

# British Cool on Hot Tea

*But Turkish steepers climb*

There's less time for teatime in the U.K. these days. Historically the British ranked as the world's leading tea drinkers, but rushed lifestyles—along with a new thirst for alternative beverages—have caused their consumption of tea to plummet in recent years.

According to Datamonitor, a London-based business information firm, the British consumed 4.94 pounds of tea per person in 2002. That amounts to about 1,100 cups—down from 1,300 in 1997. Datamonitor analyst John Band points to several reasons for the trend. Younger British consumers are drinking more iced tea and trendy specialty coffees. They tend to dismiss hot steeped tea as old-fashioned, slow to prepare, and inconvenient to

drink on the run. And although they are buying more herbal, fruit, and green teas, consumption of these teas is minuscule compared to black tea, the mainstay of the traditional "cuppa."

Now the world champion tea drinkers are the Turks, whose tea consumption in 2002 came to 5.05 pounds per person. Turkish custom calls for endless small servings (above). A tea-loving Turk can knock back more than 20 tiny glasses of the hot brew daily. Turkish coffee may be world famous, but inside Turkey tea is more popular. "There's a saying in my country," says Turkish tea authority **Pelin Aylangan**.



"Conversations without tea are like a night sky without the moon."

—Margaret G. Zachowitz

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## 2002 Tea Totals

(All types of tea, per person)

Turkey	5.05 pounds
U.K.	4.94 pounds
Ireland	3.33 pounds
Hong Kong	3.24 pounds
Poland	2.67 pounds
Morocco	2.60 pounds
Russia	2.60 pounds
Egypt	2.47 pounds
Israel	2.38 pounds