

Audioscript

Listen to the text and mark the sentences 1–10 True, False or Not Stated.

You will hear the text twice.

You have 30 seconds to look at the questions.

(Pause 30 seconds)

Now we are ready to start.

Tea was introduced to Russia in 1640 when the Russian ambassador boyarin Vasily Starkov returned from the Mongol horde and brought a gift of 200 tea packages, 500 grammes each, to tsar Mikhail Fedorovich Romanov. It was praised for its medicinal powers and ability to refresh and to purify the blood. Starkov himself didn't like the taste of the drink but he feared the tsar's anger and brought it to court. There are different legends about the way Romanov felt about the exotic foreign drink. One of them claims the tsar liked it and exclaimed 'More!' But many historians hold the opposite opinion because tea trade did not start in Moscow until 36 years later.

The next shipment of tea arrived from China. In 1679 Russia and China signed a special tea treaty. In the beginning tea was very expensive and only rich people could afford it. Also very few people knew the secrets of its brewing.

Traditionally, common Russian people drank forest herbal teas – vzvars – made of herbs, dried leaves and fruits.

But very soon tea had become very popular, and now Russians could not imagine their lives without it. It was also noted that tea would keep one awake during a long church service.

By the 18th century, tea was part and parcel of Russian life and had become very much a national drink. Family affairs were settled around the tea table. Asking one to sit down to tea became a traditional sign of hospitality. Tradition demanded that the water be boiled in a samovar if possible. Russian tea is served with a lump of sugar and lemon, along with various jams and preserves, honey and Russian cookies or pies. People in the West even call tea served with lemon Russian tea.

Now you have 30 seconds to fulfil the task.

(Pause 30 seconds)

Now listen again and check your answers.

(The recording is repeated)

Now you have 20 seconds to check your answers.

(Pause 20 seconds)

This is the end of the listening comprehension task.