



[www.TheSwissTeaSommelier.ch](http://www.TheSwissTeaSommelier.ch)

## **Afternoon Tea in Zurich 2020/2021**

There is a craze for Afternoon Tea at hotels in London and the heavy competition is the driving force behind many a beautiful idea. In Zurich, there is much less demand for Afternoon Tea. Hence, you could be thinking there is little need to excel. The following places, however, do a job that ranges from fairly decent to seriously impressive:

## Carlton

(Bahnhofstrasse 41, 8001 Zürich; 044 227 19 19)

From September to May, i.e. all year round with the exception of 3 months (and maybe December when most people run up and down Bahnhofstrasse in search of presents and, therefore, are not relaxed enough), the Carlton offers a very nice Afternoon Tea indeed. The tea menu is a notable exception in that it is well written, too. The teas are explained in detail and the more than fair selection comprises both renowned teas as well as rare ones. Their three-tiered stand is filled with an impressive selection of sandwiches, cakes and biscuits, small tartlets and mini glasses with vanilla cream. To top it all off, the scones and their usual accompaniments are served as a separate course. And just when you feel well pampered, your waitress will appear at the table with a small portion of bread & butter pudding.

Ask for someone to show you how to remove the sieve with loose tea before the time is up and your tea has turned bitter. The Carlton pots are cleverly designed and even heated up prior to serving. Now this is attention to detail !



## Park Hyatt Zürich

(Beethovenstrasse 21, 8002 Zürich; 043 883 10 15)

The Afternoon Tea at the Park Hyatt Zurich is a bit of a find. On their website it hides well among the 'Area Attractions' such as a visit to the Kunsthau, shopping in Bahnhofstrasse, or a boat cruise on the Limmat. However, if you do find it and manage to place a reservation at least 48 hours in advance, you'll be more than happy with your discovery.



The presentation of the three-tiered stand is one of the best in Zurich. A lot of work has visibly gone into creating all these mouth-watering cakes, sandwiches and confectionaries. The scones have become pleasant, bite-sized cubes – two bites when laden with jam and lemon-mascarpone mousse – and both the variety with as well as the one without raisins are on offer.

What is equally impressive is their choice of tea and how it is served. Gone are the days of tea bags. Loose tea by the world-renowned French tea merchant Mariage Frères can now be found throughout the extensive tea menu. It comes in clear glass pots so that you can appreciate the colour of the tea, and all you need to do is to push down the piston after the desired brewing time. This will separate the leaves from the water and thus avoid rendering the liquid in the tea pot a bitter drink.

Work is currently under way so guests can order a Japanese matcha in a traditional chawan and have it whisked up at their table. This will be quite a spectacle.

## The Dolder Grand

(Kurhausstrasse 65, 8032 Zürich; 044 456 60 00)

Their main web page lures you with the promise that their concierge team will make almost anything possible. Almost anything except Afternoon Tea, that is, if your visit is not on a weekend and not between November and February. If you manage, however, to suit to their requests (and I always thought at such high-end establishments it was the other way round), then you will be rewarded with a nice Afternoon Tea in the lobby, complete with beautiful crockery and a respectable view across Zurich.





## Widder Hotel

(Widdergasse; 044 224 25 26)

Afternoon Tea at the Widder Hotel has been on quite a journey. It used to be served stylishly in their library. From there, it was removed and had a short stint in their cosy upstairs restaurant. Then it went two floors down, and the last time I sampled it was in the famous Widder Bar (Entry through Widdergasse 6).

Along this journey, the originally English invention has received not just a new twist but but a visually stunning Japanese look and comes complete with chopsticks (in addition to European cutlery for those less acquainted with eating using hashi):



The Afternoon Tea Bento, listed on the website in the events section, is a wonderful feast for tongue and eyes, but only lasted from November 2018 to March 2019 and then made a seasonally restricted reappearance from mid-October 2019 to end of March 2020. Will it reappear next winter ?

You will need to place your reservation at least 24h in advance. You are also well-advised to remove the sieve from your (Tetsubin ?) tea pots and to ask for a dish to place it in before time runs out. Otherwise, there is a high chance your tea will turn bitter. There is a good selection of teas, but curiously enough it still does not comprise a single Japanese tea, which would tie in rather well with the idea of serving the lovely nibbles in a Japanese bento box.

## Les Gourmandises de Miyuko

(Beckenhofstrasse 7/9, 8006 Zürich; 044 350 21 43)

This is one of the few places where Afternoon Tea is served all year round. Les Gourmandises de Miyuko is a small café whose owner has a strong penchant for all things Japanese. You will also find yourself at ease if you want vegan, vegetarian or gluten-free food – provided that you can find a seat. It is always fully booked and you stand little chance of finding a free space unless you have booked over the internet and well in advance.



# Baur au Lac

(Talstrasse 1, 8001 Zürich; 044 220 50 64)

The website of the Baur au Lac shows a video (during the entire year) in which a white-gloved waiter lays the table, then delicately places a three-tiered stand. This is followed by two glasses of champagne, an elegant pouring of tea and mouth-watering little cakes. It is only when you visit the hotel that you discover that Afternoon Tea is solely served from mid-October to March.



The ad

Afternoon tea for one





## Hotel Eden au Lac

(Utoquai 45, 8008 Zürich; 044 266 25 25)

It is not advertised very well, but they [used to] do a classic Afternoon Tea with a traditional three-tiered stand and a good selection of Ronnefeldt teas.



Addendum: As per July 2017, there has been a change. The crustless sandwiches have had to make way for baguette slices (nicely decorated though) and the tea selection (above described as “good”) has been cut back to a barmy choice of 5 different kinds of tea bags advertised as loose tea. (Is this because the tea leaves are allowed to float around loosely within the tea bag?). In addition to the English afternoon tea, there is now also an innovative Asian afternoon tea, where the sandwich tier is replaced by a dim sum basket.

Addendum 2: The hotel is currently being renovated and is due to re-open ~~in 2019~~ in spring 2020

Addendum 3: After suffering several delays, the hotel is now again open for business. Albeit, it is currently unclear whether the Afternoon Tea has been axed. To add insult to injury, the first handful of reviewers on Tripadvisor were anything but happy with the offerings, and so the La Réserve Eden au Lac has dropped to place 122 out of 137 hotels in Zurich. What appears to have made it back onto the menu is a tea bag for Sfr. 7.-.