

# What Color Do You Want Your Tea to Be?

On its way to becoming the drink of the moment, tea is being served alongside the Cristal at VIP events in Hollywood, and hip tea shops, like Teany, owned by techno star Moby, are destination spots. Reports of health benefits are also sparking interest in the brew. But which tea will suit your needs and tastes? Below, a primer:



**BLACK TEA** accounts for 90% of tea consumed in the U.S. and has been linked with many heart-health benefits. Studies suggest that drinking it appears to improve blood-vessel functioning in those with coronary heart disease and reverse atherosclerosis, which can lead to heart attacks.



**RED TEA**, an herbal brew, is made from the South African rooibos shrub. The reddish-brown tea has a full, strong taste and smells earthy, like grape stems or olives. It's the rare herbal tea that can take milk. It's also caffeine free, high in antioxidants and low in potentially kidney-damaging oxalic acid.



**GREEN TEA**, pale in color and nutty in flavor, also contains antioxidants, which have been associated with a slew of health benefits, including lowering cholesterol and fighting tumor growth. Green tea has gone mainstream in the past few years—it's even available as a bottled iced tea.



**WHITE TEA** is one of the rarest teas. The downy buds are hand-plucked in the mountains of China only two days of the year, right before the leaf opens. The tea brews to a pale yellow or orange color and has a slightly sweet flavor. White-tea leaves offer even more antioxidant value than green tea.

—By Lisa McLaughlin