



## Tea Research

Since ancient times people have utilized herbs, plants, and other natural substances to affect the way they feel. Aromatic herbs, such as clove oil or mint were used for tooth pain. Coffee and tea are common stimulants used both by Shamans to encourage spiritual visions and by many peoples worldwide to help get them started in the morning. Natural remedies, such as tea infusions, are becoming increasingly popular as methods of promoting vibrant health and mental balance. The benefits from teas include both the herbs that are ingested and also the aroma produced when the tea is steeped.

There are certain herbs used to make tea which are particularly useful for stimulating ones mind and body. One which has been historically used by the people of the Pampas region of South America for just this purpose is Yerba Maté or Maté, as it is commonly known. This wild growing plant is a member of the holly family, and its use is both social and spiritual, and may be found for one of the most effective all natural stimulants in the world. Gourds of Mate are regularly passed around a gathering.

While drinking teas and tinctures is a popular way of utilizing the flora of the planet, scent or aroma has long been used in much the same way. The scent of lemon and orange fruits is felt to also reduce mental fatigue, while the aroma from cinnamon has traditionally been used to increase alertness and improve mental focus.

On the opposite end of the spectrum many natural ingredients can be calming and produce feelings of tranquility and serenity. Chamomile has long been used to promote relaxation – even Peter Rabbit was put to bed with a teaspoon of chamomile tea, according to the children’s tale by Beatrix Potter. Lavender’s soothing, sedating phytochemicals are absorbed by the skin inside the nose, and are used to treat insomnia and reduce restlessness.

In addition to the feelings of well-being, there are many health enhancing benefits of both traditional and herbal teas. Green and black teas, as well as Rooibos teas, provide high levels of antioxidants, and often contain vitamins A, B1 and B2, and sometimes vitamin C. Rooibos tea or “Red Bush,” while not technically a “tea,” is produced from a South African flowering shrub and has been brewed in the Cedarberg mountain region of South Africa for generations. Sometimes, called “Earth’s Elixir” by the native population, Rooibos has no caffeine, very little tannin, and both powerful anti-allergic and antioxidant properties. In addition, it contains calming compounds and a unique flavonoid that supports cell stability,

especially in the hair and skin. Another benefit is that the naturally occurring enzymes in Rooibos can enhance the absorption of the other ingredients, giving better results.

Sitting with a cup of tea is comforting, and helps provide a sense of calm and wellness. The act of brewing tea in and of itself can be a relaxing diversion from the hustle and bustle of everyday life. Great tea can play a contributing role in promoting a positive mood, and works well in combination with other mood enhancing factors such as light and aroma to promote holistic health. Iced or hot, tea is a great way to improve the quality of your life and your body!

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