

LS EDITOR'S NOTE

An afternoon tea for me

There is something about tea that calms me down. And tea parties are my all-time favourite invites; not only dressing up for the elaborate Victorian ones that socialites were throwing before the pandemic, but also a small cosy tea party surrounded by a few good friends is an instant pick-me-up. What I really love is planning one with children in the late afternoon or if no one else is interested, one just for me.

Sounds a bit off but think about it, the best way to pamper and give yourself some me time is by throwing yourself a tea party. Few chocolate chunk cookies, tiny cucumber sandwiches, or quickly whipping up an orange sponge cake; sitting in the balcony, surrounded by lovely seasonal blooms, enjoying the light summer breeze and sipping the amber gold brew of tea — heaven is right there for you! Nothing stressful on your mind, just listening to the birds chirping their way home... the rustling of the leaves... are these evenings not to die for? Well, for



me, they surely are.

If I were to spend such an evening with my children, arranging a tea party for them would be such a pleasure. I would write small invites and hand them the invitation, and ask them to dress for the occasion. I would arrange the balcony setting for an

intimate gathering, decorate it by hanging up their drawings with clips, bake brownies and make pies, brew an infusion tea for them to have something light, or even treat them to a cup of hot sweet milk tea — if it's too hot then maybe opt for iced tea.

Playing fancy with children would be a great way to bond with them, allowing them to play grownups with you, teaching them how to raise their pinkie while sipping tea, talking about games, movies, and music; it would certainly take their mind off electronic devices, they might grudge but I promise you they will remember the party forever. It is upon mums to devise ways to entertain bored children and such a tea would no doubt be a great idea to try.

Unfortunately, I cannot always party, but tea time is my favourite part of the day. Exactly at 4 o'clock, I turn on the stove, measure a cup of water and pour it in my small, local steel kettle — like the ones

you find in street side tea stalls. I have the smallest version of those kettles, and I love it. There is a nostalgic feel to it.

While the water is reaching its boiling point, I arrange my 'ghee e bhajha toast' on a plate. Then drop a spoon of loose tea, the local variant that I get from New Market's special tea house, to the water and wait for a few minutes for the leaves to spread its strong aroma and colour.

I like my tea without milk and sugar and dunking my toasts to it. My partner during my afternoon tea ritual is Boo — my pet dog. He loves biscuits like I do, and we both sit in the living space, enjoying ourselves to the fullest!

On that note, you will find some awesome mocktail, iced tea, cold coffee recipes in today's issue of Star Lifestyle to beat the humid stifling monsoon heat. Try them out and happy partying!

— RBR
Photo: Collected

LS PICK

A glass full of bliss

If there is one thing that does not go with the soothing rains of the season, it's the stifling humid heat that comes before or after it. For caffeine lovers, it is a moral dilemma to forego a steaming mug of high-octane work elixir. It's times like these that kicking back with a glass of cold coffee or iced tea seems like a slice of paradise on Earth.

This season also happens to bring one of those unfortunate bouts of lack of appetite. Gulping down soups or heavy broths just do not sit right for the stomach. To answer all these little troubles, smoothies may as well be godsend for a late morning or early evening snack you can drink, or a drink you can have as a meal! Seasonal fruits and all the fresh ingredients you can get your hands on for the perfect glass — there is very little that can compare to this.

To get you started, here are some recipes for you to try, and don't forget to get creative!



MOCHA COCONUT ICED COFFEE

Ingredients

1 cup coffee, brewed and chilled
½ cup coconut milk
3 tbsp chocolate syrup
1 tsp vanilla extract
1 can full-fat coconut milk, chilled
2 tbsp sugar
2 tbsp toasted coconut slivers
Whipped cream

Method

Add the sugar and chilled coconut milk to bowl and beat with a mixer until peaks form. Pour 1-2 tablespoons of chocolate syrup to the bottom of a glass, add ice cubes then pour the coffee in. Next, add the coconut milk and sugar and stir. Top with whipped cream

to taste along with a sprinkle of toasted coconut.

SUMMER GARDEN TEA PUNCH

Ingredients

1 cup water
½ cup sugar
1½ tbsp fresh mint, snipped
½ cup orange juice
¼ cup lemon juice
1 cup tea, brewed and chilled
1½ bottle club soda, chilled
Fresh mint leaves or rose petals, for optional garnishing



Method

In a large stainless-steel or nonreactive saucepan, combine the water, sugar, and mint. Bring to a boil, remove the saucepan

from heat, and let steep for 20 minutes. Strain mixture through a sieve to discard any solids.

Add the brewed tea, orange juice, and lemon juice to the mixture, stir continuously to mix. Cover and chill for at least 2 hours or up to 24 hours. Just before serving, slowly pour the chilled club soda into mixture, stir gently. If desired, sprinkle with mint leaves. Serve punch with ice cubes.

MANGO AND STRAWBERRY SMOOTHIE

Ingredients

1 cup strawberries
1 cup mango puree
½ cup plain or vanilla yoghurt
4-5 ice cubes

Method

In a blender, blend all the ingredients until mixture is smooth and frothy. Optionally, slice some mangoes and strawberries and freeze them overnight. These can be used as a substitute for the ice cubes.

CINNAMON, HONEY AND GREEN TEA SMOOTHIE

Ingredients

1 cup green tea, brewed and chilled
½ cup milk
1 tsp cinnamon powder
1 tbsp honey
½ banana

Method

The green tea can be brewed beforehand as preferred, and be kept chilled until ready to use and serve. To make the smoothie, add one to two scoops of ice to blender along with all the ingredients. Blend until smooth. Serve immediately with a few slices of banana and a drizzle of honey on top.

Compiled by Iris Farina
Photo: Sazzad Ibne Sayed