



AFTERNOON TEA

The Peninsula Hotels

A DELICIOUS TRADITION:

AFTERNOON TEA AT THE PENINSULA HOTELS



The Lobby of The Peninsula Hong Kong in the 1950s

A HALLMARK OF THE PENINSULA EXPERIENCE

When The Peninsula Hong Kong, the first Peninsula hotel, opened its doors on 11 December 1928, its lobby was a quiet tea lounge. However, it quickly became a lively, colourful “crossroads of the East” following the introduction of its

afternoon tea – a quintessentially English ritual, supplemented by popular Sunday tea dances. The Peninsula was the first hotel in Hong Kong (then a British colony) to serve afternoon tea, which has since been adopted by

a number of restaurants and hotels throughout the city. Today, the afternoon tea tradition is a popular feature of all Peninsula properties around the world, and has become a beloved highlight of The Peninsula experience.



Afternoon tea is served at all 10 Peninsula properties around the world

EMBRACING A TIME-HONOURED TRADITION

The British custom of afternoon tea dates to the late 1830s, when the Duchess of Bedford began hosting gatherings where guests could enjoy tea, pastry and sandwiches in the late afternoon hours between lunch and dinner. Her habit became a national trend, and by the late Victorian years, afternoon tea had developed into a well-established meal with its own distinctive array of foods – including bite-sized sandwiches, delicate sponge cakes, and scones with jam and clotted cream. Tea time became an event for which guests dressed elegantly to

share the news of the day, while hostesses showed off their most refined china and table settings.

The Peninsula Hotels is proud to maintain this tradition in all ten of its hotels. Afternoon tea is served in each lobby to exacting standards amid sumptuous décor, accompanied by live music. As is customary, the tea service includes savoury finger sandwiches made with crustless slices of freshly-baked bread and delectable fillings such as smoked salmon, egg and watercress, coronation chicken, prawns and cucumber.



Anna Maria Russell, Duchess of Bedford

Warm, buttery scones also feature – made from a recipe unchanged at The Peninsula Hotels for over half a century – served with strawberry jam and satiny Devonshire clotted cream (a rich, sweet accompaniment made from milk slowly scalded and thickened over a low heat). A range of carefully prepared patisseries accompany these items, often featuring seasonal ingredients typical of each hotel's destination.

After selecting their accompanying beverage from a menu that features teas from around the world, guests will be served their choice in aged silver-plated teapots.

A persistent legend has long circulated about a particular cache of this silver, located at The Peninsula Hong Kong. Supposedly, during the early days of the Second World War, a trove of the hotel's silver was tucked away in a hiding spot somewhere on the property. In the turmoil of the ensuing occupation, the location of the treasure was lost – and has not been found since.



Silver-plated teapots are used to serve teas from around the world at each Peninsula property

*Sumptuous décor
accompanied by
live music*

PAIRING A CLASSIC TRADITION WITH MODERN TRENDS

Over the decades, as The Peninsula Hotels has preserved the grand ritual of afternoon tea, it has also cultivated unique and creative ways to keep the custom fresh and modern. Peninsula properties regularly introduce specially themed tea services that celebrate the seasons; for example, The Peninsula Tokyo's 'All Things Matcha' with a menu of special

green-tea infusions and confections that complement the lush greenery of summer. Similarly, The Peninsula Hong Kong's 'Springalicious' afternoon tea highlights the lively flavours characteristic of the season – such as pastry made with zesty crabmeat, and cake infused with fresh raspberries.



A limited-edition partnership between The Peninsula New York, The Peninsula Beverly Hills (picture) and Ladurée Paris brought a twist to the hotels' classic afternoon tea

*Themed tea services
that celebrate the
seasons*

The Peninsula Hotels also creates an array of themed afternoon teas in conjunction with cultural partners and similarly luxurious brands to provide guests with exclusive experiences. At The Peninsula Bangkok, for instance, afternoon tea guests were treated to vibrant installations by Thai video artist Kawita Vatanajankur, held in partnership with the inaugural Bangkok Art Biennale. To coincide with Paris Fashion Week, The Peninsula Paris offered a themed afternoon tea in partnership with legendary diamond jeweller Harry Winston – complete with lavish pastries modelled on iconic jewellery designs, and the chance for one lucky guest to win a signature piece from the Winston collection. The success of this collaboration resulted in the partnership featuring at all three China hotels shortly afterwards. Similarly luxurious afternoon tea partnerships have included Ladurée, Mikimoto and Tiffany & Co.

Such special events allow the effortless marriage of venerable tradition with modern-day chic. It's a pairing that reflects the distinctive character of The Peninsula Hotels, and for which its properties continue to be recognised all over the world.



(Above) 'Winston Garden at The Peninsula'-themed afternoon tea was made available for a limited time at all three China properties
(Below) The KNIT afternoon tea was served during live performance art sessions at The Peninsula Bangkok