



## Let's Have A "Tea Party"



*Patty's Plants*

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Do tea parties still exist? I would have to say, "yes". Tea parties may have changed in some areas of the country. They may not be as formal as the used to be, but do they really have to be. What are the reasons for a tea party anyway? There could be many reasons, from getting together to share stories, memories, to give comfort, even planning events or having an informal business meeting. When I was little I loved having tea parties with my mom. Having one on one "sharing" time with just my mom and me. I couldn't wait to get out the special tiny set of china. I must have had and actually still have five little sets of china. My favorite one had a mama duck on the tea pot and all the cups had the baby chicks. I did the same thing with my daughter. She used a different china set for each tea party. Some of mine were passed down to her as my mom gave me some of hers. My daughter would send out an invitation to meet up in her room. She would have everything set and ready to go. We would eat mini cookies and sip on lemonade . (her choice of beverage). As she got older, she would bring everything out to the garden while I was out weeding. She'd tell me I had to stop for a while because it was time for tea. These times she would bring the iced tea out & some very yummy breads. We would sit and talk about girlfriends, shopping and boys. Then we would count how many butterflies were in the garden. Good times, Good times!

Tea is also healthy for you. To help your immune system to better fight off colds and flu, drink tea. It can be an easy comforting way to relief your symptoms. They say healing comes from within so why not let tea help. Having "A Tea Party" is much like a flower luring a bee. Healthy plants release their scent (the volatile oils) to send signals to either attract or repel certain insects. The oil also helps a plant resist bacteria and viruses by acting like an antiseptic. When we make tea with herbs we are also releasing the volatile oils or organic compounds in a way to help prevent or counteract an unhealthy situation. Add green or black teas to your herbal tea for even more benefits. There was a Harvard study that showed people who drank 5 cups of tea a day (black or green) for two weeks transformed their t-cells into super cells that produced 10 times more cold fighting ability. Other germs like infected cuts & food poisoning were also defeated. Even drinking less than 5 cups helped.

Tea sales reached 1.9 billion last year with most of the sales in specialty teas. This is where herbal tea comes in. There are many herbal teas that are good for your health too. We can thank the "Daughters of Liberty" for starting us on herbal teas. During the days of the 'Boston Tea Party' the ladies made up their own teas using sage and other local plants, we call herbs. An herbal tea is actually called a tisane or herbal infusion. It doesn't become a "real tea" unless you add some black, green or oolong tea to it. They all come from the tea plant— *Camellia sinensis*. So next time you want to have your daughter, granddaughter or even a friend over, think about a tea party for memories, comfort and health.

Good Times X Good Times = Tea.

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