



TAKE A TEA BREAK

When you're feeling a bit clapped out and it's proving difficult to concentrate, there really is no better way to revive yourself than with a proper cup of tea. And now it's been proven by scientists that a compound in tea can help you to feel more alert and focused.

In a study at Unilever's Beverages Global Technology Centre, people who took theanine (an amino acid in black, green and oolong tea) and then performed a difficult mental task, found their brains became quite active. In fact, the right parietal cortex lit up, which is the part of the brain's circuit system linked to attention span. So don't put off that tea round any longer!

TIPPLE OF THE MONTH

Wheatgrass Supershots

Anyone serious about their health will be no stranger to the benefits of whizzing up a fresh smoothie. However, did you know that adding one ingredient to the mix could supercharge your nutrient intake? The Brazilian acai berry is jam-packed with antioxidants that can help to tackle health problems like high cholesterol, varicose veins and macular degeneration. It's also listed as one of the world's top wrinkle-busting foods by anti-ageing expert, Dr Nicholas Perricone.



Try this tasty recipe by leading nutritionist Dr Carrie Ruxton and London's top cocktail hotspot, Zeta Bar:

La Viva Acai

Blend together:
50ml guava juice
5ml ginger syrup
Half a banana, blended
Five strawberries, blended
30ml Acai Gold 100% Pure

Acai Gold 100% Pure is available from superfooduk.com priced £24.95.



WHOLE FOOD JUNKIE – SEA VEGETABLES

The Food Doctor weighs up your options

Clearspring Dulse, £3.99

A decent source of fibre and iodine, dulse is quite versatile. It can be added to soups and stews, or eaten as it is. It's a good source of iron and potassium too, but perhaps it's most useful as a source of B12 for vegetarians, a nutrient that can be lacking without animal produce. Dulse can be slightly chewy when it is re-hydrated, so it is an acquired taste for some people.



Clearspring Arame, £3.29

A kelp that is popular in Japan although not often seen in the UK, arame contains calcium, iron and iodine, the latter making it a useful food for anyone with low thyroid activity. Like all seaweeds, it's best avoided by people with hypertension as



there is a fair degree of inherent sodium in all sea vegetables.

Clearspring Hijiki, £2.69

This is a brown sea vegetable, not quite as appealing to the eye as dulse or arame due to its duller colour, especially given that it tends to be black when dried. It has a more bitter taste compared to the others so is perhaps best mixed into soups made from sweeter vegetables.



Oromar Wakame, £3.50

Familiar to many people as it is usually served in miso soup and in Japanese restaurants on the side of main dishes. It contains omega 3 fats which make it a useful source of this nutrient for vegetarians.

Research shows the wakame can help with weight loss as it contains fucoxanthin, which can trigger fat burning.

Oromar Kombu, £3.50

Kombu is a component of dashi, a soup dish popular in Korean cuisine. It's often used when cooking beans as it makes them more digestible and reduces the flatulence that can go hand in hand with eating them! Dried is better than this version held in salt and water as the sodium content of sea vegetables is high enough without added salt.



The Food Doctor is Ian Marber, principle nutrition consultant at The Food Doctor Clinic. For dietary advice and inspiration, visit thefooddoctor.com

The Taste Barometer

Chilled milk

We love organic dairy farmer Rob Taverner's technique for getting his cows to produce more milk – he practises tai chi in front of them for an hour each morning and swears it really works! His motto: "A happy cow is a productive cow."

Better bread

If you've been wondering what happened to simple, wholesome loaves of bread, then you must check out The Real Bread Campaign (realbreadcampaign.org), which aims to increase the production of bread made with natural ingredients.

Super scales

Avid bakers must check out Antony Worral Thompson's Autograph Padded Electronic Kitchen Scale (£9.99 robertdys.co.uk). We love its function that lets you turn the measurement back to zero at any point, meaning you can weigh everything at once in one bowl!

▲ GOING UP ▼ GOING DOWN

Starving soldiers

A leaked report has revealed that many soldiers in the British Army are living in poverty. Some are so poor that they are forced to rely on emergency food voucher schemes set up by the Ministry of Defence. Give our boys more food, we say!

Baby bottles

Three studies suggest that exposure to the chemical Bisphenol-A early in life, which is widely used in plastics including babies' bottles, can lead to excessive weight in adulthood. We're keeping well away...

Doner kebabs

The post-pub staple has been exposed as no more healthy than other takeaway options. Scientists have found that they contain the equivalent of a wine glass of cooking oil, which tends to be of the saturated variety.

Marinating can reduce up to
95% of the cancer
causing chemicals released
from **barbecued** meat