Good Conversations Start with Mlesna

Posted on

A cup of tea is never dull. Utterly spiriting, who can deny the gravitational pull of a nice cup of tea, especially when it’s Mlesna? It’s a brand crafted delicately, with nuances of flavors and smells to ooze depth and grace. The tea buff knows the feeling.

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The Mlesna tea story unfolds in many tastes and shapes, that patrons will be spoilt

for choice.

A name that’s outstanding in Sri Lanka’s tea literature, Mlesna teas, crafted by its founder Anselm Perera, are products of the heart. It’s a story of a strong brand built upon a determination to bring to fruition his vision to establish teas of distinctive value. As it turns 40 years in 2023, Mlesna has explored the unchartered and managed to stand out. An enduring relevance built on a journey of expansion and redefining to suit evolving tastes, Mlesna teas exemplify an orchestra of rich blends and flavors. It’s the Ceylon Tea with a difference.

Tea is a simple beverage. Combining the diverse regional varieties for unique blends and flavors is simply “teaspirational.” The delicate flavors of Nuwara Eliya, tangy Uda Pussellawa, rich Dimbulla, and aromatic Uva, Kandy’s intensely full-bodied to distinctly unique Ruhuna, bring individual DNAs to the blending table. Their harmonizing brings out the best in each. At the hands of master blenders, each region’s strength is extracted to create a range of teas, 36 in all, from the famous English Breakfast to Earl Grey to strong and rich brews interspersed with fruity and flowery flavors, spices to healthy herbs.

Mlesna has turned tea buying into an exciting adventure of overwhelming selections. One could begin exploring the vast universe of their teas by trying their versatile packs of regional and blended teas, regular teas, specialty estate black teas, and green and flavored teas. Tasting one at a time, slowly allowing the beverage to murmur through the taste buds, it’s never too late to become a tea connoisseur. After all, it’s true that variety is the spice of life. And Mlesna is a testament to that stirring experience with teas.

Mlesna Tea Center – Dalada Weediya Kandy

Even though tea was never a local staple until the British started growing it in the mountains, Sri Lankans have embraced it as if it’s a beverage of their own. So addicted are natives to tea that it’s not only desired at any time of the day, it’s the go-to beverage for whisking one off the ground. Tea is such an uplifter of moods that one can tolerate any baloney or oddities. It’s a harmless binge drink that is refreshingly stimulating and amazingly restoring. No wonder amid the rush of people and vehicles in Kandy city, the charming old building that nestles the Mlesna

Tea Center and restaurant is dubbed calm and quiet. Satisfied patrons describe it as one of the best places to hang out. The building's all-white façade is beautifully pitched with arched wooden doors and glass panes of European design that elevate it into something magnificent, characterful, and romantic. The building beautifully exudes old-world charm, distinctive aesthetics, and an ethos that fuses with Kandy's colonial history.

Inside the store, one sees Mlesna's signature interior design of gray brick walls and wooden fixtures with ample illumination to choose from the extensive range of tea packs. The compact interior is easy to navigate as the seasoned sales assistants help visitors walk through a garden of teas. They guide them through the tea dictionary and help visitors make wise tea choices, whether the lighter Victorian Blend, the Loolecondera for a stronger cup, or the gift-worthy Sensation range of regional and regular tea varieties. Like the throng of feet outside, the Dalada Weediya store is swarmed with packs big and small, compact and handy, colorful and striking. They are practical assemblages for consumption and gifting. Of course, the discerning visitors will be satisfied with the more stylish options of porcelain ware of gold and platinum-edged teapots and accessories. Decorated animal figurines and souvenirs, elegant wooden boxes, and chic metal caddies, a clutter of colors in their packaging serves to satisfy diverse tastes of bold and subdued gift options.

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A narrow staircase leads patrons to a small cozy eating space. It's where savories and sandwiches could be washed down with a choice of English Breakfast Tea, flavored teas, health teas, or iced teas. A cup of tea with the cake range will be good too. Any space, whether big or small, can be the perfect retreat for pleasant moments and happy conversations so long as they exude harmony with the sentiments of its patrons.

Mlesna Tea Center – Kandy City Center

A nook in a mighty mall best describes the Mlesna Tea Center at the sprawling Kandy City Center, the cynosure of the Central Province. The mall's vibrancy fails to

clutter the quiet vibe inside the tea store and the adjacent snack bar, where there is room for teas and conversations. First impressions matter in any business. This interior doesn’t renege from capturing the right ambiance, lighting, and arrangement to wanting to stay on to delve through the fantastic range of teas. The artistic choices are just right to sway customers in their favor.

A passageway decorated with elegant glass panels on either side divides the store and the snack bar, the elegance wrought by the wooden walls on both sides. It’s a blend of minimalism with comfort and style. Tea inspiration, of course, is at the core of the decor. The store’s interior is stacked with tea display racks set against wooden walls with unobtru- sive details of pictures and tea-related ornaments complementing the overall concept.

