

- Prep Time: 2 minutes
- Cook/Steep Time: 10 minutes
- Total Time: 12 minutes
- Difficulty Level: Easy
- Intensity Level: Low (Gentle Simmer & Steeping)
- Recipe Yield: 2 cups (16 fl oz / 480 ml)
- Serving Size: 1 cup (8 fl oz / 240 ml)

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Equipment Needed

- Small Saucepan or Kettle
- Fine Mesh Strainer (if using crushed or broken leaves)
- Measuring Cup & Spoons
- Two Tea Mugs

Ingredients

- 4 cups cold, filtered water (32 fl oz)
- 4-5 whole dried bay leaves (*Laurus nobilis*)
- 1 small stick Ceylon cinnamon (optional)
- 1-2 tsp pure honey or maple syrup (optional, to taste)
- 1 thin slice fresh lemon (optional, for serving)

Step-by-Step Cooking Instructions

Step 1: Prepare the Leaves & Water

1. Inspect the dried bay leaves to ensure they are clean, whole, and fragrant.
2. Gently snap each bay leaf in half across the midrib. *Cracking or bruising the leaf breaks the essential oil glands inside, releasing natural eugenol and linalool compounds for maximum flavor extractions during boiling.*
3. Pour 4 cups of cold filtered water into a non-reactive small stainless steel or enamel saucepan.

Step 2: Heat to a Rolling Boil

1. Place the saucepan on your stove over High Intensity Heat.
2. Add the cracked bay leaves (and the optional Ceylon cinnamon stick) directly into the cold water.
3. Bring the water to a full rolling boil. This usually takes around 3 to 5 minutes depending on your burner strength.

Step 3: Gentle Simmer & Infusion

1. Once boiling rapidly, reduce the stove heat to Low Intensity Heat so the water maintains a soft, gentle simmer.
2. Cover the saucepan with a tight-fitting lid to trap volatile essential oils and prevent steam evaporation.
3. Simmer gently for 5 to 7 minutes. The liquid will slowly transform from clear to a pale amber or light greenish-gold color.

Step 4: Off-Heat Steeping

1. Turn off the stove entirely and remove the saucepan from the hot burner.
2. Keep the lid on and allow the tea to steep off the heat for an additional 3 minutes. This extra steep completes the extraction while allowing the flavor to soften into a balanced, smooth brew.

Step 5: Strain, Sweeten, and Serve

1. Remove the lid carefully to let trapped steam escape.
2. Use a fine-mesh strainer or slotted spoon to lift out the bay leaves (and cinnamon stick). Discard the spent leaves.
3. Pour the warm herbal tea into two tea mugs.

4. Stir in 1 teaspoon of raw honey or maple syrup per cup if desired, and float a fresh lemon wheel on top for a bright citrus aroma. Serve immediately.

Recipe Intensities & Timing Summary

Phase	Heat / Stove Intensity	Duration	Visual / Sensory Indicator
Initial Heat	High Intensity	3-5 minutes	Water reaches a full, rolling boil with large active bubbles.
Covered Simmer	Low Intensity	5-7 minutes	Soft, small steady bubbles; amber/gold color begins to release.
Off-Heat Steep	No Heat (Covered)	3 minutes	Infusion settles, essential oil aromas concentrate under lid.
Final Prep	Ambient	1 minute	Strained into mugs, sweetened to taste, served hot.

Flavor Variation & Customization Ideas

- **Spiced Warmth:** Add 2 whole cloves or 1 sliced star anise alongside the cinnamon stick during the boiling phase for a spiced, chai-style herbal infusion.
- **Ginger Bay Tea:** Peel and thinly slice a 1/2-inch knob of fresh ginger root. Boil it directly with the bay leaves for a zesty, warming kick.
- **Citrus Mint Blend:** After removing the tea from the stove, toss in 4-5 fresh mint leaves before closing the lid for the final 3-minute steep.

Storage & Reheating Instructions

- Refrigeration: Allow leftover bay leaf tea to cool completely to room temperature. Transfer to a sealed glass jar or airtight carafe and refrigerate for up to 3 days.
- Enjoying Cold: Serve chilled over ice cubes with a squeeze of fresh lemon juice for a refreshing herbal iced tea.
- Reheating: Reheat chilled tea on the stovetop over low heat until warm, or microwave in a mug for 45–60 seconds. Do not bring back to a prolonged boil, as this can concentrate bitterness.

Nutritional Information

The following estimated nutritional values apply to one serving (1 cup / 8 fl oz) of plain unsweetened Bay Leaf Tea prepared with filtered water and dried bay leaves.

Calculated based on standard USDA nutrient databases for herbal infusions.

Nutrient	Amount per Serving (Unsweetened)	% Daily Value (DV)*
Calories	2 kcal	0%
Total Fat	0 g	0%
Saturated Fat	0 g	0%
Trans Fat	0 g	—
Cholesterol	0 mg	0%
Sodium	2 mg	0%
Total Carbohydrates	0.5 g	0%
Dietary Fiber	0.1 g	0%
Total Sugars	0 g	—

Nutrient	Amount per Serving (Unsweetened)	% Daily Value (DV)*
Added Sugars	0 g	0%
Protein	0.1 g	0%
Vitamin C	0.8 mg	1%
Calcium	6 mg	1%
Iron	0.1 mg	1%
Potassium	12 mg	0%