

## Paula's Sugar-Free Sweet Tea

7 or so cups cold water  
1 family-size decaf Luzianne tea bag  
2 – 3 decaf English Breakfast tea bags  
2 – 4 decaf green tea bags  
1 Earl Grey tea bag (optional)  
¼ teaspoon baking soda (optional)  
Liquid Splenda or equivalent to taste

Place teabags in cold water (the amount of water doesn't really matter) and bring to a boil. As soon as it starts to boil, remove from heat.



If you opt for the baking soda, add it to the tea very slowly so the pan doesn't boil over. Place the lid on the pan and steep tea for about 10 minutes.

Remove teabags and let tea cool; add ice if you want to speed up cooling. When cool, add Splenda or equivalent; if you like fruit or herbs in your tea—lemons, oranges, peaches, raspberries, mint, basil—add them now. You'll need to adjust the amount of sweetener for your taste. If the tea is too strong, add more ice next time.

## Sugar-Free Sweet Tea in the Iced Teamaker

Follow the directions for the teamaker; the recipe above is what I use in ours, adding baking soda and sweetener to the pitcher before brewing. It takes a bit of planning to squeeze all those bags into the basket; be sure to remove the string and paper tags.

## Paula's Notes

The Earl Grey is optional, but it adds an interesting note to the tea without being overwhelming; any other flavored tea bag works, too. An occasional flavor twist keeps it interesting. If you like green tea or you're willing to pay the premium for the really smooth stuff, definitely use more. Baking soda makes the tea darker and removes any bitterness; you may be able to use more green tea by adding baking soda.

If you use stevia, add a tablespoon or so of leaves with the tea or pack it in the basket of the teamaker according to your taste. More often we use a liquid sucralose such as Liquid Splenda; I use a teaspoon to please Chet (that's equivalent to one-third cup of sugar), then add a few more drops to my glass because I like it really sweet. To make it Southern-restaurant sweet, you may need 2 teaspoons or more per pitcher. You'll have to experiment to find the right sweetness for your taste. The tea is always smoother after it sits in the fridge for a few hours, so this is a task you can finish early if you're entertaining.