



# Antiquitea

## *Vintage High Teas*



### High Tea Tips

*(Follow these tips and you will successfully create a high tea fit for a queen!)*

The idea is to have everything out (hot/cold food, savouries/sweets, etc, plus piping hot tea in the pots) and ready to go at once, so that your guests arrive to an amazing spread of food that has the 'wow factor'!

If you can, arrange to place the food onto the plates whilst the guests are not around (ideally whilst they are all having a welcome glass of champagne and waiting for everyone to arrive in another area – this usually takes about half an hour). Use your best judgement on how to manage this. You may need to move the serving stands and dishes into a kitchen area and place all the food on them there – and then bring them out and place them on the tables just before tea is served.

If you are placing the food on the plates that we have laid out on the tables for you, be careful not to drop crumbs on the white tablecloths.. if you do, remove them!

#### Food Placement on *Antiquitea* Vintage China

- **3-Tiered Cake Stands** - The general rule is for savoury items to be placed on the bottom tier, scones and cupcakes on the middle tier and the tiny petit fours, baby cakes and tartlets on the top (and smallest) tier.
- **2-Tiered Cake Stands** – Place cakes and scones on the lowest tier and the tiny petit fours, baby cakes and tartlets on the top plate (other savouries and sandwiches can go on the single vintage china serving plates).
- **Sandwich Plates** – Finger sandwiches can be placed on either the lowest tier of a 3-tiered cake stands or, preferably, on the oblong (rectangular)-shaped vintage china sandwich serving plates.
- **Single-Tiered Cake Plates and Vintage China Serving Plates** – These are provided as 'back-up' and pretty much anything can be placed on these – should you run out of space on the stands and sandwich plates. The 'general rule of thumb' is to put the larger items on the larger plates and the petite items on the smaller, dainty serving plates.
- Remember to always put thought into the placement and presentation of the food on the plates.

### Early Preparation

- Milk and cream should be kept in the fridge right up until serving.
- Sandwiches should be kept in the fridge and covered with cling film at all times. To save time, you can neatly place the sandwiches onto the rectangular china sandwich plates then cover them with cling film and store them in the fridge. Put them out on the tables about 20 minutes before your guests arrive and then remove the cling film just before serving (as sandwiches have a tendency to get very dry and crispy very quickly!). Remember: fresh is best!
- Ensure there is plenty of boiling water available for when the tea is to be made.  
*(NB: If you require an urn, remember to book one as early as possible with Antiquitea).*
- Pre-heat your oven(s) and place savoury tartlets/baby muffins/croissants in oven approx. 20 – 25 mins prior to serving (they just need to be warmed through, not burnt or re-cooked!)
- Place leaf tea in teapots as follows:  
**Small:** 2 level teaspoons  
**Medium:** 4 level teaspoons  
**Large:** 5 - 6 level teaspoons (this is the teapot size that is used the most).  
*(NB: The small teapots are usually provided for the guests who prefer herbal tea or something different to the English Breakfast Leaf Tea, which is what is served to the majority of guests). Each small teapot requires 2 teabags).*
- Place sugar cubes in the vintage china sugar bowls.
- Spoon plenty of jam into the vintage china jam serving bowls (these will have been placed on the tables alongside the vintage china cream bowls) – both will have small silver serving spoons next to them.  
*(NB: Our open sugar bowls look the same as the jam and cream bowls – but you can tell the difference by the silver sugar tongs that will be placed beside them).*
- Scones, cakes and tartlets can be placed on the vintage china tiered stands and serving plates first - as they will stay fresher for longer.

### Last Minute Preparation

*(Be prepared for a flurry of activity prior to serving a high tea – and then things get much calmer afterwards!)*

- Place the cold milk in the milk jugs and put them back in position on tables.
- Spoon plenty of freshly whipped cream in the vintage china cream bowls and place them back in position on tables (next to the small silver cream serving spoon).
- Place hot food onto serving dishes and put them back in position on the tables.
- Remove cling film from sandwich serving plates and place back in position on tables.
- Fill each teapot with boiling water and place them back in position on the tables (they need to be near the milk, sugar and silver tea strainer).

### During the High Tea

- The first round of tea will go fairly quickly. The large teapots will serve 6 – 8 cups of tea and then will need refilling with boiling water and placing back on the table.
- If your guests require a 3<sup>rd</sup> pot of tea, they will need fresh tea leaves. Rinse the teapot (with hot tap water – to keep the pot warm), dry it and place fresh teaspoons of leaf tea in them (ie each serving of leaf tea will make two pots of tea.. just re-fill with hot water when the first pot is empty).
- Check the silver tea strainers – if they are looking full, empty them out (out of sight from your guests), clean off any excess tea leaves and then place them back on the table.
- Be aware of the music volume and adjust it if necessary (change CDs when they finish).

### Conclusion of High Tea

- Try not to start clearing anything away until:
  1. The high tea finish time has been reached
  2. Tables have been vacated (guests have left).
- Clear tables and areas where there are no guests. Do all that you can before clearing away tables where guests are still lingering (and only do this if you really need to – it's nice for guests to stay if they are enjoying themselves).
- Empty tea leaves from teapots and scrape food from dishes.
- There is no need to wash any of the china or cutlery. Place it in the kitchen area and *Antiquitea* staff will collect everything and will do all the washing-up for you (off-site).
- Breakages are extremely rare and unlikely. However, if there has been an incident, report it to *Antiquitea* staff.
- Place *Antiquitea* table linen in one area ready for collection.

The idea of a vintage high tea is for your guests to be transported to an era of Edwardian elegance and luxury. Keep the fantasy going by trying to make the experience a seamless, relaxing and enjoyable event that flows beautifully and is one that your guests will never want to end!