

Move over coffee! Tea is the new 'it' drink

Tea may no longer be the lesser cousin to coffee. Social media is slowly increasing the appeal of the aromatic beverage as more people look for a healthier, caffeine-free drink to enjoy.



In her recently launched single, 'Look What You Made Me Do', pop star Taylor Swift whets fans' appetites for tea in her provocative video. Similarly, TV shows like *Downton Abbey*, which has entranced millions of viewers, is fuelling the current tea revival.

According to a recent Innova Market Insights consumer study, one in 10 consumers in the US, Canada, Mexico, Spain, the Netherlands and Australia are influenced by social media in their food and beverage purchases.

That number increases to a whopping one in five in China and India. In SA, the case is bound to be similar with more than 23 million users spending almost three hours on average a day on social media.

Every day, people all over the world post millions of snaps of the most beautifully-styled dishes and drinks with the aim of wow-ing followers who are often left with a sense of envy and cravings for these foods and beverages.

It's a phenomenon that is also having a big impact on tea consumption worldwide says Adele du Toit, spokesperson for the SA Rooibos Council.



Rooibos exports to Japan hit record high in 2018

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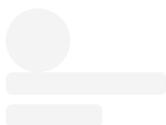


Ready for rooibos

"Before the social media boom, coffee was king, but these days tea is catching up to the popular brew. Aside from Facebook and Twitter, tea has been hashtagged in over 29 million Instagram posts alone – arguably turning one of history's oldest drinks into what may be the beverage industry's sexiest new offering."

Du Toit says the tea-drinking demographic is also widening as influencers on social media encourage followers to live healthier lives, by becoming more mindful about their lifestyle choices and the impact it has on the environment. "Many consumers are looking to cut back on coffee and are tending towards caffeine-free drinks with natural plant-based ingredients. This opens the door for botanical and herbal teas, such as rooibos offering health-boosting benefits."

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#icetea#heatwave#oranges#rooibos#citrus#oranges#applejuice#nhlstenden#centralbrew

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According to industry experts, consumers have maxed out on other beverages and enjoy the variety of flavour combinations that teas offer them. Beverage giants have responded by launching tea-infused waters, soft drinks and energy drinks. Ready-to-drink, tea-flavoured alcohol options are also proving popular.

“So too, the increasing interest in ethnic cuisines is drawing food bloggers to unique flavours such as matcha and rooibos teas. Every time celebrity chefs such as Gordon Ramsay or BBC’s Siba Mtongana posts a Rooibos recipe, it reaches millions of social media followers who share it with their followers.



Posts by celebrity chefs are catapulting SA's homegrown Rooibos to superstar status on social media.

“Popular platforms, such as Instagram and Facebook have made our homegrown rooibos accessible to the more than 3.48 billion users that are currently active on social media, which in turn is strengthening the demand for the tea globally,” she remarks.

