

# Tea Time

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“Afternoon tea in the Library Bar”

I saw the sign as I stepped from the car  
Royal York, four o’clock, right on the dot  
Time for a nice cup of tea, strong and hot.

Waitresses serving in aprons and silk  
Tea trays with honey, cube sugar, and milk  
Jasmine, Darjeeling, Earl Grey Bergamot  
Oolong and Assam, each in its own pot.  
High tea, low tea, cuppa tea, two  
Lemon bars, *madeleines*, *tiramisu*  
Keemun, Ceylon, *chacun à son goût*  
Come in, it’s tea time—time for a brew.

Oolong from China, green tea from Japan  
If you prefer you can have a *tisane*  
Cucumber sandwiches, biscuits, and cake  
Croissants and petits fours, nicest they make.

Triple-tier stands are a triple delight  
Smoked salmon pinwheels on brown bread and white  
Muffins and buns, split and slathered with jam  
Pastries and devilled eggs—please pass the ham.  
High tea, low tea, cuppa tea, two  
Loose tea, bag tea, either will do  
Will you be Mother and pour for the crew?  
Come in, it’s tea time—time for a brew.

Tea kettles whistle when day’s almost gone  
Tea leaves are measured out, water poured on  
Red Rose and Tetley steeped never too long  
Masala chai, smoky lapsang souchong.

“Do you take milk, dear, or lemon—a slice?  
One or two sugars? These tea cakes are nice.”  
Bone china cups you can almost see through  
Milk first or afterwards—it’s up to you.  
High tea, low tea, cuppa tea, two  
You’re just in time for our tea *rendezvous*  
Cuppa tea veteran or rank *ingénue*  
Come in, it’s tea time—time for a brew.