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The good thing about buying tea at a Mlesna store is that everyone purchases the most suitable tea for one’s taste. That courtesy extends to helping patrons select a tea that suits the taste of the person it’s being bought for gifting. So resourceful are the Mlesna shop’s assistants that their guidance is meticulous because they know their teas well. They are nothing short of tea all-rounders, attentive and confident in their knowledge, helping every patron to choose from the exceptional range of general and specialty teas.

At KCC’s Mlesna Tea Center, the Romance porcelain tea set of a pot, two cups, and saucers with pure Ceylon Tea in line red, vintage blue, green, and black designs is a delightful new couple ensemble ideal for a wedding gift. For the singles, the Executive Tea Set borders on contemporary austereness. Cast iron tea kettles reminiscent of Japanese tea-drinking tradition suit the discerning connoisseur. The connoisseur appreciates the refinement tea drinking brings to the taste buds in a cast iron kettle, leaving a better after-taste. Mlesna’s over-the-top and ornate high-end gold and platinum porcelain tea wares will undoubtedly be show-stoppers at tea parties and ceremonies. At the same time, the assortment of souvenir-wor- thy curios of sundry animals is nothing short of melodramatic.

There is artisanry not only in the tea-laden porcelain, wood, and metal packaging.

Craftsmanship extends to churning out some of the best blends and flavored teas that only a tea encyclopedia would help understand their distinctions.

The snack bar overlooking the store is modest and warmly welcoming, serving hot dogs, juicy burgers, French fries, and satisfyingly savory sandwiches. The native grated coconut relish of Pol Sambol with cheese, egg, or delectable crepes wrapped around grated coconut dipped in treacle are superlative, and so are waffles, French Toast, delicious snacks like patties and crispy samosas, and a chock-full of creamy cakes, utterly irresistible to satisfy those sugar cravings. All that consuming could be followed by a fine cup of Mlesna tea to wash it all down, or even a decadent milkshake will be the ultimate hunger filler. Mlesna’s little café space is a place of contrasts, warm and relaxed, at the same time buzzy with no hyperbole. Here, it’s the food that packs a real punch.

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Mlesna Tea Fortress – Kiribathkumbura, Kandy

Historically fortresses were places of intense human activity. They are symbols of astonishing architecture. Marvels that awaken our imagination to the depths of whimsical dramas of romance and fairytales, intrigue, and stories of valor. Fortresses are stately edifices that command attention. And so it is with the Mlesna Tea Fortress, an attention-grabbing sprawling structure with gray-bricked walls and a large model tea dispenser on the busy A1 highway.

The Mlesna Tea Fortress has been the tea citadel on Kandy Road since 2005. Amid manicured garden plots on either side, the pathway leads to an entrance with a beautifully carved moonstone and an arch-shaped doorway where staff members glee- fully greet visitors to the chants of Ayubowan. The Fortress abides by its tea theme in displaying chapters from Sri Lanka’s colonial tea-growing days in black and white pictures, wooden tea boxes, an antique tea weighing scale, and brass tea filters. Built into a rock, the atrium is where the light seeps in, and water flows into a pond.

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The restaurant on the upper floor opens to the atrium and a pleasant view of flowing water.

Like all its tea stores, the Fortress shop is a veritable repository of teas. It’s more accommodating and spacious for browsing through the profusion. There are bulk packs of loose tea in cloth bags and glossy foil packs. Handy boxes of small quantities of loose tea of many blends are ideal for gifting. Loose tea and tea bags morphed into arrays of single-origin teas from estates and regions, blended regional teas, specialty teas, and flavored teas. Orange pekoe blends epitomize the best of gourmet Ceylon Tea. Mlesna’s new Victorian Blend Superior is a fusion of premium quality Orange Pekoe that churns up a delicate tea for relaxing. The Loolecondera BOP Fannings is another preferred full-bodied intense tea specifically designed for drinking with milk. Fruit-flavored teas are much-desired health elixirs. Naturally, when it fuses one’s favorite fruit with tea and promises to make way for better health and deliver disease-fighting benefits. Mlesna’s fruit flavor-infused teas combine a subtle sweetness of fruits with a tartness that makes a difference to tea drinking.

If the Fortress is Mlesna’s royalty, its restaurant will help you eat like one. A bridge across the natural rock leads to the spacious restaurant, where there’s a capacity for 50 guests. The food is a celebration of many flavors ranging from eastern to western, a meeting of different worlds where modest potions to heartier fares leave cherished tastes. Breakfast at seven o’clock could start with Sri Lanka’s favorite string hoppers, Pol Roti, and signature accompaniments or be English or continental downed with a cup of Mlesna tea. All it takes to serve fresh food made by a group of in-house chefs is 20 minutes. It’s a mouthwatering array of fresh salads and warm and comforting soups. From grilled, fried, and devilled dishes to succulent seafood to spice-rich Sri Lankan rice and curry to aromatic spaghetti infused with bright flavors to delightful desserts and decadent milkshakes, they are hand-curated with precision and quality. Their tea menu is as alluring as the food, premium BOPs, silver tip, flavored, and specialties. Traditional Sri Lankan ginger tea served with fresh ginger and jaggery is the quintessentially all-time favorite. Tea makes good conversations and even expeditions into the world of tea. So, their teas weave magic and speak to the soul, enamoring the drinker into wanting more of it. And so

guided by the restaurant staff, patrons get their quota of their favorite teas from the store below.

