

Winter tea parties to warm up the soul

If you have a veranda decked out with plants and ferns, place two garden chairs and the setting is perfect for a tea. Simply spread the tea table for your spouse and yourself, with just two cups of steaming milk tea and ghee toast, and it is party enough. In this busy metro-life of yours, you two do not have the luxury to spend quality time together let alone enjoy a cup of tea in silence. This small gesture might sweeten your bond a bit, chit-chatting about the future or reminiscing about the yonder days, this precious 'us' time will no doubt perk up your week.

Come to think of it, you hardly get time to spend with your parents or parents-in-law as well, so inviting them over for an evening tea together is pleasure enough for both them and you as well. Since mum will drop by, a little effort in bringing out the teapot and tea-cosy might earn you brownie points with her.

Setting the centre table of your drawing room and trolley with tea goodies that are



make a gazebo tent-like hut with old saris for the children to have a place to enact their make-believe plays and games. The table arrangements can have fruits like oranges and grapes and seasonal flowers.

Food can be salty lemonades, coconut water, *puris*, Mughlai parathas, tiny *shingaras* and home-baked banana bread or coffee cake. And of course, chocolate chip cookies and hot chocolates for the children.

These are zero-stress fun weekend afternoons, where a little effort goes a long way in keeping you pleased throughout the week. These are like 'chicken soup for the soul' and once in a while, you must indulge or take the time out to appreciate life's subtleties for yourself.

Social gatherings like fancy winter tea parties are always exciting; the prospect of dressing up in casual smart attires is a diversion from the mundane must-attend parties. Walking along the green grass, these teas are always arranged in big



healthy for older people and offering them a variety of your special tea selection will definitely brighten their tea time. Tomato and *deshi paneer* (cheese) sandwich, chicken mince sauteed and rolled in cabbage wraps, or rice paper rolls stuffed with cucumber, and carrots.

Dried fruits and nuts and a cup of lopchu orange pekoe black tea; it's bliss right there. You must remember to talk about the latest Netflix movies, listen to Ananda Shankar's music, play cards, and avoid talking about money, property, or even ailments; just concentrate on giving them and yourself a good time and steer clear from pressing realities.

You can try your hand at arranging a not-so-quiet tea party for friends and their children, squealing around on your rooftop. You do not need to have a garden up there, but if you have one it's a bonus.

Place a few single Danish sofas, a few cane chairs, and a floor setting with thick *deshi shujni* or hand-stitched carpets scattered around with colourful cushions. You can



houses with manicured lawns, nibbling on tea sandwiches, scones, pastries, and mini quiche, all with a cup of tea in your hand makes you think about the good things in life.

Teas are about bonding, be it one on one or in a gathering. It lightens your spirit and allows you to be glad about the niceties of life.

— RBR

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