

# Reasoning and Prioritization Matrix: Does it taste good to people who enjoy high quality tea?

The Tea Tavern understands that cultural and habitual changes take place over long expanses of time. As such, we recognize that sustainable practices are vital in ensuring this business is able to operate for a lengthy period.

**To grow a community of tea drinkers, we must ensure our farmers are able to grow healthy teas for generations.**

As a result, we prefer to work with vendors that make an honest effort to adopt sustainable practices. We acknowledge the economic necessity of certain ultimately unavoidable practices that may not be ideal. Still, the Tea Tavern will attempt to support tea farmers who farm with an eye toward creating a sustainable environment for our community, the planet, and even their own plantations, understanding that these practices are the key to continued long-term growth.

Currently, when selecting tea inventory, the Tea Tavern makes decisions within the following context:

- For Americans, tea (*Camellia Sinensis*) is often perceived as a bitter, astringent, boiled leaf juice. Many believe tea has *less* caffeine than most other products that contain caffeine and/or other health benefits.
- The Tea Tavern operates in areas where other beverages that are currently more popular are also harmful to one's health. These include:
  - Sugary beverages, such as sodas, synthetic fruit or vegetable juices that purport false health benefits, and boutique beverages, such as vitamin-enhanced water, are in reality little better than soda.
  - Alcoholic beverages
  - High-caffeine beverages such as energy drinks, bottled iced coffees, and others also usually contain unhealthy amounts of sugar or other detrimental substances.
- The Tea Tavern operates in areas where products, though not beneficial to the consumer, have a deep, embedded cultural familiarity and brand loyalty.

The Tea Tavern aims to improve people's lives and encourage them to consume healthier beverages like Tea Tavern teas, so people must voluntarily change their habits.

As numerous research studies have found, there a number of ways to help people create new, healthier habits using proven methods pulled from behavioral science.

**The current environment, coupled with the knowledge that to improve people's health and general well-being, drinking quality tea would have to become habitual, the Tea Tavern founders decided their starting point was high-quality teas.** High-quality teas share many of the same aspects as alcoholic beverages and even soda: they come in a wide variety of flavors, have an established culture around them, and can be seen as an indulgence. This offers some degree of familiarity that opens the door to habit creation.

This is true on a more granular level as well. Just as wines improve with age (and often increase in price as a result), or are demarcated by the year of their source crop or vineyard, teas also gain pedigree from these factors. Just as a red wine bottle of Pasa Robles 2020 may be coveted, so too is a Taiwanese oolong tea from 2017.

Coffee lovers can be discerning about their roasts, possibly preferring a light roast over a dark roast, for example. Similarly, there are different methods used in tea processing that may also be preferred by discerning consumers, such as white teas or sheng pu-erh teas.

Taste, of course, is the ultimate factor when most people are choosing what beverage to drink. Here, too, tea offers just as wide an array as other less healthy options. Just as some people prefer a sweet wine over a dry wine, or a lager rather than a stout, tea drinkers often prefer different amounts of various aspects, such as grassier teas, more flowery teas, or fruitier teas.

These aspects of tea culture help tea seem a bit familiar even to the uninitiated. **Offering only the highest quality tea not only elevates the experience when someone enjoys it but also helps mitigate the potential negative impact of *disliking* a tea.** For example, if someone tries a grassier tea but doesn't enjoy it, they can still be pointed to a fruitier tea with a completely different taste profile that they *will* enjoy. Thus a poor initial exposure to tea does not become a ruinous experience but instead becomes a starting point for discovery of personal preference.

With low-quality teas, an uninitiated tea drinker may have a distasteful experience with all varieties and stop exploring the tea world altogether. They may even grudgingly decide that while they can see the appeal for *other* people, tea simply does not appeal to them. Higher quality teas offer a greater opportunity to generate interest in tea; instead of "all tea" not tasting good, a new tea drinker will have the opportunity to try, say, a dark fruit tea such as plum and realize there is more exploration to be done.

It is worth noting that the Tea Tavern can become so successful it eventually becomes a ubiquitous beverage product within a given area. However, the Tea Tavern needs to accept that change occurs over time and be willing to invest that time to continue the mission.

If it is discovered that other products on the market are, in fact, better in health benefits and quality than the Tea Tavern's products, then the Tea Tavern must adapt and embrace change to continue its mission. And, if Tea Tavern products do not better people's lives or somehow are causing more harm than improving health, then this business should not exist.

**TLDR:** The Tea Tavern's highest priority when determining if to sell tea is if the tea tastes good.

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