

# Ceylon Tea: Analytical Laboratory and Tea Tasting Unit

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The small island nation of Sri Lanka is the world's fourth largest producer of and, following only Kenya, the second largest exporter of tea. The lion's share of exported tea is orthodox (traditionally manufactured) black. Production in 2016 reached approximately 265 million kg ~ 90% of which is exported.

Renowned for high-quality, clean tea, Sri Lanka's prominent global placement is no small feat. It involves the finely coordinated efforts of many entities including but not limited to the gardens, the pickers, the factories, the handlers, the brokers, the exporters and the Sri Lanka Tea Board which is the umbrella regulatory, administrative and promotional body of the Ceylon tea industry.

As discussed in the February 13, 2017 blog post entitled The Sri Lanka Tea Board - PureCeylonTea.com, the six divisions of the Sri Lanka Tea Board include:

- The Head Office in Colombo
- The Promotion Division
- The Market Intelligence & Resources Division
- The Tea Commissioner's Division
- The Tea Tasting Unit
- The Analytical Laboratory



The Tea Tasting Unit and the Analytical Laboratory act in tandem. The Tea Tasting Unit, made up of a panel of expert independent tasters, examines samples provided by traders, exporters and

others to ensure the quality meets the standards necessary to qualify them for the famous Lion logo that identifies pure Ceylon tea (see Ceylon Tea = Lion Logo post dated February 6, 2017). The unit undertakes price ratification of private sales, direct sales, forward contracts and the issuing of quality certificates.

Also involved in marketing and public relation functions, the professionals in the Tea Tasting Unit conduct tasting sessions and classes and help raise the awareness of the art of tea making for local and foreign guests. While visiting the Sri Lanka Tea Board, Gail Gastelu and Linda Villano were invited to a private tasting session at the Tea Tasting Unit. . .



*The Tasting Unit - Photo credit top & right SerendipiTea, left The Tea House Times*

The Analytical Laboratory was established in 1986 to check and certify the quality of Ceylon tea. The Laboratory tests and certifies tea samples in terms of chemical, pesticide and microbial standards. Professionals in this division are committed to advising, monitoring, inspecting and guiding to achieve and maintain high standards of quality in final product of Ceylon tea. All activities of Analytical Laboratory complies with the ISO 17025:2005 Standard and the requirements of Sri Lanka Accreditation Board.

What is ISO? Headquartered in Geneva, Switzerland, ISO (International Organization for Standardization) is an independent, non-governmental international organization with a membership of 164 [national standards bodies](#).



The ISO website informs us that “Through its members, it brings together experts to share knowledge and develop voluntary, consensus-based, market relevant International Standards that support innovation and provide solutions to global challenges. International Standards make things work. They give world-class specifications for products, services and systems, to ensure quality, safety and efficiency. They are instrumental in facilitating international trade. ISO has published 21,517 [International Standards](#) and related documents, covering almost every industry, from technology, to food safety, to agriculture and healthcare. ISO International Standards impact everyone, everywhere.”

The Sri Lanka Tea Board’s Analytical Laboratory operates ISO/IEC 17025-accredited, state-of-the-art labs with world class laboratory facilities at its permanent location, in the New Laboratory building of Sri Lanka Tea Board situated at 574/1, Galle Road, Colombo 03, Sri Lanka, where separate floors are assigned for each unit specific to their function and/or operations, Microbiological Analysis Unit, Chemical Analysis Unit and Pesticide Residue Analysis Unit.

For more about the pristine Ceylon tea process from garden to factory to auction to your cup find a feature article entitled Ceylon Tea ~ Clean Tea in a future edition of The Tea House Times’ bi-monthly publication.

Keep watching this blog for more about Ceylon tea.

*This post was prepared by Linda Villano, [SerendipiTea](#), reporting for The Tea House Times.*

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