

How to Celebrate Any Occasion with a

Vintage Tea Party

by Calvin Farrell

Sipping freshly brewed tea from fine bone china teacups, eating delicate finger sandwiches, and savoring a variety of homemade cakes, scones, and cookies are all reminders of a bygone age of elegance and style. The pace of life was slower, and people took time to sit down and enjoy a leisurely afternoon tea. A vintage tea party seeks to recreate this sense of leisurely enjoyment.

A vintage tea party adds luxury, elegance, and charm to any occasion, whether it's a birthday, a Mother's Day celebration, or a coffee morning to raise money for charity.

If you don't have your own collection of vintage teacups, saucers, plates, and tablecloths, you can rent them from a specialist company. Alternatively, look for vintage tea party items in thrift stores and at garage sales.

Here are some tips for organizing and hosting your own vintage tea party.

INVITATIONS

Receiving a beautiful, hand-crafted invitation to a vintage tea party will create a sense of anticipation among your guests. You can either purchase elegant tea party invitations or make your own.

Choose paper illustrated with vintage images, such as romantic roses, birds and birdcages, botanical prints, teapots, and cupcakes.

Write each invitation by hand and send it in the mail for an authentic vintage feel.

DECORATIONS

Decorate the room or outdoor space with bunting made from either paper or fabric. Make your own bunting using vintage fabric or look online for a variety of bunting for sale.

Cover the table with an embroidered vintage tablecloth. Add floral decorations to your table. A simple vase of fresh flowers makes a good centerpiece. Add coordinating napkins, vintage china, silver teaspoons, cake servers, and cake knives.

Don't be afraid to use vintage plates, cups, and saucers with a variety of different designs. Different floral patterns with similar colors usually work well together.



Give Mom a Transformational Wellness Experience at Blue Lavender Spa

**BLUE**
Lavender
SPA

Medical Aesthetics
Spa Services

Laser Hair Removal,
Skin Tightening, Spot
Treatments, Spa Packages,
Botox and Fillers

Mother's Day Gift Cards Available

www.bluelavenderspa.com | 803-575-8404

1400 Chapin Rd | Chapin, SC 29036

**GRACE**
CHRISTIAN SCHOOL

FINE ARTS PROGRAM

COMPLETE SPORTS PROGRAM

TESTING CONSISTENTLY ABOVE NATIONAL NORMS

LOW STUDENT/TEACHER RATIO

416 Denham Avenue
West Columbia, SC 29169
Daycare - 12th Grade

803.794.8996
WWW.GRACELIONS.COM

\$50 OFF
NEW STUDENT APPLICATION

Must present this coupon.
Discount only available on school applications.



FOOD

Serve dainty sandwiches made from bread with the crusts removed. Cut the sandwiches into small triangles, squares, or rectangles. Some ideas for fillings are:

- cream cheese and cucumber
- smoked salmon and cream cheese
- tuna, sweetcorn, and mayonnaise
- egg and cress
- ham and mustard
- cheese and chutney

Arrange a variety of homemade cakes and cookies on tiered cake stands. Suggestions include:

- frosted and decorated cupcakes
- small tarts topped with fresh fruit
- meringues filled with fresh cream and berries
- scones served with strawberry jam and cream
- chocolate brownies
- ginger cookies

You could also bake one or more large cakes, such as a Victoria sandwich, coffee and walnut cake, or carrot cake. Cut these cakes into slices and serve on a cake stand.

Rectangular cakes, such as banana bread or lemon drizzle cake, can be served on a platter. Aim for a wide variety of flavors and textures to delight your guests.

TEA AND OTHER DRINKS

Brew loose-leaf tea in vintage floral or elegant silver teapots and pour it into patterned teacups on saucers. Give your guests a choice of several different types of tea, including traditional English blends of black tea such as:

