

The  
Reading  
Room

## Welcome To Afternoon Tea

*Afternoon tea, the most quintessential of English customs is, perhaps surprisingly, a relatively new tradition. Whilst the custom of drinking tea dates back to the third millennium BC in China and was popularised in England during the 1660s by King Charles II and his wife the Portuguese Infanta Catherine de Braganza, it was not until the mid-19th century that the concept of 'afternoon tea' first appeared.*

*Afternoon tea was introduced in England by Anna, the seventh Duchess of Bedford, in the year 1840. The Duchess would become hungry around four o'clock in the afternoon. The evening meal in her household was served fashionably late at eight o'clock, thus leaving a long period of time between lunch and dinner. The Duchess asked that a tray of tea, bread and butter (some time earlier, the Earl of Sandwich had had the idea of putting a filling between two slices of bread) and cake be brought to her room during the late afternoon. This became a habit and she began inviting friends to join her.*

*This pause for tea became a fashionable social event. During the 1880's upper-class and society women would change into long gowns, gloves and hats for their afternoon tea which was usually served in the drawing room between four and five o'clock.*

*At The Reading Room, your afternoon tea experience may actually begin with a glass of champagne or maybe one or two cocktails from our award winning mixologist. Of course there will always be a pot of one of our famous tea which is prepared and poured at your table to your preferred strength.*

*Spend a good hour to enjoy this most leisurely meal, where you can catch up with your friends and share the latest gossip.*

*If there's anything more you'd like to know, don't hesitate to ask.*

# THE READING ROOM AFTERNOON TEA

## **A selection of indulgent finger sandwiches including**

*Sweet pickle and smoked applewood cheddar*

*Onion chutney and blue cheese*

*With spring onion egg mayonnaise*

*Salmon and caper creme fraiche*

*Watercress nut free pesto and pastrami*

## **Plain and cranberries scones**

*Freshly baked every day at The Roseate Reading kitchen*

*Served with Cornish clotted cream and jam*

## **Selection of exquisite hand-made pastries**

*Chocolate mousse*

*Choux caramelised cream patisserie*

*Lemon cake*

*Seasonal macaroon*

## **Traditional Afternoon Tea** £26.00 per person

*Including a glass of Ferrari Maximum Brut £34.00 per person*

*Including a glass of Pommery Brut Royal £36.00 per person*

*Including a glass of Pommery Brut Rosé £40.00 per person*

## **Champagne**

*Brut £11 per glass*

*Rosé £15 per glass*

# THE READING ROOM TEA SELECTION

## By The Rare Tea Company

We are delighted to introduce an exclusive range of premium, artisan and handcrafted teas. Our tea collection has been selected with diligence and care by world-renowned 'tea lady' Henrietta Lovell of the Rare Tea Company and has been sourced from some of the oldest tea plantations around the world. Alternatively, filter coffee is also available upon request.

## Black Tea

is allowed to fully oxidise, which blackens the leaf resulting in the most robust and deep flavours. The British Afternoon Tea was developed to accentuate the rich, dark flavours of these leaves.

## Speedy Breakfast

### Satemwa Estate, Shire Highlands

Malawi A black tea, blended from selected fields and harvests across the Satemwa Estate; a small, family run tea garden in the Shire Highlands of Malawi. Remarkably strong, rich and comforting with a deep malty finish. Perfect with milk.

## Earl Grey

### Satemwa Estate, Malawi and Reggio Calabria, Italy

A traditional Earl Grey blended with pure bergamot oil from the ancient orchards of Calabria. This is a classic British tea made to exacting standards. A clean and exceptionally bright infusion with exhilarating citrus notes. It can be enjoyed with or without milk, or a twist of lemon zest.

## Second Flush Muscatel

### Temi Estate, Sikkim, India

High in the Indian Himalayas, at the border with Darjeeling and Tibet lies the secret region of Sikkim. Not as famous as its Darjeeling neighbours, but making a black tea of such delicious delicacy that makes the heart soar. This tea has a heady, floral aroma with soft notes of muscatel grapes. Best enjoyed without milk.

## Mild Lapsang Souchong

### Wuyi Mountains, Fujian Province, China

Made to exacting traditional methods, this black tea is smoked over pine wood in the Wuyi Mountains. Deep notes of peat like a fine malt whisky with a rich smoky aroma. It can be enjoyed with or without milk.

## Rose Tea with Petals

### Gujarat, India

A silky, fragrant blend of black teas scented with delicate rose petals. The rose petals give this tea a luxurious and perfumed taste. Malty Assamica with floral Darjeeling and notes of Turkish delight.

