

Tea Talk

By Joyce A. Whitaker, owner of the Painted Lady Tea Room

Have you noticed the feeling of fall in the air? Leaves are starting to turn and the days are getting a little shorter. For tea drinkers, this is always a favorite time of year for sitting quietly drinking a cup of tea; orange spice tea is the perfect choice. This rich, spicy tea is delicious served hot or iced. The brew leaves a distinct freshness in the mouth and seems to warm the soul. Cinnamon, cloves and allspice are blended with the finest black tea to make this popular concoction. This loose-leaf tea is so aromatic and beautiful that it can be used in a simmering pot to give your home a crisp, fall scent.

An “autumn harvest” tea is one of our most popular afternoon teas at the tea room. The kids are back to school, holiday planning is beginning and the colors of the season give us reason to celebrate. Having tea with a friend or friends is a special time to enjoy the flavorful foods made from the bounty of the season. A typical fall tea menu served by the fireplace could feature the following:

Autumn Harvest Tea

Hot Orange Spice Tea with Honey
Cream of Butternut Squash Soup
Apple Butter Cream Tea Sandwich
Ham Spread on a Butter Biscuit
Mini Three-Cheese Quiche
Pumpkin Praline Tart
Pumpkin Raisin Tea bread
Apricot Walnut Scone
Devonshire Cream

This hearty, flavorful tea is so filling and delicious. Decorating your table for this occasion is easy, too. Gold, olive green, red and orange leaves, candles and dishes placed on an antique ecru lace cloth or linen is the perfect back drop for a fall tea. I have found that flea markets and garage sales are perfect places to find amber, gold and green glass that is inexpensive (autumn colors are not as popular today, so they are plentiful). Nature provides the rest...a vase or pot of gold chrysanthemums, dried leaves, nuts and branches are perfect. One of my favorite finds is a harvest gold compote perfect for displaying pumpkin bread. I couple this with my mother’s ivy and beige twig teapot, cream and sugar and the result is warm and inviting, plus the ceremony is reminiscent of days gone by. Remember, no matter how full your life may seem, there is always room for a cup of tea with a friend or loved one.

Note: Joyce will answer your tea questions through this column. Contact her by Email:jwhitaker@A-TEA-ROOM.com or stop by the Painted Lady.

