

Press Release: Generation T – Sri Lanka: The Ultimate Guide to Tea

Tea is in Vogue. From tea tastings, to tea parties to tea cuisine, absolutely everything to do with tea is back in fashion – from London fashionistas such as Nicole Farhi and Lulu Guinness to celebrity couples like Seal and Heidi Klum, everyone is indulging in afternoon high teas. Slick wine bars and fancy cocktails are on the way out – the new temptation causing a stir amongst the hip crowd, is a shot of tea – so stick the kettle on! And with Sri Lanka being one of the most famous global producers and exporters of tea, we at Sri Serendipity Publishing are in exactly the right place - half way in the middle of the world - to write a book on the world's most popular export.

Who doesn't love a cup of tea? The famous mood-lifting beverage is a part of everyday life and is at the heart of many cultures around the world. Tea is big business – with 78% of Russians drinking tea, the Sri Lankan company Mlesna has opened 48 teashops in Moscow and St Petersburg – and there are millions of tea fans the world over. Many of them choose Sri Lanka as a holiday destination – after all, with 221,000 hectares of Hill Country covered in plantations, what better place is there to immerse yourself in tea? This medicinal leaf has helped put the pearl of the Indian Ocean on everyone's tourist map – in January 2010 Sri Lanka was voted the number one place to visit in the world by the *New York Times*. Exotic places to stay like Tea Trails (named on Conde Naste's 2006 and 2007 Hot List), where guests are absorbed into life on a working tea estate, whilst enjoying five-star luxury, will teach you everything you need to know about the perfect brew. The island's tea country offers a refreshing type of holiday and there are plenty of new and different experiences opening up: you can pay a visit to St Clair's Tea Castle, the largest tea shop in the world, bathe in tea at the Heritage Tea Factory hotel or even paint with tea in an art master class.

In Sri Lanka, tourists get the opportunity to experience outdoor tea action with cricket cream teas, which inspire even the most laid back characters to get up and go. This book will reveal new and exciting things to do in the Tea Country, including unusual places to stay like tea planter fantasy villas, weird and wacky things to do like watch the annual tuk-tuk challenge through the tea terraces and visit eccentric artists who turn tea bush roots into furniture and create tea-picking dolls out of old saris. We introduce you to beautiful hikes through lush plantations and the best places serving up a good afternoon cuppa to whet your whistle with a big slab of chocolate cake. For those who enjoy a taste of luxury, sampling Sri Lanka's most expensive Silver Tips tea at \$13 per 50 gram box, at St Clair's Tea Castle and the Tea Fortress near Kandy, with its 22 carat gold teapot, is a must.

The book is packed with interesting information on the tea industry, seen first hand through a tea picker's eyes and top tea factory tours (including, of course, where to find the most scrumptious cake). Meet the characters that make this area really come alive: the original Mr Tea who talks tea varieties and the night watchman at Warwick Gardens who recounts over 50 years of tea tales.

For extra excitement feast your eyes on our mouth-watering recipes created with tea and discover how well tea works as an ingredient – it's a whole new cuisine taking the world by storm. Top chefs like Heston Blumental are exploring the culinary potential of the leaf and at his world famous triple-Michelin-starred restaurant in Bray, Berkshire, UK, he is now including tea cuisine on his menu - Green Tea Trifle with Bacon and Eggs anyone? Or how about afternoon tea and scones at Gordon Ramsay's restaurant in LA? Enjoy learning how to cook unique recipes created by Vajira Gamage, the head chef at Tea Trails.

Tea cuisine may be new to you, but everyone has heard of the health benefits of tea. We dispel the myths and tell you the real story about which teas promote health and beauty. So pick up a copy of this book. We guarantee it'll be just your cup of tea.