



MEDIA Q&As TWININGS' 300TH ANNIVERSARY

TWININGS - THE COMPANY & 300 YEARS

Q: What is different about Twinings products compared to other teas in the marketplace?

A: Twinings has a great advantage in that it doesn't own any tea gardens, which means we're not tied to our own producers. We're not restricted by having to use specific crops – we can choose the very best every time. By cultivating relationships with estates in the more unusual parts of the world especially, we can achieve incredibly diverse, inventive and innovative results.

Over 300 years, Twinings has been able to develop long-standing relationships with growers and suppliers all over the world. Knowing the people in these companies on a personal level means that they are intimately in touch with our requirements.

At Twinings, the tea-tasters/blenders don't change around 'areas' of responsibility too much. A taster's palate really develops season to season so you build an extensive knowledge and understanding of points of difference over the years by focusing on an area of blending expertise. Quality is non-negotiable for Twinings; it cannot be compromised in any way. We're also one of the few companies that blends herbs and fruits for infusions instead of using pre-mixed varieties.

Q: What are you going to do to mark 300 years?

A: A range of activities including exclusive: commemorative caddies with a special blend, crafting bespoke blends for VIP customers and guests and launch of a commemorative blend for retail. In a number of markets we will be hosting 300 year Birthday tea parties. We will also be offering up as prizes to consumers and inviting key trade customers to a unique 'Twinings London Experience'.

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Q: What are your objectives for the anniversary year?

A: To open up the world of premium tea. To encourage consumers to try Twinings if they are new to the brand, and, for those who already enjoy Twinings, to invite them to try new blends and flavours from the extensive range. We want consumers to celebrate the fact that Twinings has been crafting great teas and only teas for so many years and that this heritage and expertise makes that everyday tea drinking occasion so special.

Q: Who are you targeting/trying to appeal to?

A: Tea is consumed by a broad target group and the core user for Twinings is somebody who recognises quality and likes to be that little bit different from the crowd.

Q: Why/ what do you think your consumers like about Twinings products?

A: They love the flavours, aromas and texture of our teas. They really appreciate the quality that comes from 300 years of perfecting the art of selecting and blending. The personality of the brand resonates with many of our consumers, we are the quintessential English tea and they believe nobody knows tea like the English.

Q: What are your strongest performing teas?

A: English Breakfast and Earl Grey are consistently our best performers internationally.

Q: Why do you think these are your most popular products?

A: English Breakfast revives, it wakes you up in the morning and picks you up in the afternoon. It is really full-bodied and has an attractive colour. Earl Grey is fine, floral and delicate. It is, perhaps, the blend we are best known for, so we take a lot of time over it. It depends on personal preference and the moment.

Q: What about the trend for drinking green tea and infusions? Do you see these overtaking the more traditional blends in relation to sales in the future?

A: We see these growing faster than the more traditional black teas but we still see English Breakfast and Earl Grey as being the core to our range.

Q: In which products in the Twinings range are you intending to invest in the most?

A: English Breakfast and Earl Grey will continue to receive the majority of our investment in markets where we decide to support specific blends. Increasingly though, we believe supporting the brand overall is a stronger way of communicating to our consumers. Twinings is really about a brand rather than a specific blend.

Q: Who owns Twinings? Is it independent?

A: Associated British Foods, a FTSE top 50 company with an annual turnover exceeding £4 billion.

Q: How does Twinings operate internationally? Do you have wholly owned subsidiaries?

A: In our top markets we tend to have wholly owned subsidiaries, eg UK, France, USA, Australia and Scandinavia. Likewise, our sister beverage brand Ovaltine – which is particularly strong in Asia and selected European markets – enables us to sell and distribute Twinings in those markets leveraging the wholly owned subsidiaries of that brand. We also have strong distribution partners in markets where local ‘know how’ is key eg Russia and Italy.

Q: How do you approach NDP (new product development) at Twinings?

A: We are very consumer focussed and key to our NPD programme is getting ever closer to our consumers and tracking trends. We also have a top rate purchasing team which working closely with marketing ensuring we are at the forefront of new blends, flavours and formats.

TWININGS' HISTORY

Q: Why do you think that Twinings has been so successful for 300 years?

A: Since Twinings' fine teas were first distributed in London back in 1706 we've only ever focused on being exceptional at one thing: tea and making tea accessible to those who appreciate tea.

