How Would You Like Your Tea?

Besides water, tea is the most widely consumed beverage in the world. In the Arab world, Morocco consumes the most tea per capita, closely followed by Egypt, Saudi Arabia and the UAE. Tea-drinking is a common social ritual, and tea is commonly served to guests when they visit someone’s home. Customs surrounding how tea is prepared and served largely depend on the region, and the exact recipe for preparation varies depending on family preference. Check out some of the Arab world’s famous teas, and even try to make one yourself!

**Sháy Istkán**

Traditional Iraqi tea is super strong and super sweet: black tea is steeped for hours and its strength is balanced with a hefty dose of sugar. Highly caffeinated, Iraqi tea is sipped throughout the day.

**Sháy Habíb**

Chai haleeb, literally “milk tea” is black tea steeped with cardamom and is usually consumed in Yemen. Evaporated or condensed milk is added.

**Sháy Kárik**

Similar to what we think of as Indian chai in the West, kárik is an aromatic blend of black tea steeped in milk with a variety of spices, including cinnamon and cardamom. This tea is consumed in the Gulf region.

**Sháy Bál Bháneظ**

Tunisian tea can be either green or black. Just like its Moroccan counterpart, it is commonly steeped with fresh mint and sugar. Its most distinctive feature is the nuts that are added to the cups after serving — pine nuts, almonds and peanuts are all common.

**Sháy Bál Bándug**

Gunpowder green tea is steeped with a bundle of fresh mint leaves and lots of sugar. It is common for Moroccan families to drink several cups of tea per day, and it is served to guests in both personal and professional settings.