The Mlesna Tea Fortress delivers an exceptional culinary and sensory experience. But it’s the tea that makes the difference. That’s what conjures the feeling of home, enjoyed sip by sip.

A cup of tea lulls us into contemplation to take a step back and appreciate our surroundings. Tea is what transports us into a realm of comfort and magically awakens the senses. Mlesna Tea is built on such an ethos. It’s meant to exude a sense of home. Not just make tea but make it meditative. A ritual of inhaling its scent while drinking slowly. Whether at home, work, or in a teashop, there’s beauty in a cup of tea, intensity, gracefulness, and sweetness combined in a single moment.



Explore the World of Mlesna – The Dalada Weediya, Kandy Mlesna Tea Center, and

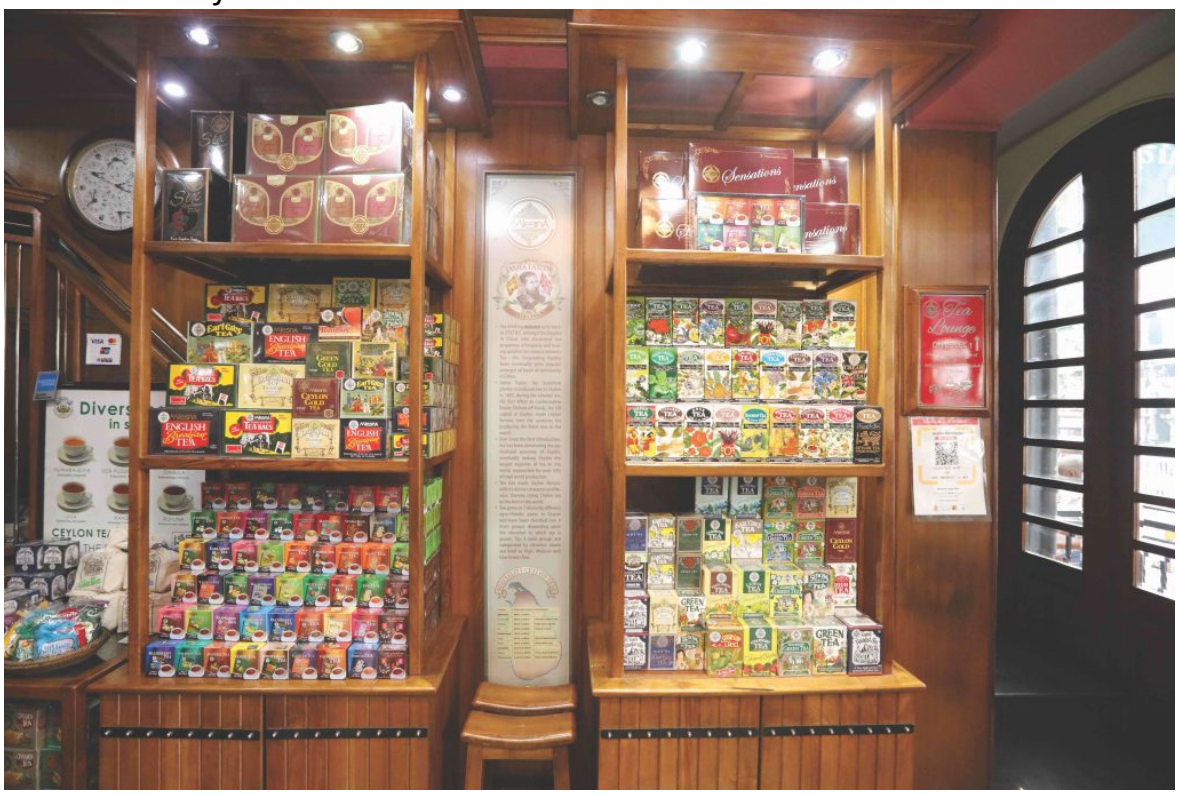
Restaurant are set in the hustle and bustle of Kandy town.


RICH BREW
TEA
STRONG BREW
TEA
Mlesna

High-grown teas for a strong and rich brew.



A modern day Tea Samovar.



Teeming with tea – The Kandy Mlesna Tea Center boasts the colors and flavors of a variety of teas.



For the tea connoisseur and collector – Gold/ platinum plated & fine porcelain teaware and souvenirs.



Eye-catching and meticulous arrangements of tea varieties.



Serving in style – Patrons enjoying tea in style at the KCC Mlesna Tea Center



Imposing façade – The Mlesna Tea Fortress epitomizes its name.


TEA
AMBAGASDOWA
TEA
ST. JAMES
TEA
UVA HIGHLANDS
TEA
LABOOKELAIR

The Mlesna Tea Centers reflect the founder’s passion for tea as collectibles adorn every store.



The friendly and courteous assistants at the Mlesna Tea Center know their teas.



Tea Fortress has a spacious space for relaxing with an extensive menu suited to diverse palettes.



The restaurant at the Tea Fortress provides a refreshing break on a long journey to the Hill Country.



Serving the best teas – A strong cup of tea is the tonic to regain that sagging energy.