

Making Sweet Tea



I'm not a fan of iced tea but a whole lot of people are. It's especially popular in the South. Sweet tea and unsweet iced tea are on the menu at every restaurant.

Obesity is also a bigger issue in the South than most of the rest of the country. Some of that obesity challenge comes when you consume a lot of sweet tea.

I did my research. The average recipe for sweet tea contains 8 cups of water and a cup of sugar. A single cup of sugar contains an astonishing 200 grams of carbohydrates! Most humans can't eat more than about 80 grams of carbs per day before they'd be setting themselves up for weight gain.

So, let's say you drink just ONE glass of sweet tea a day. That one glass is probably 12 ounces. That's about 37 grams of carbs in that one drink. And who has just one? Not many.

The good news is you can have your sweet tea and drink it, too. I've come up with a new recipe and had it rated and perfected at a party at my home last night.

I've tried lots of ways to brew tea, but my favorite is the simplest. It doesn't even require turning on a burner. I "brew"

my iced tea in the refrigerator.

Another simple way to “brew” iced tea is called sun tea. I used to employ this method when I was younger and foolish enough to sunbathe. My friends and I would lay on the deck all afternoon, chatting and reading. We’d set a pitcher in the sun on the deck filled with water and tea bags. Sometimes we’d be out on that deck for up to 8 hours and the tea would be ready when we were done.

In doing my research on iced tea I found this disturbing piece written by a food blogger about sun tea.

What’s Wrong with Sun Tea

“While sun tea has long been a favorite summer drink, there are concerns about brewing tea for a long time in the hot sun. The primary reason for concern is that the heat and rays from the sun can cause bacteria to grow in your tea. If you ever noticed long strands in your sun tea, that’s bacteria.

This is particularly true if you are like many sun tea brewers and allow your tea to steep for many hours. Three or four hours is the recommended maximum. Refrigerator tea might take a little longer to brew, but the results are the same. You can also feel good about serving this safe tea to your family and friends.”

So, if I ever thought about going back to brewing sun tea this little tidbit has caused me to give up that idea – forever.

Another thing I’ve learned is it matters what tea you buy. In the South there is a favorite brand called Luzianne.



They sell Luzianne's at pretty much every grocery store in the South. I had never heard of it before I moved to Chattanooga. Of course, I bought some.

The other popular brand around here for making iced tea is Lipton. That one I know from up North, too.



I'm sure there are others that make great iced tea. You can discover which one works best for you.

I think another important element in making iced tea is the pitcher. I have a favorite made by Anchor.



I found it at Target. It's not expensive. It has a top that seals perfectly. It doesn't take up much room in my refrigerator and it has a handy handle/grip. This one holds a full 12 cups.

In order to make sweet tea that has no sugar I am going to recommend that you sweeten each glass of tea individually. At the party last night, I had each guest take the bottle of stevia sweetener (I used a new Truvia liquid sweetener) and sweeten their own tea. Remarkably the amount of sweetener required to sweeten the tea to individual preferences ranged from one tiny squirt up to 4 squirts. That's a big range. You can also buy liquid stevia that has a dropper. I think that solidifies that I'm not going to be sweetening the tea by the pitcher, but rather set out a liquid stevia sweetener and let them do it themselves. Just takes a second.

So enjoy your sweet tea, regular or decaf, and feel safe that you're not over-consuming the calories and carbohydrates.

Cheers!

Zola



Sweet Tea (The No Sugar Way)

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