

NEWS RELEASE



Touchmark at Coffee Creek

Special to *Edmond Sun*

December 21, 2010

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Woman loves to serve using china collection **Time for tea – at Christmas and Touchmark**

By Carol Hartzog

EDMOND, Okla – More than 70 women and a few men carried on a centuries-old Christmas tradition recently, a fifth celebration of the annual Christmas Tea at Touchmark at Coffee Creek.

Five years ago, concierge Rosemary Domina decided to entertain the Touchmark residents in part to honor her mother's love of fine china cups, saucers and a Christmas bell collection. For a handful of residents, she told the story of the origination of tea, and she served a "Christmas tea" using her and her mother's china.

Today, she continues to serve dozens of guests – and amazingly all from her and her mother's vast collection of china.

Domina has expanded the celebration with not only different types of tea but also three to four varieties of scone, small brownies, tea cakes and a Romanian dish of mocha cake, much from the Touchmark kitchen. Of Romania, she says the eastern Europeans still drink tea with a sugar cube clasped between their teeth and from a clear glass in a silver metal holder.

Origins of drinking tea began with a Chinese emperor who always boiled his water, noticing that those who did had better health. The fire was stoked with branches of a nearby tree and, as the water boiled, the topmost leaves were blown into the pot. "What a delightful aroma," the emperor exclaimed, and that's how tea was discovered around 2737 B.C., according to "Teatime" by Audrey Franklin.

The tea-drinking practice spread to eighteenth century Great Britain, where a duke's wife invented the afternoon tea. Breakfasts were usually very full, and lunch had not been invented, so the duke's wife would always have a "sinking" feeling by 4 p.m., noted Franklin. Thus, the afternoon tea originated.

The Christmas Tea is linked to the Victorian age, and the luxury that accompanied it. Finger sandwiches, tea biscuits, slices of cake and pastry were served but, as tea was expensive, the luxury was limited to the rich. The tradition carried over to the 13 Colonies and thus, the United States enjoys the love of tea today.

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And Domina's favorite tea? The Stash brand of green and white fusion.

Touchmark, located in Edmond at 2801 Shortgrass Road, is part of the Coffee Creek 638-acre planned residential development, which includes a golf course, recreational centers and walking and biking trails for Coffee Creek homeowners. Touchmark at Coffee Creek offers a wide range of homes and lifestyle options. For more information, visit TouchmarkEdmond.com.

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Photo captions:

Rosemary Domina serves Marty Rose, left, and her daughter-in-law Carol Rose, at Touchmark's annual Christmas Tea Saturday.

Rosemary Domina, a receptionist at Touchmark at Coffee Creek, serves Virginia Morefield. Domina started the Christmas Tea tradition five years ago for the residents' pleasure, in part to honor her mother and use her – and Domina's own – collection of china.