When first introduced, tea was the drink of a privileged few because of its extremely high cost. Richard Twining, grandson of the founder, persuaded Prime Minister William Pitt to pass the Commutation Act of 1784, which slashed the prohibitive taxes on tea, and consumption in England promptly doubled.

We pride ourselves on maintaining consistently high standards – every one of our 198 blends are carefully and lovingly nurtured and are tasted at seven separate stages to ensure each one is as it should be. Consumers have therefore simply come to know and trust Twinings for producing premium, consistently high quality tea.

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Q: How long has Twinings had the British Royal Warrant?

A: Twinings was honoured by Queen Victoria, in 1837, when we were appointed as suppliers of tea to Queen Victoria and her Royal households. We have had the honour of supplying every successive British Monarch to date.

TWININGS PRODUCTION

Q: Does Twinings own estates from which it sources its tea?

A: No. Twinings has a long established network of tea estates worldwide from which it is able to source and hand select the very best teas. This means that tea can be selected according to quality as opposed to Twinings being committed to use whatever a specific plantation produces.

Q: What's the difference between black and green tea?

A: Green, oolong and black tea all come from the same plant – the difference is the way in which the tea-leaves are processed. Green tea is unoxidised and black tea is fully oxidised, which is why black tea is more full bodied while green tea is lighter tasting.

Q: How has tea production changed over the years?

A: The biggest change was the advent of the tea bag, Twinings has always used technology to improve the efficiency of packing tea, and frankly the fundamentals for quality and standards remain unchanged.

Q: Where does Twinings sit among competitor tea brands internationally?

A: Twinings has 4.2% share of the global tea market. Twinings is the 2nd largest tea brand.

TWININGS THE BRAND

Q: Where is the tea market heading? What are your predictions?

A: The tea market is forecast to grow in the future, with all sectors in growth except instant tea.

The strongest growth is forecast in the premium sectors of black speciality tea (+2.6%), green tea (+2.6%) and infusions (+3.6%).

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The main drivers in forecast growth are the increasing number of health conscious consumers, wider product choice, improved manufacture, distribution and retail networks and increased advertising expenditure and lifestyle choice.

US medical research has promoted the health-enhancing properties of tea, especially green tea and infusions. The increasing health awareness of consumers in less developed markets will continue to boost tea's profile.

The trend for convenience will increase the demand for teabags as opposed to loose tea varieties.

Busier lifestyles offer an opportunity for foodservice channels to grow, e.g. growing number of tea houses.

Q: From where do you source your tea?

A: India, Sri Lanka, China, Kenya, Indonesia and Brazil.

Q: Are these teas cultivated ethically?

A: Twinings is committed to improving the working conditions for tea plantation workers worldwide.

Twinings was a founder member of the Ethical Tea Partnership formed in 1997. We're not its spokespeople but the partnership's aim is to deploy and promote ethical trade among tea producers internationally and ensure improvements in the livelihoods of tea workers. Target areas relate to terms and conditions of employment, education, maternity welfare, health and safety, basic human rights as well as monitoring local legislation, detailing union agreements and conducting factory and estate audits. The result has been a significant improvement in workers' conditions throughout the tea-producing world.

TEA & HEALTH

Q: Is green tea better for you than black tea?

A: There is evidence to suggest that both types of tea are good for us. For example, black teas can help reduce the risk of coronary heart disease and reduce cholesterol long term. Some studies have shown that drinking moderate amounts of green tea over a prolonged period is helpful in preventing high blood pressure and is also thought to give some protection against bowel cancer.

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Both black and green teas contain flavanoids which act as powerful antioxidants and as such help protect the body against the damaging effects of free radicals – for example pollution, smoking and exposure to sunlight. Free radicals are known to cause damage to the cell wall and the genetic material within cells and are known to play a significant role in the development of heart disease, strokes and cancer.

Q: Is tea fattening?

A: Not at all. Without milk, tea is calorie-free. Even with milk, tea contains only around 13 calories – much, much lower than most soft drinks and ‘posh’ coffees.

Q: Doesn't tea dehydrate?

A: No. Contrary to popular belief, tea can be included in the recommended daily fluid allowance and drinking tea throughout the day can help prevent dehydration.