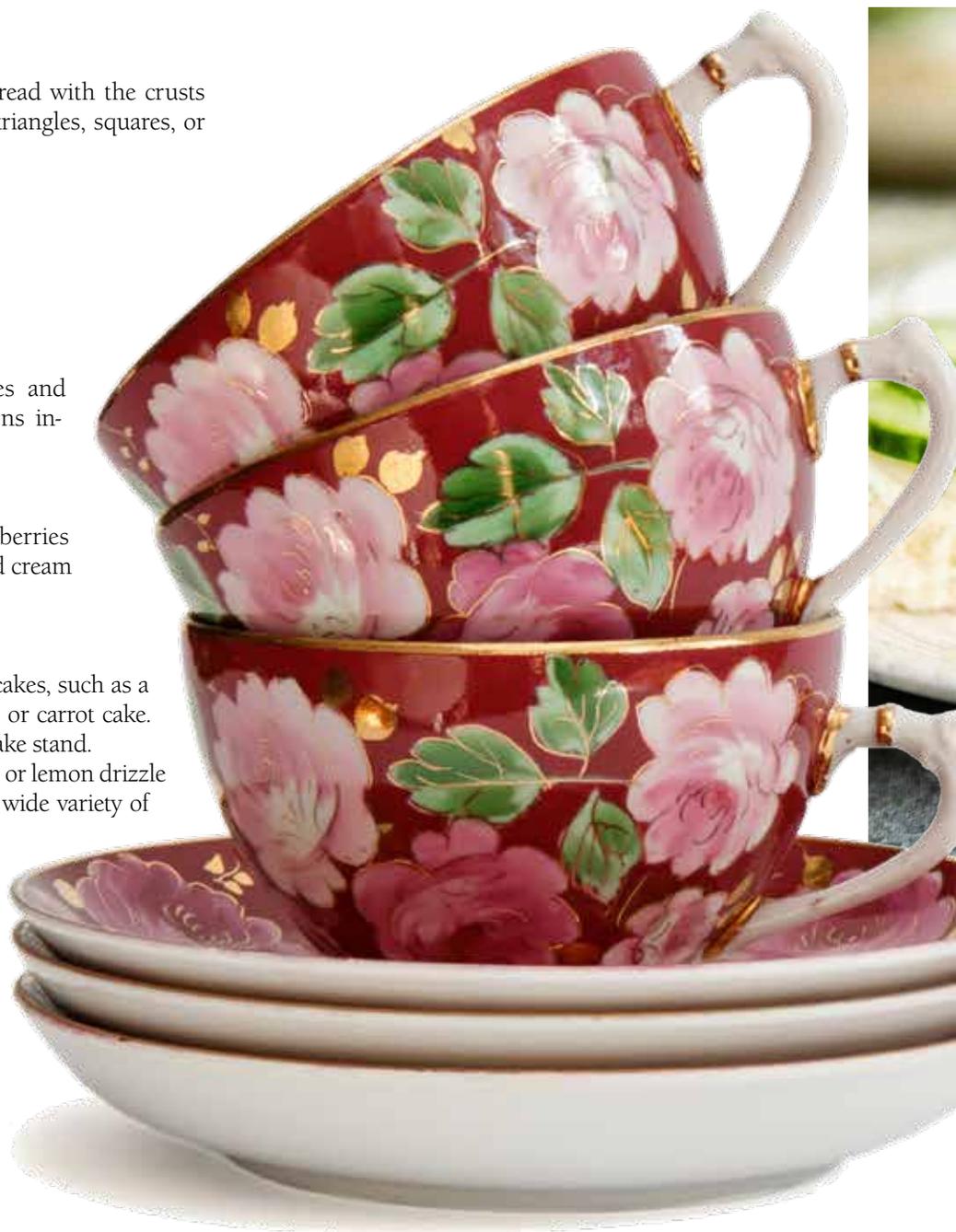
- Earl Grey
- English Breakfast
- Darjeeling
- Assam
- Lady Grey
- Lapsang Souchong

Add calming herbal teas and refreshing fruit teas, including

- peppermint
- chamomile
- lemon
- blackcurrant

If you've invited children to the tea party, serve traditional lemonade, or cream soda in large pitchers. It's a good idea to have cold drinks available for adults, too, especially in warm weather.

Offer refills at regular intervals. To accompany the tea, provide milk in vintage milk jugs, slices of lemon, cubes of sugar or pastel-colored sugar crystals arranged in sugar bowls as well as honey served in a honey pot.



ENTERTAINMENT

Simply let the conversation flow around the tea table or play vintage party games after tea; the choice is yours. Card games are a popular choice as well as traditional board games like backgammon, Ludo, or checkers. Charades is also an entertaining game.

Children could play simple yet fun games like throwing coins into teacups, decorating party hats, and dressing up in vintage clothes.

If you have a large outdoor space, play a traditional English lawn game such as croquet or quoits.

A vintage tea party is the ideal way to celebrate any occasion, large or small. Personalize your celebration to suit yourself and your guests. Your guests will enjoy themselves so much that they'll ask for the date of your next vintage tea party. ■