



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Murang'a Purple Tea Debuts in Paris as Kenya Advances Global Recognition of its Unique Tea Heritage

Paris, France, June 23, 2026: Kenya's distinctive Purple Tea has made its debut in Paris, marking a significant milestone in the global positioning of one of Africa's most unique specialty teas and underscoring Kenya's growing ambition to move beyond commodity exports into premium, origin-led agricultural markets.

Unveiled at the iconic Hôtel de Crillon, the showcase introduced French consumers, tea experts, and industry stakeholders to a product celebrated for its rarity, vibrant character, floral aromas, subtle fruit notes, and naturally high antioxidant content.

The unveiling follows a landmark agreement signed during the Africa Forward Summit between Gatanga Industries, Palais des Thés and Equity Group, aimed at expanding market access for Kenyan specialty tea and connecting producers directly to premium international consumers.

Cultivated on the fertile volcanic slopes of Kenya's central highlands, particularly in Murang'a County, Purple Tea represents a new frontier for the country's tea industry as producers pursue value addition through premium branding, traceability, and origin recognition.

Beyond the tea cup, Kenyan specialty tea is increasingly being incorporated into premium consumer products. At the G7 Summit in Évian, France, chefs from the Élysée Palace created a dark chocolate infused with Kenyan Grand Cru tea selected by Palais des Thés. The collaboration showcased how Kenyan tea can be transformed into high-value products that appeal to discerning international consumers, reinforcing the importance of value addition in expanding market opportunities for Kenyan producers.

Equity Group Managing Director and CEO Dr. James Mwangi said the unveiling reflects a decisive shift in how Kenya positions its tea on the global stage.

"Kenyan tea needs a distinct sub-identity and strong geographical identity. What we are witnessing is the beginning of a journey to transform tea from a commodity into a premium product. Moving from commodity pricing to premium value demonstrates the scale of opportunity for farmers. This transformation has the potential to improve farmers' livelihoods, expand access to education and healthcare for their children, and enable meaningful investment at the household level," he said.

Dr. Mwangi added: "Ultimately, this initiative extends far beyond tea. It is a change in how Kenya approaches agriculture, a transformation of farming practices, and a new way of creating value for farmers and the country. This is the new Kenya."

Palais des Thés Founder and Chairman François-Xavier Delmas welcomed the milestone, noting that it signals the beginning of a broader expansion of Kenyan specialty tea in international markets.



“This is only the first step. We have been working to increase the visibility and value of Kenyan tea, promoting and marketing it in France and across other European markets. In this effort, geographical indications are an extremely valuable tool, helping consumers identify and appreciate the unique origin and quality of the product. We are here not only to celebrate Kenyan farmers, but also to strengthen the friendship between Kenya and France and create new opportunities for premium Kenyan products globally,” he said.

Kenya’s Ambassador to France, Hon. Betty Chebet Cherwon, said the initiative reflects the growing economic partnership between Kenya and France and the importance of value addition in strengthening trade between the two countries.

“Kenya and France share a strong and growing economic partnership. What we are witnessing today is an important step towards a more balanced trade relationship by promoting value addition, branding, and market access for Kenyan specialty teas. This partnership demonstrates how Kenyan products can move beyond raw exports to capture greater value in international markets. By opening new opportunities for Kenyan specialty teas in premium international markets, we are creating value for farmers, strengthening trade, and deepening economic cooperation between our two countries,” said Hon. Betty Chebet Cherwon, Kenya’s Ambassador to France.

Equity Group Holdings Non-Executive Chairman Prof. Isaac Macharia said the launch demonstrates the power of partnerships in unlocking new opportunities for farmers and strengthening Kenya’s position in global value chains.

“This launch demonstrates what is possible when farmers, industry partners, financial institutions, and international markets work together around a shared vision. By positioning Kenyan specialty tea in premium global markets, we are not only enhancing the value of our agricultural products but also creating sustainable economic opportunities that can transform rural communities and strengthen Kenya’s competitiveness on the global stage,” said Prof. Isaac Macharia, Non-Executive Chairman of Equity Group Holdings.

The Paris debut comes as Kenya advances efforts to secure Geographical Indication (GI) status for its specialty Purple Tea. GI protection recognizes products whose qualities and reputation are intrinsically linked to a specific place of origin, strengthening authenticity, and enabling more competitive pricing in premium markets.

For consumers, GI certification provides assurance of provenance and quality. For producers and farming communities, it strengthens market differentiation and creates pathways to improved returns from premium products.

The unveiling also reflects a broader shift in global consumer behavior toward products defined by provenance, authenticity, and traceability. Increasingly, specialty buyers want products that carry a clear story about the place, and the people who produce them.

--ENDS--



About Palais des Thés

Founded in 1986 by François-Xavier Delmas, Palais des Thés is a French tea house renowned for its direct-sourcing model. Driven by a 40-year commitment to sharing the finest teas, the brand maintains rigorous ethical standards in the selection and virtuous production of high-quality teas. With expert teams of Tea Sommeliers, Palais des Thés provides passionate guidance across a selection of more than 200 teas and herbal teas in its 140 stores across France and internationally. For more information, visit <https://www.palaisdesthes.com/en/about-us/> and François-Xavier Delmas' blog: <https://www.discoveringtea.com/>

About Equity Group Holdings PLC:

Equity Group Holdings Plc. is a Pan-African financial services holding company listed at the Nairobi Securities Exchange, Uganda Securities Exchange, and Rwanda Stock Exchange. The Group has banking subsidiaries in Kenya, DRC, Rwanda, Uganda, Tanzania, South Sudan, and a Commercial Representative Office in Ethiopia. It has other subsidiaries in investment banking, insurance, telecom, fintech and social impact investments delivered via Equity Group Foundation. Equity Group is the largest integrated financial services firm in the region with a market capitalization of USD 2 billion.

The Group has an asset base of USD 15.7 Billion, a customer base of 22.7 million supported by a footprint of 409 branches, 86,910 Agents, over 1.4 million Pay with Equity (PWE) merchants, 39,296 Point-of-Sale (POS) Merchants, 881 ATMs and an extensive adoption of digital banking channel.

The Bank's strong liquidity buffers, resilient funding profile, established domestic presence, and extensive use of digital and alternative distribution channels have earned it significant recognition. In 2026, it was named Africa's Strongest Banking Brand by Brand Finance, achieving a Brand Strength Index (BSI) of 93.9 out of 100 and an AAA+ rating, and ranking among the global top 10 strongest banking brands.

The Group was also recognized as a Superbrand in East Africa (2024–2026), affirming its commitment to quality, reliability, and excellence in the financial services sector.