



Organic Rooibos Tea

HISTORY OF ROOIBOS TEA

Rooibos Tea is made from the *Aspalathus linearis* plant which is indigenous to the rugged slopes of the Cedarberg Mountains about 250 km north west of Cape Town, South Africa. The region's coarse sandy soils, hot, dry summers and winter rains are ideal growing conditions for the plant.



The European settlers in the area noticed that the local people harvested the fine, needle-like leaves of the wild rooibos plant. These were then chopped, bruised and dried in the sun and used to make a refreshing hot drink. This discovery led to the Dutch settlers of the area developing Rooibos Tea as an alternative to the much more expensive black tea that they imported from Europe.

In 1904 a Russian immigrant, Benjamin Ginsberg, became interested in Rooibos and realised its marketing potential.

By 1930 Dr P le Fras Nortier, a medical doctor and nature lover, discovered the real value of Rooibos as an agricultural and medicinal product. Due to his enthusiasm, other farmers became interested in the cultivation of Rooibos and commercial production soon started.

FARMING ROOIBOS

Growing the *Aspalathus linearis* plant is difficult. In order to do it successfully seeds must first be scarified and then planted in acid, sandy soils during February and March.

In July the seedlings are planted out and it then takes about 12 to 18 months before the shrubs are ready to be harvested.

Harvesting takes place between December and April and plants usually have a productive life of about 5 years.

THE MANUFACTURING PROCESS



Branches are cut by hand; the tea is wet thoroughly and bruised, then placed in fermentation heaps and allowed to sweat. After this the tea is dried in the sun on special yards.



The dried teas are then sifted and delivered to the Rooibos Tea Board at Clanwilliam. Samples are tested by the Board for quality control and grading. The quality of Rooibos Tea is the most important aim of the Board. Therefore all Rooibos Tea is evaluated according to taste, flavour and colour.



The tea is also subjected to a very strict microbiological test before it is sent to the distributors. The Rooibos Tea emblem is your guarantee of the tea's quality.

Green (unfermented) Rooibos Tea has a lighter tan/yellow colour and a very mild 'green' taste reminiscent of traditional green tea.

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ORGANIC CERTIFICATION



Vital Rooibos Tea is organically grown and packed. The organic certification is under the auspices of ECOCERT which is a control and certification organisation, whose activities are governed accordingly by the public authorities and legislation.

ECOCERT is accredited for structure and procedures by COFRAC (French committee for accreditation), in accordance with guide standard ISO 65 (EN 45011), which requires independence, competence and impartiality.

<http://www.ecocert.com/?lang=en>

HEALTH BENEFITS OF ROOIBOS TEA

Rich in Antioxidants

Like most teas Rooibos Tea is a natural source of antioxidants. Antioxidants protect our body cells and tissues against free radical damage and are also referred to as free radical scavengers. Free radicals are unstable molecules that cause damage to body cells and tissues as found with the ageing process, exposure to sunlight, pollution and cigarette smoke.

Antioxidants bind to free radicals before they cause harm.

The types of antioxidants found in Rooibos Tea are called polyphenol antioxidants, based on their structure, which includes a phenolic ring. The polyphenol antioxidants in Rooibos Tea are classified as flavonoids and phenolic acids. These include: aspalathin (only found in Rooibos Tea), quercetin, rutin, orientin, isoorientin, vitexin, isovitexon, luteolin, vanillic acid, caffeic acid, ferulic acid and p-courmaric acid.

The polyphenol content of Rooibos Tea varies according to brewing time and temperature and typically amounts to 60-80 mg per 200 ml of tea.

Vital Rooibos is rich in the antioxidant Super Oxide Dismutase (SOD), which offers protection against free radical production.

Naturally Caffeine Free

Rooibos Tea is naturally caffeine free and is therefore not subjected to a decaffeinating process which may reduce the concentration of the natural antioxidant compounds. It is therefore an ideal replacement for caffeine containing beverages that are regularly consumed, such as coffee, cola drinks, black tea and certain energy boosting beverages.

