

As I see it, green tea is wholly and profoundly perfect as a genre of tea. Needless to say that I owe the *Camellia sinensis* plant (it is imperative that I am scientific about my tea, and that includes binomial nomenclature) more than a few thank you's for the hundreds of cups it has provided me with, but this is not the point. I will take my green tea in precisely one way—hovering over the fuzzy, liminal border between lukewarm and truly warm and accompanied by a Goldilocks-esque serving of honey.

The complication of brewing a flawless cup of green tea according to my (non negotiable and golden) standard is that it is rather difficult to tell if the tea is the perfect temperature while also discerning whether the tea and honey have reached the ratio that generates the most harmonious synergy. And while electrons and tea are not commonly said to have much in common, I venture to disagree. Quite the same way Heisenberg put forth the notion that the position and momentum of an electron cannot be known simultaneously, I propose that the temperature and flavor of tea cannot both be known simultaneously. Taste buds, containing taste receptor cells, which themselves contain G Protein-Coupled Receptors, are the offenders in the drama. The GCPRs in taste buds are affected both by chemical and thermal signals, and the taste profile of the tea can be altered (to a degree) by how hot the tea may be.

Hot tea is a term I use incredibly loosely, because to most people, my version of “hot tea” would simply not be considered hot at all. So in the interest of time, which is always of the essence as I scramble around the kitchen at half past seven in the morning before I'm off to class, I do not wait for the water to reach a full boil. It takes longer to reach a boil, and it would also take longer to recede from the scalding temperature that would be utterly unacceptable to my (apparently thermally weak) taste buds. In a similar fashion, it is difficult to gauge the proper

amount of honey to add to the green tea given that the size of the mug I employ changes on the daily.

So I am left with the solitary option that is to take a gamble on my preliminary taste, both in regards to its temperature and its sweetness. And if I wager incorrectly, the results are dastardly! If the tea is hotter than is ideal, thermal signals could alter my perception of the sweetness of the tea, and leave me disappointed once it cools. But if the tea is cool enough for me to be entirely certain of its exemplary sweetness, it has already become lukewarm if not cool, which not even I would venture to classify as a preferable state. I have attempted to devise methods to remedy the dilemma (you may envision this as a slightly maddened girl furiously brewing tea), but most have fallen short. One cannot simply measure the honey without forgetting to account for the variance of mug size and thus tea volume, nor can one set a timer and wait a set amount of time for the tea to cool, as greater volumes of tea also cool slower and lesser volumes cool faster as a result of their surface area to volume ratios.

The days when my luck is good and I finagle myself into green tea perfection are few and far between, and most days I end up choking down a less-than-ideal mug (oh, the plight of a tea-lover). But if green tea is the science I believe it to be, then perhaps through vast experimentation I will find the pattern of nature that governs it at some point. Or perhaps, I will simply acquire a kettle that displays the temperature.