## THE READING ROOM TEA SELECTION

### **Oolong Tea**

*is a tea that falls artfully between a black and a green tea. It only undergoes a small amount of oxidation during processing. Best infused multiple times, each infusion will reveal hidden subtleties locked inside these humble leaves.*

### **Oolong**

#### **Anxi, Fujian Province, China**

*This Chinese oolong is known as the Iron Goddess of Mercy (Tie Guan Yin). Crafted to an exact point at which the leaves reveal their hidden subtleties. It has rich floral aromas leading to a perfectly balanced mineral finish. The first infusion has a succulent sweetness with later infusions leading to green floral notes. Each time you infuse the leaves, different subtleties are revealed.*

### **Green Tea**

#### **Fuding, Fujian Province, China**

*An exquisite Chinese green tea that is meticulously hand crafted. The leaves are fired in a wok over charcoal in the same way and in the same place they have been made for over 3,000 years. Clean, bright and remarkably delicate.*

### **Emerald Green**

#### **Anhui, China**

*Also known as Mao Feng, Fur Peak for the downy hairs on the spring buds. The leaves are painstakingly hand rolled by masters resulting in an extraordinarily fine green tea. Soft hay with notes of apricots and an elegant and lingering buttery finish.*

### **Green Tea and Mint Blend**

#### **Zhejiang Province, China and Malawi**

*A delicate, pan fired spring green tea that's been combined with an uplifting blend of spearmint from selected small holders in Malawi. It has a smooth, round mouthfeel and a refreshingly clean flavour. Soft and gently uplifting.*

### **Genmaicha**

#### **Shizuoka, Japan**

*Top grade Sencha with organic, Japanese brown rice. Crafted by Moriuchi-san - one of the most revered tea masters in Japan, on his 200-year-old, family run, tea garden. This Sencha is remarkably complex and deep. Rich, verdant notes with a deep comforting aroma of popcorn.*

### **Malawi Steamed Green**

#### **Satemwa Estate, Shire Highlands, Malawi**

*This is a very rare African green tea steamed in a traditional Japanese style. Made from original Chinese seed taken from Fujian to Malawi by way of the Royal Botanical Gardens of Edinburgh in 1921. The flavour is succulent and extremely rich with high tannins. Can be beautifully enhanced with the addition of honey or maple syrup and a twist of lemon zest.*

## THE READING ROOM TEA SELECTION

### **White Tea**

*is the least processed of all teas. Only the unopened buds and young leaves covered in downy hairs are used, and they are merely withered and dried. White tea produces a very light coloured infusion with a mild flavour. It has the highest level of antioxidants as they are simply picked and dried. White tea is best enjoyed with nothing added.*

### **Jasmine Silver Tip**

**Fuding, Fujian Province, China**

*A delicate white tea crafted entirely from spring buds. The tea is not flavoured but carefully scented over six consecutive nights with fresh jasmine flowers. Once the preserve of the Chinese Imperial family. A deep and heady aroma with a light and gentle flavour.*

### **Yunnan Silver Tip**

**Yunnan, China**

*An unusual white tea from a region predominantly known for black tea and pu'er. Just the first leaf buds of spring are harvested, and sun dried, for a sweet, very delicate flavour with a gentle trace of acidity. Bright and supremely light.*

### **Herbal Infusion**

*is not strictly 'tea' because all tea comes from the leaves of camellia sinensis. They are infusions of the leaves and stems of different herbs. These herbal infusions are all naturally caffeine-free.*

### **Cornish Peppermint**

**Tregothnan Estate, Cornwall, UK**

*A rare English peppermint grown on the private botanical garden of the Tregothnan Estate. Counter-intuitively, the menthol oils infuse more easily from the dried leaf, giving a brighter, cleaner flavour than fresh mint. Powerful and uplifting with a gentle approach leading to a long finish.*

### **Whole Chamomile Flowers**

**Slavonija and Podravin, Croatia**

*These delicate flowers are carefully dried and kept intact for a sweet and soft flavour. Clean and subtle, these flowers are also wonderfully calming and, of course, caffeine-free.*

### **Lemon Verbena**

**Provence, France**

*Aloysia Citrodora or lemon verbena is originally from South America. It was brought to Europe by the Spanish in the 17th century. A pure herb with a mellow lemon flavour, it makes a wonderful digestif.*

### **Hibiscus Flowers**

**Aswan, Egypt**

*A delicious herbal infusion made from the beautiful red petals of Hibiscus Sabdariffa. These whole hibiscus flowers produce a beautiful tea, raspberry red in colour. The flavour is rich in berries, slightly tart, but with a cranberry sweet finish.*

## THE READING ROOM TEA SELECTION

### **Rosehip**

#### **Maule, Chile**

*The Rosehip after being carefully dried, is ground in order to extract its wonderfully tart berry and rose petal notes. The infusion is of an elegant pale rose colour.*

### **Wild Rooibos**

#### **Cederberg Mountains, South Africa**

*The real South African Red Bush. Beyond organic, this Rooibos is harvested completely wild in its indigenous habitat in the Cederberg Mountains. A richly delicious infusion with deep earthy notes, bright red berries and cedar. Can be beautifully enhanced by the addition of a twist of lemon zest.*