tea supply from China—a **stark reminder** that tea was serious business.

# From Luxury to Everyday Sip

Read the text and explain the words in bold.

Tea started as a **luxury** item for emperors and the elite, but as cultivation expanded, it became more accessible to **the masses**. By the 18th century, tea was a daily ritual in households from Kyoto to London. Its **adaptability**—served hot, cold, or spiced—helped it thrive across cultures and climates. Even today, tea is the second most consumed beverage in the world (after water). With global tea markets generating billions annually, this ancient drink has gone from sacred leaf to economic juggernaut, **brewing not just cups but entire industries**.



Why did tea become more accessible to people? Was it just about growing more tea, or do you think there were other reasons?

# Idioms

Match the idioms to their meanings.

1. Not my cup of tea
2. A storm in a teacup
3. As good as a chocolate teapot
4. Brew up a storm
5. Steeped in tradition
6. Sweeten the deal

- Having a lot of history or being deeply rooted in customs.
- Something useless or impractical.
- Something you don't like or enjoy.
- To make an offer more attractive.
- Making a big deal out of a small problem.
- To create excitement or trouble.

moroccan tealeidoscope  
 18c teapot \$78  
 cup & saucer \$34  
 milk jug \$28  
 saucer bowl \$20  
 T2 Glass set  
 18c tea pot \$45  
 sml tea pot \$36  
 mug & inkuse \$32

T2 Best of Black  
 Best of Black  
 Black

# Taiwan's Milk Tea Innovation



Read the text and explain the words in bold.

**Fast-forward** to 1980s Taiwan, where tea took a playful turn. One day, a creative vendor decided to drop chewy tapioca pearls, typically a dessert ingredient, into sweetened milk tea. The result? Bubble tea, also called boba tea, was born. The drink wasn't just a treat—it was **interactive**, thanks to the chewy pearls and oversized straws. Vendors quickly realized they were **onto something** and began adding creative toppings like jelly, pudding, and fruit. Milk tea turned into a snack, a drink, and an experience all rolled into one, quickly becoming a national obsession.



Why do you think making a drink interactive, like adding chewy pearls or oversized straws, made it more popular with young people?

# Global Milk Tea Takeover



Read the text and explain the words in bold.

What is the most famous milk tea chain in your city/country?



Milk tea's rise wasn't **limited to** Taiwan. By the 2000s, it had **taken the world by storm**, landing in major cities like New York, Tokyo, and Manila. Its secret to success? Adaptability. Vendors tailor their flavors to local tastes, from matcha boba in Japan to brown sugar milk tea in the Philippines. The economics of milk tea exploded as chains like Gong Cha and Koi opened thousands of shops worldwide, generating millions of dollars in **revenue**. Milk tea became more than a drink—it became a **cultural ambassador**, introducing people to Asian flavors while creating a booming global industry.

# The Economics of Milk Tea



Read the text and answer the questions.

Today, milk tea is as much a business as it is a cultural icon. With its **customizable** flavors and toppings, it appeals to teens and adults alike, generating long queues and social media buzz. Shops thrive on **low overhead costs** and high customer loyalty, while **eco-conscious** brands innovate with plant-based ingredients and sustainable packaging. Even the **pandemic** couldn't slow its growth, as delivery apps kept fans sipping from home. Milk tea's success lies in its ability to mix tradition and creativity, proving that whether you're brewing ancient leaves or slurping tapioca pearls, there's always room for tea in our lives.



Why didn't the pandemic slow the growth of the milk tea industry?



# Milk Tea - Role-Play



Take turns being the cashier and the customer.

## Conversation 1: Ordering milk tea

**Cashier:** Hi, what can I get for you today?

Customer: Hi! I'd like a milk tea, please.

**Cashier:** Sure! What size would you like—small, medium, or large?

Customer: Ah, let's go with medium.

**Cashier:** Great! Do you want any toppings?

Customer: Sure, I'll take the tapioca pearls.

**Cashier:** Perfect! So that's a medium milk tea with tapioca pearls.

That'll be \$5.50.

Customer: Ok, here you go, thanks.

# Unique Teas



Read about 'tea culture' in different places.

## Butter Tea

- **Origin:** Tibet
- **What's unique:** Butter tea, also called po cha, is made from tea leaves, yak butter, salt, and water. The ingredients are **churned** together, creating a rich, salty, and creamy drink. It's more like a soup than the sweet teas many are used to.
- **Fun fact:** Butter tea is high in calories and helps Tibetans survive the cold, high-altitude climate. Drinking multiple cups a day is common during social gatherings or ceremonies.



1. What does 'churned' mean?
2. Would ingredient makes it high in calories?

# See you next time!



GOOD  
BYE!

