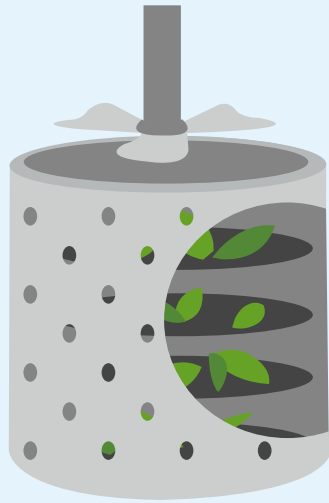


Breaking down the tea bag assembly process

Tea is the most widely consumed beverage in the world next to water. On any given day, more than 158 million Americans drink tea. In 2014 more than 77 percent of the tea brewed in the United States was prepared using tea bags. To get to the point where it can be brewed, tea must go through a series of steps.

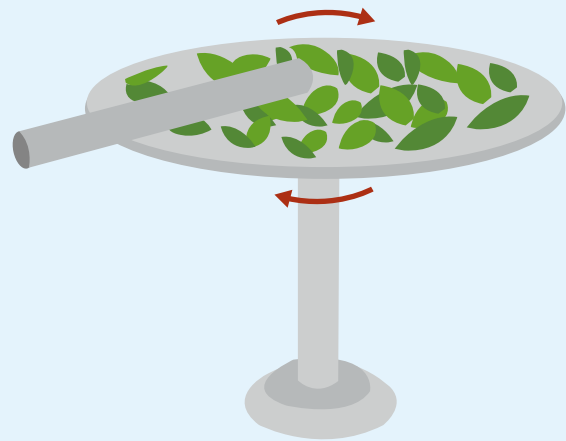
1 WITHERING

Leaves are spread in layers inside perforated steel drums and exposed to blasts of hot air, which oxidizes the polyphenols in the leaves, the primary active ingredient in tea.



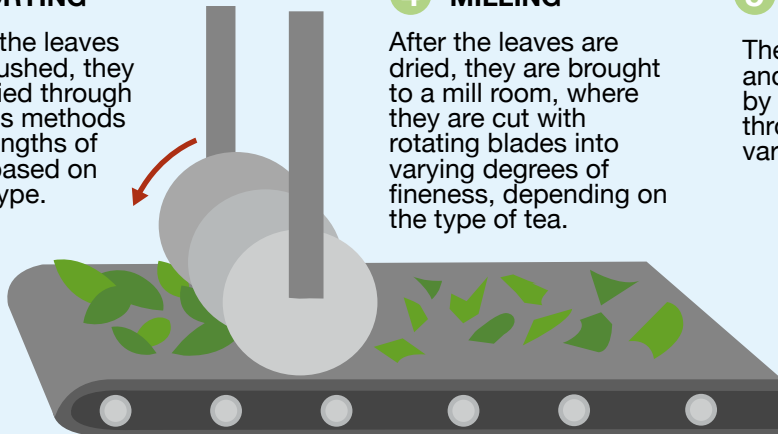
2 CRUSHING

The leaves are then crushed on a rolling machine. They are twisted so that they are eventually coated with their own juice and torn into smaller pieces.



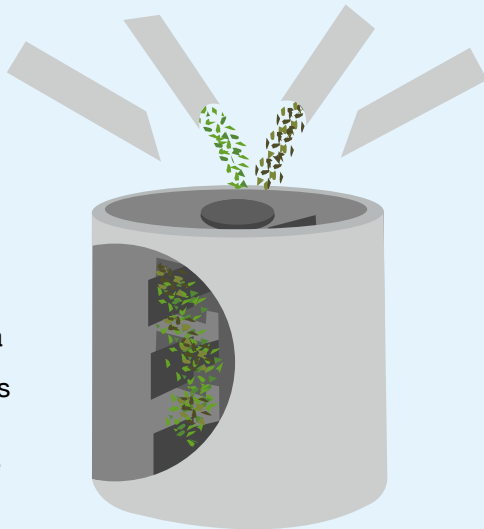
3 DRYING

Once the leaves are crushed, they are dried through various methods and lengths of time based on their type.



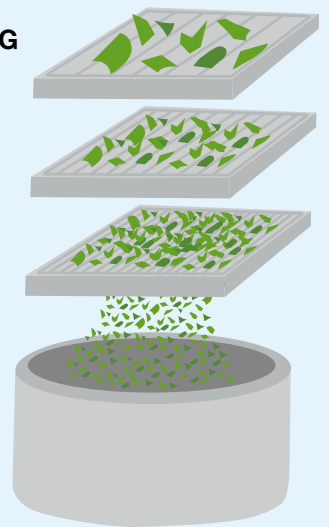
4 MILLING

After the leaves are dried, they are brought to a mill room, where they are cut with rotating blades into varying degrees of fineness, depending on the type of tea.



5 ADDITIONAL DRYING & CUTTING

The leaves are dried and further refined by sifting them through mesh of varying grades.



6 BLENDING

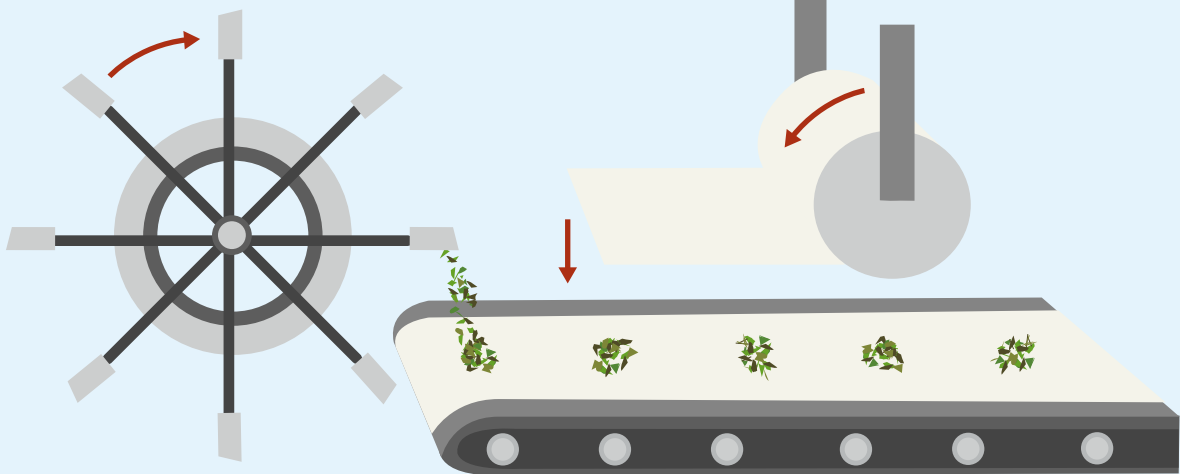
Up to four types of leaves are blended together to create a distinct taste. Additional flavorings such as cinnamon, orange peel and peppermint may be added during this step.

7 MEASURING

The blended tea leaves are sent through flow tubes to a doser wheel, which separates the tea into pre-measured amounts of two grams.

8 ASSEMBLING

The doser wheel drops the tea onto a layer of filter paper on a conveyor belt. A second layer of filter paper is lowered on top of the tea. Next, a heat-sealing drum seals the paper together, forming the tea bag.



9 PACKAGING

The tea is then packaged and ready to be sold to consumers.

Tea type consumption

In 2014 Americans consumed more than 3.6 billion gallons of tea. About 84 percent of all tea consumed was black tea, 15 percent was green tea, and the small remaining percentage was comprised of oolong and white.

