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PRESS KIT

Company Backgrounder – Executive Bios – Insights on Tea

Company Backgrounder

- [The Tea Spot, Inc.™](#) is a leading producer of handcrafted whole leaf teas and creator of Steepware®—the housewares tools that make your daily tea practice easy and fun. The company's mission to empower healthy living through tea fuels their 10% Pledge to cancer & community wellness.
- The Tea Spot's vision to modernize the loose leaf tea experience has held steadfast since the for-profit philanthropic company was founded by Maria Uspenski in 2004, a cancer survivor drawn to the health benefits of leaf tea during her recovery. Her message is simple and powerful: Tea in its freshest form renders premium flavor, unmatched health benefits, and is eco-friendly. Uspenski is the author of [Cancer Hates Tea](#), published by Page Street Books in 2016.
- The Tea Spot's premium, award-winning loose tea blends are micro-blended in small batches. The company's inspiring hot and cold brew teas rise up to meet the challenges of modern life. Whether it's a kick to get you going in the morning or just a small escape from the stresses of the day, at The Tea Spot there's a handcrafted tea that's perfect for every moment. With full-leaf teas, botanicals and functional teas, the company has evolved age-old traditions to allow exquisite flavor and good health to collide in every cup.
- Steepware are The Tea Spot's tools for the emerging American loose-tea drinker who wants a simple and convenient way to make a perfect cup of tea anytime, anyplace. These tools bring modern convenience to loose leaf tea, so tea lovers can enjoy premium healthy tea daily. The Tea Spot's line of modern teaware include a unique array of single and multiple serving tea steeping products – all designed to make loose leaf tea easy for healthy living – be that at home, in the office, or on the-go. All Steepware is lead free and BPA free.



- The company's model of social entrepreneurship incorporates its mission to foster health and wellness through loose leaf tea with its 10% Pledge. Ten percent of every sale is donated in-kind to cancer and community wellness programs. To date they have touched more than 100,000 lives through their 10% Pledge.
- The Tea Spot is a Boulder, Colorado-based woman owned and operated business. To purchase online or to learn more about The Tea Spot, visit TheTeaSpot.com. Wholesale, corporate gifting and co-branding options are also available to organizations, including retailers, grocery and natural food stores, and the outdoor and fitness industry, among others.

Executive Bios

- **Maria Uspenski is the founder of The Tea Spot**, where her mission is to advance and empower healthy living through tea. Uspenski is the author of [Cancer Hates Tea](#) (published by Page Street Books in 2016), and she was recognized as the “Top Tea Health Advocate” at the 2017 World Tea Expo. She’s been featured in leading media outlets for her success as a social entrepreneur and as a certified tea and fitness nutrition expert.
- **Jessica Kochik is CMO of The Tea Spot**. With over 10-years of experience at the company, Kochik heads-up brand management, marketing and eCommerce initiatives. Her role at The Tea Spot builds upon her previous decade spent in project management and scientific research, honing analytical skills and a numbers-based approach. She’s thrilled to combine her love of tea with her love of analytics in digital marketing.
- **Mary Allard is director of business development at The Tea Spot**. With a dynamic educational background in business, nutrition and psychology studies, Allard brings a holistic approach to developing partnerships and creating brand awareness. Her personal passion for tea runs deep, especially in relation to the healthful properties that tea and herbs provide naturally.

Insights on Tea

- **Maria Uspenski, CEO of [The Tea Spot](#) and author of [Cancer Hates Tea](#), believes tea is having a real moment right now, and it's becoming the new coffee.** She says, “I feel that we're entering the



renaissance of tea in the United States, with more and more people making the transition from dusty tea bags towards premium whole leaf tea. With the consumer interest and knowledge that are fueling this evolution, we're seeing an explosion of ways to combine the traditions of premium tea with the convenience of modern lifestyles. People no longer want to compromise completely on quality for convenience. With the increasingly global availability of premium teas, and with the advent of innovative teaware designs – geared toward making whole leaf teas easier to steep at home, in the office and on-the-go – western consumers can now enjoy a closer connection than ever before to the origin of the tea leaf.”

- **Uspenski is seeing a lot of innovation with tea.** “The trend towards functional ingredients in tea blends is exploding right now,” she says. “I feel the surge of this wave dovetailed immediately following the spike in green tea, and particularly matcha a few years ago. This trend won’t be going away anytime soon, because the awareness and perception of tea as a healthy beverage is what still drives many new consumers its way. Another significant trend in tea, especially strong in foodservice, is the cold brew phenomenon, which follows right on the heels of the same trend in coffee. Every boutique premium teahouse, and even most major foodservice tea outlets are now offering cold brewed options for iced tea. Its smooth and subtle flavor profile, combined with the ease and consistency in preparation, make cold brew tea a perfect choice for premium restaurants and cafes. This is a trend which is becoming more prevalent and touted in a consumer-ready bottled tea options as well.”
- **Uspenski says The United States is still very strongly “coffee country,” but we're seeing an increasing shift towards tea across all demographics: men, women, young and old.** “Our customer base is split almost between the genders. We also see gravitation towards tea in two of the largest and most influential generations: millennials and baby boomers. Baby boomers are becoming increasingly health conscious as they age, and are looking to tea for the many wellness benefits that it offers in their efforts to increase longevity and vitality. Millennials are attracted not only to the premium craft aspect of tea, but also the boom of a new crop of premium ready-to-drink (RTD) and “shake-and-go” options that satisfy their desire for quick access to a high-quality tea product. As the millennial population grows further into adulthood and gains more buying power, this is going to send tea sales skyrocketing.
- **What types of tea trends will emerge in the near future?** Uspenski says, “Cold brew is one of the newest and coolest trends in tea, and it’s booming perhaps because of its incredible simplicity. We’re seeing new types of RTD [ready-to-drink] cold brewed iced tea products appearing monthly, as well as creative applications in food-service. One of the attractive aspects of cold brewing for premium tea is that it can help minimize the finicky aspect of delicate higher-end teas. Another trend we're seeing is the drive to have premium tea in the food-service arena. Leading-edge cafés, restaurants, spas and hotels are taking note of this trend and coming up with many creative ways to offer this to their customers. This can be as



straight-forward as showing off a premium tea sachet infusing in a glass teapot or mug, or a glass carafe of cold-brewing tea leaves for iced tea.

- **Thoughts on tea and healthy lifestyle?** Uspenski notes, “Indeed, more and more health-conscious consumers are turning to tea and enjoying many high-quality products. They’re drinking tea in a variety of forms, including loose-leaf, single-serve options, quality shake-and-go products, ready-to-drink teas, and cold brews – all of which make it easy to enjoy tea’s health benefits.”

Additional Resources

- Download The Tea Spot’s eBook, ***DIY Cold Brew Tea Lifestyle Guide***. The ebook is free and available at TheTeaSpot.com/cold-brew-tea-ebook.
- Also download The Tea Spot’s ***Tea Wellness Lifestyle Guide*** at TheTeaSpot.com/ebook.