

Small Leaf Tea Camellia



What's most exciting about those leaves, is that you can pick them and make your own tea. You'll have a great conversation –starter with visitors, and the coolest homemade present.

***Camellia sinensis* 'Small Leaf Seedling'**

- **Use:** Almost everyone drinks tea without really thinking about it, not realizing that the leaves themselves are actually from a well known garden plant, the Camellia. It is slow-growing and easily maintained at 4 to 5 feet in height and width, which also makes it a fine candidate for growing in pots that can be situated on patios, decks, porches and other outdoor living spaces where the fragrant white fall flowers can be enjoyed and the leaves easily picked. Unlike some other Camellia species, this one is both heat and drought tolerant and can perform well in full sun (recommend on irrigation) or part shade. If you're a tea lover and enjoy brewing your own, the Small Leaf Tea is sure to please.
- **Exposure:** Prefers sheltered site with morning sun and afternoon shade, and any well drained neutral/acid soil. Extreme summer heat may cause leaf burn; needs some shade if planted near a white house due to reflection of sun.
- **Growth:** Moderate growing to 6' tall and 6' wide and possibly 8-10' tall over time if left unpruned. Can be kept as short as 4-5' tall for easy harvesting.
- **Hardiness:** Zone 7a-9; Shrub
- **Foliage:** Evergreen, glossy. You can make both green tea or black tea the difference is in how you dry the leaves. Green tea is dried right after harvesting, while black tea is crushed and allowed to oxidize. Medium-green leaves with irregular serrations remain less than 4" x 2.5" at maturity.
- **Flower:** It blooms in late fall and winter, white flowers illuminating the sleepy winter landscape. You can even surprise your dinner guests with fresh floral tablescapes. Prune only right after blooms fade if you want flowers every year.

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