

Large leaf Green/Black 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 'Tetraploid'

- **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 originates from China where it naturally grows on moist mountain slopes in fertile acidic soils, and originally this was a USDA introduction from the 1970s. Yes you can harvest the leaves to make a refreshing cup of tea. Best of all you can grow them into a hedge in shade and make a gorgeous winter display of white flowers too.
- **Exposure:** Prefers sheltered site, part sunny or medium shade, and any well drained neutral/acid soil. Extreme summer heat may cause leaf burn; needs some afternoon shade if planted near a white house due to reflection of sun.
- **Growth:** Moderate-fast growing to 15' tall and 6-8' wide. Can be kept as short as 6-8' tall for easy harvesting.
- **Hardiness:** Zone 7-10; Shrub
- **Foliage:** Evergreen. Large, leathery leaves plant are dark green and strongly reticulated with pronounced serrations. 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.
- **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 tablescape. A favorite for white tea because the buds are quite large. Prune only right after blooms fade if you want flowers every year.

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