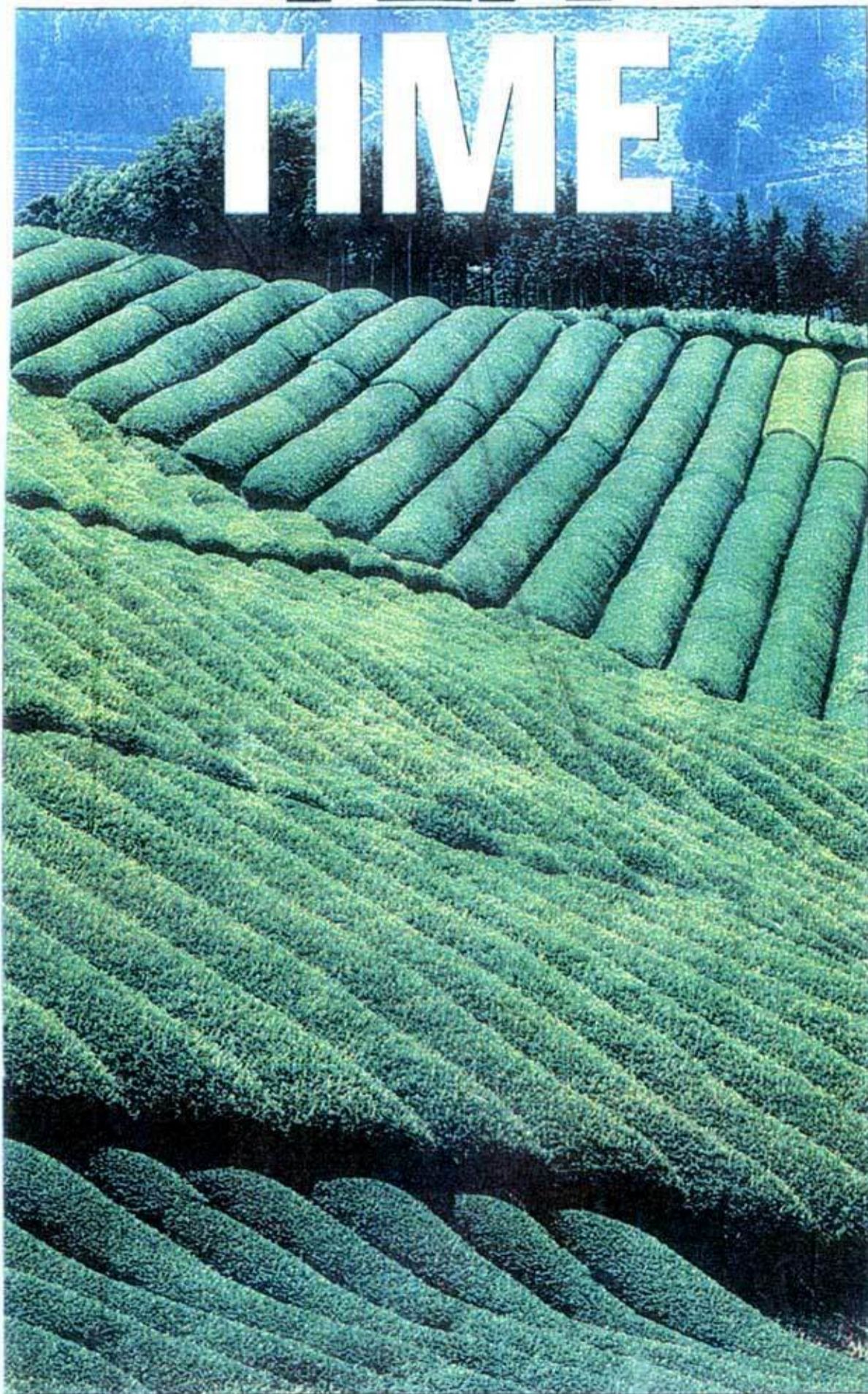


THE HAMILTON SPECTATOR

TEA

TIME



REBECCA FIELD JAGER

Are you a woman older than 30 who is health conscious, urban, active and always on trend?

If so, you fit the green-tea drinker profile, according to market research conducted by tea manufacturer Tetley.

