

Tea tasting date:

Tea name, type & characteristics,
steeping procedure, water temp. + time

Aroma, taste and
rating (0–10)

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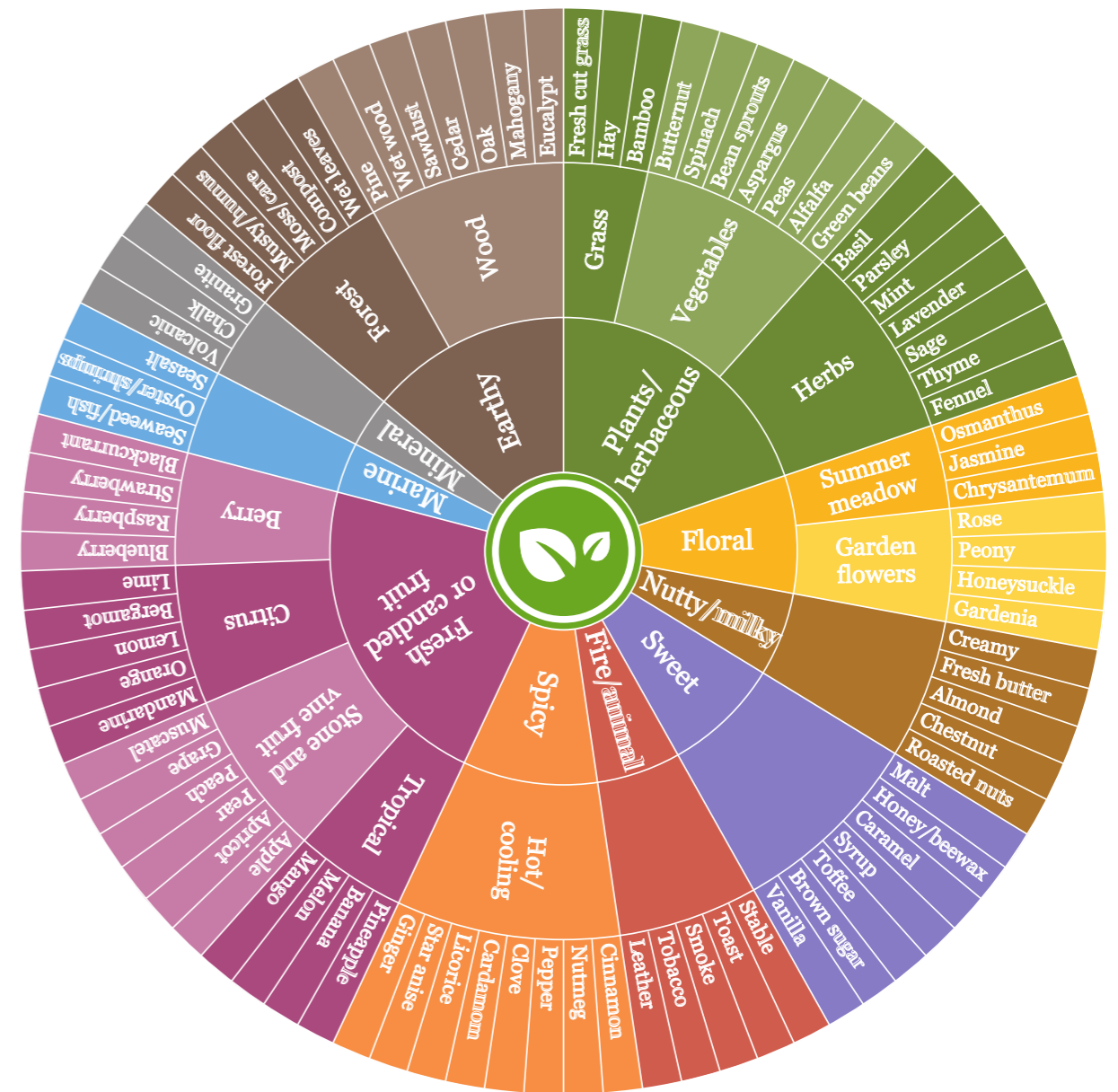
Smell the aromas, taste the flavours

The complete sensation of flavour is always a combination of taste and smell (aroma), 80 % of the flavour is contributed by the sense of smell. Most of us can distinguish among 1,000 smells, perfumers /professional tasters among 10,000.

Tasting tea can only be perfected through practice. Professional tea tasters undergo years of training in order to develop their skills. It takes 3–5 years to become a professional taster (after tasting around 1200 teas per day).

The structure or mouth feel of what you taste will influence your experience, hot (like pepper), rough (like crisp bread), slippery (like an oyster), fizzy (like a carbonated drink) etc.

The taste qualities we can perceive in tea are: sweet, sour, salty, bitter and umami (pleasant savoury taste).



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Tea Masters

www.teamasters.se catrin@brandable.se

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Parameters for preparing tea

Tea Type	Temperature	Steeping time
Green & yellow tea	165-175°F 70-80°C	1-3 minutes
White tea	175-185°F 80°C	3-8 minutes
Oolong tea	180-190°F 80-85°C	1-4 minutes
Black tea	205°F 96°C	3-5 minutes
Pu-erh tea	205°F 96°C	0.5-1.5 minutes
Herbal tea	205°F 96°C	5 minutes or more

In China tea is tasted in three areas of the mouth:

- Tip of your tongue tastes sweetness (gan)
- The middle – tastes tartness, (similar to sour)
- The back – tastes the bitterness (ku)

A balanced tea in China needs both bitterness (ku) and sweetness (gan), "a bitter attack with a sweet aftertaste". A bad tea, or badly prepared tea, is either too sweet or too bitter.

A few common descriptors for tastes for various types of tea:

- White – honey, delicate, stone fruit
- Green – vegetal, grassy, sea weed, nutty
- Oolong – fl oral, complex, roasty, herbal
- Black – muscatel, tannic, round
- Pu-erh – earthy, mushroomy, forest floor, herbaceous

Temperature is very important for taste perception:

- High temp: sweetness is enhanced
- Lower temp: bitter, salty and umami is enhanced

Sour remains unchanged regardless of temperature

Do not wear heavy perfume while tasting, avoid eating extreme, very sweet or hot food, do not speak. Listen inwards and use your senses.

