

## Tea Chic

My current breakfast obsession is a new line of elegant teas called Steven Smith Teamaker. Tied in sheer sachets reminiscent of delicate lingerie, and filed into stylish flip top boxes, these full leaf teas can be found in a small selection of specialty markets around the country. Slipping a sachet into a steaming cup, with the herbal bouquet perfuming the room, is a rather fanciful way to begin the day.

Steven Smith, founder of both Stash and Tazo tea companies, has taken his nearly 30 years as a tea producer and world traveler to create this boutique line. His third tea company marks a return from big business to his roots, the craft of tea making. Smith personally concocts the teas in small batches at his “atelier” in Northwest Portland, which doubles as a tranquil tea café for enjoying a cup or picking up a selection of artisan loose leaf teas to enjoy at home.

Full leaf teas have a fresher, more pure flavor than those packed with “fannings” or the smaller crushed leaves found in most tea bags. Smith offers a refined selection of white, green, oolong, black, and herbal blends. A personal favorite is the Lord Bergamot, a vibrant version of classic earl grey infused with the fragrant oil of Bergamot orange.

In the works is a complementary line of micro-brewed bottled tea drinks. Also keep your eye out for a line of sophisticated tea service wares such as cups, pots, and infusers, created for the simple pleasure of enjoying a fashionable cup of Steven Smith’s teas.

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