



OGDEN'S DESIGN & PLANTINGS, INC.

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TEL: (631) 473-5064

CAMELLIAS & TEA

Design & Installation:

- Natural Gardens
- Japanese Gardens
- Bed Maintenance
- Therapeutic Gardens
- Paths & Patios
- Stone & Brickwork
- Specialty Gardens
- Seasonal Color & Interest

May To-Do List:

- Stake tall perennials
- Plant herbaceous perennials at mid-month
- Sow vegetable seeds outdoors
- Prune spring flowering shrubs
- Apply mulch to perennial borders
- Set up peony hoops
- Overseed lawns
- Deadhead spring bulbs

Ogdenwords:

Flush: An eruption of fresh shoots, usually from a previously dormant root or stool.

Bud: Dormant rudimentary projection on a stem from which growth may develop.

Harvesting: Gathering or collecting the mature crop (may be fruits, cereals, roots or flowers).

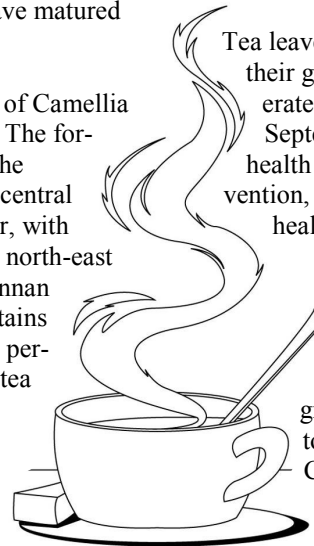
Tea is the second most popular drink of choice today after water but did you know that tea actually comes from a plant that we see in many gardens? Those lovely camellias with their overabundant blooms are the same plant that we get tea from. Here on Long Island we are on the northern edge of the range for growing camellias. Many of the ones that we see growing around here are very established, often planted more than fifty years ago and they have matured into magnificent specimens.

All tea is made from the leaves of *Camellia sinensis* or *Camellia assamica*. The former, with a small leaf, prefers the cool, high mountain regions of central China and Japan while the latter, with a broad leaf, is found mainly in north-east India and the Szechuan and Yunnan provinces of China. The mountains and damp, misty conditions are perfect for the production of great tea leaves. Tea is very much like wine in that the final product is determined both by the environment and how it is processed.

There are four main types of tea - black, green and Oolong and white. The leaves are picked when the growing season just starts (known as 'first flush') and then are dried. In warm climates the plants can have more than one 'flush' in a year, whereas in cooler ones there is often just one growing season. The leaves picked from the earliest flushes usually produce the best tea. The drying process makes a difference between teas. For black tea, the leaves are spread out to wilt and when soft they are rolled and then spread out again. Finally they are fired, either in woks or hot ovens. For green tea, leaves are picked by hand and left in the shade so any water on the leaves evaporates. The leaves are then steamed or roasted in a hot pan for a few minutes and finally dried in a cool oven for 20 minutes to Some leaves are left out in the sun, others are dried in an oven and the length of drying

time as well as the temperature all make a great difference. For Oolong tea the process is the most difficult and time-consuming. The leaves have to be picked at their peak and then processed immediately. They are left to dry and then pan-fried. White tea, the most delicate of all, is made from leaf buds covered with white hairs which are picked as buds and dried slowly at low temperatures.

Tea leaves can only be harvested during their growing season, which in a moderate climate can be from April to September. Tea is known for many health benefits including cancer prevention, heart health, oral health, bone health and gastrointestinal health.



Although we think of tea growing as associated mainly with Asia, especially India and China, tea can, and is, grown in America. The Charleston Tea Plantation in South Carolina produces the only tea grown in America. The conditions in this area of the country are ideal for tea growing -

warm and damp with good soils. The Charleston Tea Plantation is owned by the Bigelow tea company and although none of the Bigelow brand teas are made from any of the plants at the plantation it is possible to purchase tea grown and produced from the Charleston plantation. The tea is called American Classic Tea and can be found in the supermarket.

Now when you see all those colorful camellias think of all the lovely tea that is produced from the same plant. If you need any advice about camellias please call us on 631 473 5064 and don't forget to come to our special lecture 'Camellias & Tea' at 11am on Sunday, May 22nd 2011 at 650 North Country Road, St James. This is a great opportunity to learn all about camellias and tea and to purchase a tea plant for your garden!

Camellias & Tea Seminar ~ Sunday, May 22nd at 11am

Call (631) 473-5064 or email public@ogdens.com



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Plant of the Month

Common Name: Kumasaka Camellia

Scientific Name: *Camellia japonica* 'Kumasaka' (kuh-MEE-lee-a juh-PON-ih-kuh)

Family Name: (Theaceae)



Description: Evergreen shrub with dark green, glossy foliage.

Mature Size & Growth Rate: Moderate growth habit, reaching 10 to 12 feet tall and 3 to 10 feet wide, even larger with age.

Flower: Pink, showy double flowers appear from mid to late spring.

Cultural Requirements: Prefers filtered sun. May require watering in extreme heat. Well-drained acidic soil, rich in organic matter. Keep roots cool with a layer of mulch.

Native Habitat: Native to eastern and southern Asia (China, Japan, Korea and Taiwan). This old world variety dates back to 1695.

Additional Comments: Deer resistant. Perfect for a border planting, as a single specimen or in a woodland garden. Red camellias are a sign of wealth. They also represent longevity and faithfulness and thus are often used in Asian weddings.