

Beverages, Juices & Snacks

Southern Road Trip Inspired Tea Line

Austin, Texas-based Sweet Leaf Tea Co. was founded in 1998 by Clayton Christopher while he was on a road trip through Alabama and Mississippi. He was inspired by the quality and abundance of homemade sweet tea being served in local restaurants and realized that there was no bottled tea on the market that tasted like real iced tea—the kind Grandma used to make.

Using his grandmother's tried-and-true iced tea recipe, Christopher and his best friend and business partner, David Smith, brewed the original batches of Sweet Leaf Tea in pillowcases, using crawfish pots as brew tanks.

Today, the production line is a bit larger for Sweet Leaf teas, which are made from all-natural, superior-blend black and green teas mixed with 100 percent pure cane sugar or honey (sucralose for the diet varieties) and carbon-filtered water. Six of Sweet Leaf's flavors are certified organic by the USDA, and the company's Green Tea line has more of the antioxidant EGCG than any other bottled tea on the market, it reports.



Sweet Leaf Tea varieties include Organic Original Sweet Tea, Diet Original Sweet Tea, Organic Mint & Honey Green Tea, Diet Mint & Honey Green Tea, Organic Peach Sweet Tea, Diet Peach Tea, Raspberry Sweet Tea, Lemon Lime Unsweet Tea, Organic Mango Green Tea, Organic Half & Half Lemonade Tea and Organic Pomegranate Green Tea.

Sweet Leaf expanded its line in recent years to also include old-fashioned organic lemonade beverages made with 100 percent organic cane sugar. The lemonade was named winner of the 2007 NASFT Silver "Sofi" Award for "outstanding cold beverage."

The lemonades include Organic Original Lemonade, Organic Peach Lemonade and Organic Cherry Limeade.

MSRP for 16-oz. glass bottles of Sweet Leaf is \$1.39-\$1.59; 12-oz. plastic bottles, \$1.00-1.25; and 20-oz. plastic bottles, \$1.59-\$1.79.

Sweet Leaf is available nationwide at convenience stores, restaurants, supermarkets and specialty grocery stores such as Whole Foods Market, Safeway (in the natural set), Wild Oats, Costco, Kroger, The Fresh Market, 7-Eleven and Albertsons.

Sweet Leaf has provided significant cash/product donations to nonprofit organizations such as Big Brothers Big Sisters, The Susan G. Komen Foundation, The National MS Society and more than 200 local charities throughout Texas and Colorado.