In the past year, approximately 350 million cups of green tea were enjoyed by Canadians, with sales up 25 per cent. To help us understand why, Katy Tubb, a buyer, blender and tester for Tetley,

travelled to Canada from the U.K. this week and stopped by The Spectator kitchen for a tea tasting.

"A lot of people think that all green tea is created equal, but there are many different kinds," she said.

Black tea and green tea come from the same plant, a tropical evergreen called *camellia sinensis*. However, unlike black tea, green tea is not fermented; it's roasted and steamed instead. That's why it retains its green colour.

Mind you, once brewed, green tea comes in different shades. "Some varieties are darker, some are amber or light yellow," says Tubb.

The popularity of green tea is credited to a number of things, including the fact that it is often consumed without milk or sugar and thus has no calories. Also, it contains half the caffeine coffee does, yet all the health

benefits associated with black tea. It contains flavonoids, an antioxidant that helps delay or prevent damage to the cells and tissues.

To many, tea offers a psychological benefit as well. Sipping a cupful provides a calming break in a hectic day.

Even iced green tea entered the mainstream this past summer.

With a range of flavours available – from mint to pomegranate to the ever trendy white tea – Canadians are sipping their way to another record-breaking year in green tea sales.

The number to beat? If research group AC Nielson is right, to show an increase from last year, more than 232.9 million tea bags must be sold.

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BREWING THE PERFECT CUP OF GREEN TEA

- 1 Heat fresh water to at least 98.5 C (209 F). Let cool slightly.
- 2 Pour water onto the bag (in cup); brew for three to five minutes.
- 3 Squeeze bag against the side of the cup with a spoon for two seconds.
- 4 Stir once, then squeeze for another two seconds.
- 5 Remove bag.
- 6 Add sugar or honey, if desired.

GREEN TEA TIPS

Because green tea is unfermented, it loses its flavour faster and is best consumed within six months.

Just one pound (450 g) of tea leaves can make more than 200 cups of tea. That's a lot of steeping.

Green tea contains, among others, the flavonoid called Epigallocatechin gallate (EGCG). EGCG is a particularly strong antioxidant and may be as much as 100 times more powerful than vitamin C.

To watch a professional tea tasting, visit thespec.com, then scroll down to the tea-tasting video.

Chicken with Tetley Green-Tea Spice Rub and Mango

Makes 6 appetizer servings

Make extra batches of the green tea spice rub and have on hand to flavour chicken, beef and pork when grilling on the barbecue.

- 3 bags green tea
- 2 tbsp (30 mL) sesame seeds
- 2 tbsp (30 mL) ground Chinese five-spice blend
- 1½ tsp (7 mL) brown sugar
- 1/2 tsp (2 mL) salt
- 1/2 tsp (2 mL) freshly ground black pepper
- 1 large firm mango
- 3 boneless, skinless chicken breasts, each about 6 oz (165 g)
- 2 tbsp (30 mL) toasted sesame oil
- Cilantro leaves

For the green-tea spice rub: Remove tea leaves from bags and place in a shallow wide

bowl. Stir in sesame seeds, Chinese five-spice blend, brown sugar, salt and pepper.

For the skewers: Peel mango and cut into 36 cubes, about 1/2 inch (1.3 cm) each. On a cutting board, cut each chicken breast lengthwise into 2 thin pieces.

Brush chicken breast halves on both sides with sesame oil and lightly dip in Tetley Green Tea Spice Rub, coating evenly.

Heat a heavy skillet over medium-high heat and cook chicken, for about 2 to 3 minutes per side or until just cooked through. Transfer to a cutting board. Cut each chicken piece into 6 1/2-inch (1.3-cm) diagonal strips. Thread chicken strips onto bamboo skewers and place a cube of mango on each end.

Line a serving plate with cilantro leaves and arrange chicken skewers on top.

Approximate nutrition per serving: 130 calories, 2.5 g fat, 20 g protein, 7 g carbohydrates, 1 g fibre



— Tetley Tea

Black and green teas come from a tropical evergreen plant called *camellia sinensis*. Black tea has been fermented; green tea has been roasted and steamed.