

Washington Tea Home Processing

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Vegetable Horticulture Program

WSU Mount Vernon NWREC

A tea tasting was conducted at WSU Mount Vernon NWREC on 23 July 2025 with 31 participants tasting 8 teas. All the teas were harvested from the same 28-year-old tea (*Camelia sinensis*) plants, cv. Minto Pacific, grown in Burlington, WA. Each tea was processed at home, following different methods. We are testing simple tea leaf drying and processing techniques that do not require special equipment or supplies. This supports our goal of developing home-grown tea as part of our WSDA Nursery Industry project.

Teas in the tasting were arranged from lightest to strongest flavor, to maintain flavor differentiation as much as possible. All the teas were brewed following the same method: 18 g of tea leaves were placed in a glass pot, and 1.4 L (6 cups) of hot (180 °F) water were added. The tea was steeped for approximately 10 minutes, then poured into white paper cups so that color of the tea was visible.

The tea tasting score sheet was assembled based on several tea taste evaluation sources, and we tested it in our program the day before. Survey questions included ratings from 1–5 regarding color of the tea (light to dark), aroma strength (weak to strong), aroma quality (muted to complex), strength of taste (light to full-bodied), bitterness (low to high), dryness (not dry to very dry), aftertaste length (short to lingering), characters (sweet, crisp, vegetal, etc.), and overall quality (undesirable to excellent).

- Tea marked with a green star indicates a crowd favorite.
- Visit our website using the QR code for tea factsheets, informational guides, and reports on tea propagation and production.
- Please email morgan.shelton@wsu.edu or milesc@wsu.edu if you have any questions.



Tea name	Tea pot	Procedure	Tea leaves	Rating
White Tea		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Top 3 leaves harvested 2. Leaves screen-dried indoors in ambient light 3. (no direct sunlight) 4. Leaves not touched after placed on screen 		<p>Overall Quality</p> <p>★ ★ ★ ★ ★</p> <p>Aroma Quality</p> <p>★ ★ ★ ★ ★</p> <p>“Vegetal, Earthy”</p>
Red Tea		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Top 3 leaves harvested 2. Leaves dried in large metal bowl in dark room 3. Leaves vigorously turned and rubbed 2x per day for 4 days 		<p>Overall Quality</p> <p>★ ★ ★ ★ ★</p> <p>Aroma Quality</p> <p>★ ★ ★ ★ ★</p> <p>“Floral, Earthy”</p>
Green Tea		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Top 3 leaves harvested 2. Leaves wrapped in towel and microwaved for 1 min 3. Leaves spread to cool 4. Leaves rolled with a heavy rolling pin for 5 min 5. Air-dried for 3 days 		<p>Overall Quality</p> <p>★ ★ ★ ★ ★</p> <p>Aroma Quality</p> <p>★ ★ ★ ★ ★</p> <p>“Acidic, Vegetal”</p>

Tea name	Tea pot	Procedure	Tea leaves	Rating
Green Tea		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Top 3 leaves harvested 2. Leaves pan-fried for 1–2 min 3. Oven-dried at ~200 °F for 2–3 hr 4. Air-dried for 1-2 days 		<p>Overall Quality</p> <p>★ ★ ★ ★ ★</p> <p>Aroma Quality</p> <p>★ ★ ★ ★ ★</p> <p>“Earthy, Vegetal, Floral”</p>
Green Tea		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Top 3 leaves harvested 2. Leaves microwaved in a towel for 2 min, and spread to cool 3. Leaves rolled for 1–2 min, then spread 4. Leaves pan-fried on low heat for 1–2 min 5. Leaves rolled for 1–2 min and pan-fried on low heat for 5–6 min twice 6. Leaves air-dried for 3 days 		<p>Overall Quality</p> <p>★ ★ ★ ★ ★</p> <p>Aroma Quality</p> <p>★ ★ ★ ★ ★</p> <p>“Earthy, Vegetal”</p>
Oolong Tea	 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Top 3 leaves harvested 2. Leaves spread outside on screen in direct sunlight for 15 min, then rested indoors for 1 hr 3. Leaves hand-tossed for 2 min and rested 1 hr twice 4. Leaves pan-fried on medium heat for 3–4 min 5. Leaves hand-rolled for 15 min and air-dried for 3 days 		<p>Overall Quality</p> <p>★ ★ ★ ★ ★</p> <p>Aroma Quality</p> <p>★ ★ ★ ★ ★</p> <p>“Floral, Earthy, Sweet”</p>
Black Tea	 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Top 4–5 leaves harvested 2. Leaves wrapped in cheesecloth and hand-rolled for 2 min 3. Leaves air-dried for 3 days, with hand mixing and tossing 2x per day 		<p>Overall Quality</p> <p>★ ★ ★ ★ ★</p> <p>Aroma Quality</p> <p>★ ★ ★ ★ ★</p> <p>“Sweet, Floral, Earthy”</p>
Black Tea		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Top 2 leaves harvested 2. Leaves wrapped in cheesecloth and hand-rolled for 2 min 3. Leaves air-dried for 3 days, with hand mixing and tossing 2x per day 		<p>Overall Quality</p> <p>★ ★ ★ ★ ★</p> <p>Aroma Quality</p> <p>★ ★ ★ ★ ★</p> <p>“Sweet, Floral”</p>



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