Caffeine is a nervous system stimulant which should ideally not be used by people suffering from high blood pressure, insomnia and nervous system conditions. Caffeine intake results in losses of calcium through the urine, which may increase the risk of osteoporosis.

Low in Tannins

Tannins are naturally found in regular tea. They are known to bind minerals such as Iron and Manganese in the digestive system, reducing the body's absorption of these minerals. Rooibos Tea is naturally low in tannins and would therefore not significantly affect mineral absorption in the way that beverages rich in tannins could.

Calcium

Calcium is used in the development and maintenance of bone structure and rigidity. It functions in the clotting process, nerve transmission and muscle stimulation, and parathyroid hormone function and in the metabolism of Vitamin D.

Iron

Iron is a mineral that is found in the blood. It is involved in the respiratory process, as it is the main carrier of oxygen to all the cells in the body. Its main function is to combine with protein and copper in making haemoglobin.

Potassium and Sodium

Potassium and Sodium help regulate water balance within the body by regulating the distribution of fluids on either side of the cell walls.

Zinc

Zinc is an essential trace mineral within the body. Zinc is known for its ability to fight disease and to protect the immune system. It is involved with energy production, increases male sex drive, related to the absorption of vitamin B, helps with digestion, helps break down alcohol and is involved with the metabolic process.

Copper

Rooibos Tea also contains traces of copper that is not found in abundance in the typical Western diet of processed foods. Copper is an essential nutrient found in the bones, skin and connective tissues and is important for the functioning of the immune system and reproductive system.

TRADITIONAL USES OF ROOIBOS TEA**Colic (for babies)**

Traditionally, Rooibos Tea has been used to assist in the treatment of digestive upsets in adults and colic in infants. Even though peer reviewed literature is not available to substantiate these claims, anecdotal reports indicate the benefits of Rooibos Tea to soothe digestive complaints.

Immune Support

Rooibos Tea antioxidants and other components are also believed to support the immune system; however more research is required to substantiate claims that it could strengthen the immune system.

Nervous System

Rooibos Tea is naturally Caffeine free and thus has a soothing effect on the central nervous system and is recommended for people suffering from headaches, insomnia, nervous strain or hypertension.

Pregnancy

Rooibos Tea is safe to use during pregnancy as it is naturally free from caffeine and very low in tannins. During pregnancy, it is recommended that women avoid beverages high in tannins, which are known to bind with essential dietary minerals such as iron (which is vital during pregnancy), decreasing the bioavailability of these minerals.

ENVIRONMENTAL CREDENTIALS

Vital Organic Rooibos Tea is packed in boxes made from recycled cardboard and its teabags are made from oxygen-bleached paper.

SERVING SUGGESTIONS

Hot Drinks

Rooibos teas are traditionally consumed hot with milk. If sweetening is required, we recommend a teaspoon of Honey. To pleasantly freshen the flavour, add a slice of fresh lemon.

For maximum flavour, allow brewing for 3 to 5 minutes before removing the tea bag. Reduce brewing time for a milder flavour.



Cold Drinks

A jug of iced Vital Iced Rooibos Tea is something you can keep ready and waiting in the fridge at all times.

4 Bags of Vital Organic Rooibos Tea Lemon wedges, honey, various fruits, fruit juices and herbs (to taste).

Steep the tea bags for five minutes. Strain tea bags. Pour the tea into a jug. Add ice cubes to cool it down quickly. Add enough cold water. Keep it simple with just a wedge of lemon or a spoonful of honey, or make it fancy by mixing in other fruits like watermelon, apples or pineapple. Also add mint, for a fresh, crisp taste.



NUTRITIONAL INFORMATION

Nutritional Panel

Nutrient	per 100 ml
Iron	0.035 mg
Potassium	3.56 mg
Calcium	0.54 mg
Copper	0.035 mg
Zinc	0.02 mg
Magnesium	0.78 mg
Fluoride	0.11 mg
Manganese	0.02 mg
Sodium	3.08 mg

Free From

Vital Organic Rooibos Tea is free from preservatives, flavourants and colourants

Warnings

None