



HIGH TEA @ THE FOREST OF TRANQUILITY



Definition of Afternoon Tea

A Brief History of Afternoon Tea

Legend has it that afternoon tea was started in the mid-1800s by the Duchess of Bedford. Around this time, kerosene lamps were introduced in wealthier homes, and eating a late dinner (around eight or nine PM) became fashionable. At the time, there were only two meals each day -- a mid-morning, breakfast-like meal and the other was an increasingly late dinner-like meal.

The story goes that the Duchess found herself with a "sinking feeling" (likely fatigue from hunger during the long wait between meals) and decided to have some friends over for assorted snacks and tea (a very fashionable drink at the time). The idea of an afternoon tea gathering spread across high society and became a favourite pastime of ladies of leisure. Later, it spread beyond the highest echelons of society and became more accessible for some other socioeconomic groups.

Today, tea is a major component of many British meals, including breakfast, 'elevenses,' afternoon tea and 'tea' (which is more like traditional high tea than afternoon tea).



Types of Afternoon Tea

Although many Americans think of afternoon tea as having a set menu, there are many variations on this tea-centric meal.

The simplest form of afternoon tea is cream tea -- a meal of tea, scones and cream.

Add fresh strawberries to cream tea and you have strawberry tea. Alternately, if you add more sweet treats to cream tea, you get light tea.

Add savoury foods, like finger sandwiches to light tea and you get full tea, which is the elaborate meal most people think of when they hear the phrase 'afternoon tea.'

