



Just for Me: A Solitary Tea

You don't need a lot of people to enjoy a lovely tea party. Taking the time to prepare a lovely tea just for you will calm you down and give you a wonderfully pampered feeling. Why not take a break in a long afternoon to enjoy a quiet cup in a lovely spot? Or if you have the luxury of an evening to yourself, why not prepare tea with fruit and sandwiches around five o'clock and then not worry about dinner? You'll have more time to enjoy the evening, and you'll sleep better if you eat early and light.

Here's a simple menu for a solitary tea that is easy to prepare, healthful, and satisfying.

A perfect pot of tea
Orange or apple slices or a beautiful bunch of grapes
Cream cheese, celery and walnut sandwiches
Homemade or store-bought cookies

While waiting for the water to boil and the tea to steep, prepare one or more sandwiches and arrange them on a plate with the fruit and cookies. Lay a pretty cloth on a tray or on the table and add a flower or a candle for elegance. Then sit down at the table or carry your tray to a cozy spot. Enjoy!

Cream cheese, celery and walnut sandwiches

- 1/4 pound cream cheese, room temperature
- 1/4 celery heart, very finely chopped
- 1/4 cup diced walnuts
- White or whole wheat bread
- Parsley sprigs (for garnish)

In a small bowl, beat cream cheese until smooth. Mix in celery and walnuts. Make sandwiches with cheese mixture. Trim off crusts of bread and cut sandwiches into rectangles or triangles. Garnish plate with parsley.

Basic scones

You can add all kinds of extras to scones, depending on your taste. Try cut-up apples, currants, ginger, orange, almond flavoring, cinnamon, apricots, fresh blueberries, cranberries, or even chocolate chips.

2 cups flour
1 tablespoon baking powder
2 tablespoons sugar
½ teaspoon salt
6 tablespoons butter
½ cup buttermilk (or milk)
Lightly beaten egg

Heat over to 425 degrees. Mix dry ingredients. Cut in the butter until the mixture resembles coarse cornmeal. Make a well in the center and pour in buttermilk. Mix until dough clings together and is a bit sticky—do not overmix. Turn out dough onto a floured surface and shape into a 6-to-8-inch round about 1 ½ inches thick. Quickly cut into pie wedges or use a large round biscuit cutter to cut circles. The secret of tender scones is a minimum of handling.

Place on an ungreased cookie sheet, being sure the sides of scones don't touch each other. Brush with egg for a shiny, beautiful brown scone. Bake at 425 for 10 to 20 minutes, or until light brown



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