



## **Katy Tubb: Director of Worldwide Tea Buying and Blending**

Katy Tubb is the Tetley Group's Director of Worldwide Tea Buying and Blending. She heads a team of 10 tea tasters responsible for selecting, purchasing, tasting and blending green and black teas, and other botanicals for infusions. These teas make the popular quality tea blends in the round and drawstring tea bags that are unique to Tetley.

Katy graduated with an honours degree in Microbiology from Imperial College, London, and lived in South Africa for two years where she worked as a microbiologist. It was here that she was first introduced to Red Tea, She later moved back to England where she joined Tetley as a tea tasting trainee in 1983. Since then, her career has been spent exploring the fascinating world of tea.

As part of Tetley's intensive tea buyer training program she spent one-year on an overseas secondment working in some of the world's leading tea growing countries, Katy then returned to Tetley's head office in Greenford, England. Following positions as Tea Buying Manager, Tea Development Manager and Head of Tea Buying, Katy was appointed Director of Worldwide Tea Buying and Blending in 1995.

As the 'Head Gaffer' of the Tetley tea tasting team, part of Katy's time is spent traveling around the world to the many tea estates, producers and markets. "One of the keys to sourcing the best possible blends is keeping up with the constant changes in the markets, new developments in tea production and changing tastes," she says.

Despite the fact that her job is to taste tea, it is still her favourite beverage and she is very enthusiastic about it. "Tea is such a wonderful beverage, it is both exotic and a home-style comfort. It's popular in so many countries around the world and very much part of the social fabric of peoples' lives."

Being a tea taster for a living gives one extremely sensitive taste buds, as well as an extra sensitive sense of smell," she adds.

Tasters in the tea tasting room are not permitted to wear any perfumed body products, or eat any heavily odoured foods such as curry or garlic during testing as it impacts flavor sensitivity, which is crucial to the tea tasting process.