



### TEAS: a Playground for Creativity and Profits

**Experimentation. Innovation. Refreshment.**



In a recent issue of *Tea and Coffee Trade Journal Magazine*, Margot Swindall of Technomic stated, “One strong opportunity for tea is in foodservice. Globally, tea as an away-from-home beverage has a significant share, but tea has an opportunity to further expand its share.” She noted that cold, iced, and frozen teas are growing in both Canada and the U.S. “Tea meets other beverages head-on in creativity and format extension on the global foodservice stage (in terms of functionality, healthy indulgence, etc.), and consumers are willing to experiment with tea (flavors and formats) — all of which enhances tea’s ability to grow its share in the foodservice channel.”

This thinking only reinforces that fact that U.S. foodservice operators have a unique opportunity continue to capitalize on iced tea. With approximately 75-80% of all tea consumed in the U.S. iced, this beverage is a staple in American dining. Offering a variety of iced teas can significantly boost profitability, as consumers are willing to pay a premium for

high-quality, flavorful options. By experimenting with seasonal flavors and fresh herbs, operators can create unique and enticing beverages that stand out. For instance, adding mint, basil, or rosemary can elevate the taste profile, making the drink more appealing and refreshing.

While hot tea is often seen as a pick-me-up, iced tea serves as a meal companion and thirst-quencher. This dual role allows iced tea to be marketed effectively alongside meals, enhancing the overall dining experience.

Foodservice is the perfect playground for tea trial, experimentation, and innovation. Operators can introduce limited-time offers and seasonal specials to gauge customer interest and refine their offerings. This approach not only keeps the menu exciting but also encourages repeat visits. By leveraging the versatility and popularity of iced tea, operators can drive sales and delight customers with creative, refreshing beverages.

## TEA RECIPE

### Chai Cider

**MULTIPLE SERVINGS (56oz.):**

- 7 Chai Teabags
- 3-1/2 Cups Hot Apple Juice
- Cinnamon and Apple Slices for Garnish

#### METHOD:

Boil 3-1/2 cups of water; add 7 Chai Teabags

Steep for 5 minutes

Add 3-1/2 Cups of Hot Apple Juice

Garnish with cinnamon stick and apple slice, then serve!



## TEST YOUR TEA KNOWLEDGE

**TRUE OR FALSE:** A tea labeled “Orange Pekoe” has orange flavoring in it.

**FALSE:** The term “Orange Pekoe” is part of the tea grading vernacular that goes back to the 17th century tea trade. The Orange is from the Dutch House of Orange known for their love of tea, and Pekoe refers to the grade.

**TRUE OR FALSE:** Brewing black tea with the same tea bag removes the caffeine.

**TRUE:** Steeping caffeinated tea in boiling water removes the caffeine on the leaves, leaving the 2nd cup with significantly less caffeine.

**TRUE OR FALSE:** Dunking your teabag up and down escalates the brewing time.

**FALSE:** Dunking doesn’t hasten the 2 to 5 minute steep time, but it is something to do while you wait!



Charlene enjoying the day at Fifer's Farm in Delaware

Charlene Kaufman, the Director of Commercial Operations at Harris Tea, has been a cornerstone of the company for 37 years. Her role is multifaceted,

## Meet Charlene Kaufman: a Pillar of Harris Tea's Success

involving interaction with nearly every department, from purchasing and operations to shipping. When Harris Tea embarks on launching a new product, Charlene is at the helm, coordinating with all departments to assess the product's viability in the commercial market.

In addition to her coordination duties, Charlene oversees all of Harris Tea's account managers, handling both retail and foodservice brands. Her expertise extends to participating in

cupping sessions, where she evaluates and approves various products and blends.

Charlene's responsibilities also encompass the critical area of packaging and labeling. She ensures that all product claims, nutritional information, and other details meet industry standards. This involves interfacing with the FDA and managing the art department to keep all labeling accurate and compliant with regulations.

Outside of her professional life, Charlene and her husband are passionate

cooks who proudly consider themselves "real foodies." She is also an avid gardener, cultivating both edible plants and flowers, and has a deep appreciation for art. Charlene is a proud mother of three grown children and a grandmother to three grandchildren, balancing her professional achievements with a rich and fulfilling personal life.

### What type of tea does Charlene enjoy?

She loves a strong black tea or Chai.

## Meet Chris Fehlig, Harris Tea Director of National Accounts



Chris with Officemate "Lemon"

As Director of National Accounts for Harris Tea, Chris Fehlig plays a pivotal role in managing key customers within the foodservice market. With 18 years of experience with Harris Tea, Chris oversees both existing business and the acquisition of new clients. Chris began his career at Harris Tea as a regional manager, gaining valuable experience in various positions along the way. His comprehensive understanding of the business has been instrumental in his current role.

Chris believes that success in the tea industry requires a combination of quality products, best-in-class distribution, world-class manufacturing, and exceptional customer service. "One thing we do differently is we put a real focus on providing customers with exceptional levels of service. We have a lot of long-term customers, and that's because of our focus on building relationships," he says.

Outside of work, Chris is a dedicated father to two girls, 13 and 15. He has coached them in soccer and enjoys supporting their various activities, including cheerleading, track and field, cross country, and basketball. An avid golfer and runner, Chris recently completed a 5K with his daughter and aims to run a half marathon this winter.

### What is Chris' favorite tea?

Just a simple, black iced tea.

## TEA FACTS

- **Single Plant Origin:** All traditional teas (black, green, white, oolong) come from the same plant, *Camellia sinensis*. The differences in tea types arise from how the leaves are processed.\*
- **Matcha's Unique Preparation:** Matcha, a powdered green tea, is unique because it is made from shade-grown tea leaves that are ground into a fine powder. This method preserves more nutrients and provides a distinct flavor.\*\*
- **Herbal Teas Aren't True Teas:** Herbal teas, or tisanes, are not technically teas because they do not come from the *camellia sinensis* plant. Instead, they are infusions made from herbs, spices, flowers, or fruits.

\*Buddha's Cup 2024 \*\*Toast - Most Popular Coffee and Tea Trends Report Jul/2024

## THE LAST SIP

"At Harris Tea, we have spent the last 40+ years cultivating long lasting relationships with our grower partners and building a best-in-class, nimble supply chain which serves as a strong foundation for our business. So, whether it's a port strike, restricted shipping routes, or a shortage of containers, we are able to provide our customers with the peace of mind that their supply of tea is secure."



- Christian Weber, Director of Foodservice