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### “History of Tea Cultivation in India”

India is the country with largest number people who drinks tea. It is the most favorite refreshing drink for the Indians. Most Indians drink tea with milk and sugar. Traditionally, a guest in any Indian home is welcomed with a cup of tea. The documented evidence according to the history of tea drinking in India dates back to 750 BC.

The introduction of proper tea cultivation in India was initiated through seeds obtained from China. Chinese varieties of tea were first introduced into India by the British, in an attempt to break the Chinese monopoly on tea. The British, using Chinese seeds, plus Chinese planting and cultivating techniques, launched a tea industry by offering land in Assam to any European who agreed to cultivate tea for export.

Tea plantation on a large scale was introduced in 1788 by Sir Joseph Banks. He was an English naturalist. He recommended Bihar, Rangpur in Assam and Cooch-Bihar as the localities in which tea cultivation was most likely to be successful.

In 1837, the first English tea garden was established at Chabua in Upper Assam. In 1840, the Assam Tea Company began the commercial production of tea in the region, run

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by indentured servitude of the local inhabitants. Beginning in the 1850s, the tea industry rapidly expanded, consuming vast tracts of land for tea plantations. By the turn of the century, Assam became the leading tea producing region in the world.

Originally tea is indigenous to the Eastern and Northern parts of India, but the tea industry has expanded and grown tremendously over the years. Since 1947, the tea production in India has increased by 250% and the land area used for production has increased by 40%. Even the export sector of India has experienced an increase in the export of this commodity.

Presently, India is one of the largest tea producing country in the world. The major tea producing states are Assam, West Bengal, Tamil Nadu, Tripura, Sikkim, Nagaland, Manipur, Himachal Pradesh, Kerala, Karnataka, etc. Over 70 percent of its tea is consumed within India itself. In this, India is also among the top 5 per-capita tea consumers. There is a wide variety of tea offered by India; from Green Tea to CTC tea to the aromatic Darjeeling tea and the strong Assamese tea, the range of tea available in India is unparalleled.

The Indian tea industry has grown to own many global tea brands and has evolved into one of the most technologically equipped tea industries in the world. This industry provides employment to more than 1.1 million Indian workers and almost half the workforce constitutes of women. Tea production, certification, exportation, and all other facets of the tea trade in India is controlled by the Tea Board of India.

Tea Board plans to launch a new marketing initiative, which will include foray into new markets such as Iran, Pakistan, Vietnam and Egypt. It also plans to renew its efforts in traditional markets like Russia, the UK, Iraq and UAE.

***"You only lose what you cling to"***

**- Gautam Buddha**

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