

Location: Gathering Solutions

The trick is to look at which squares each pattern appears in. Looking at the squares that have circles in them, we see a T shape. Doing this for each of the patterns in order gives us the answer:



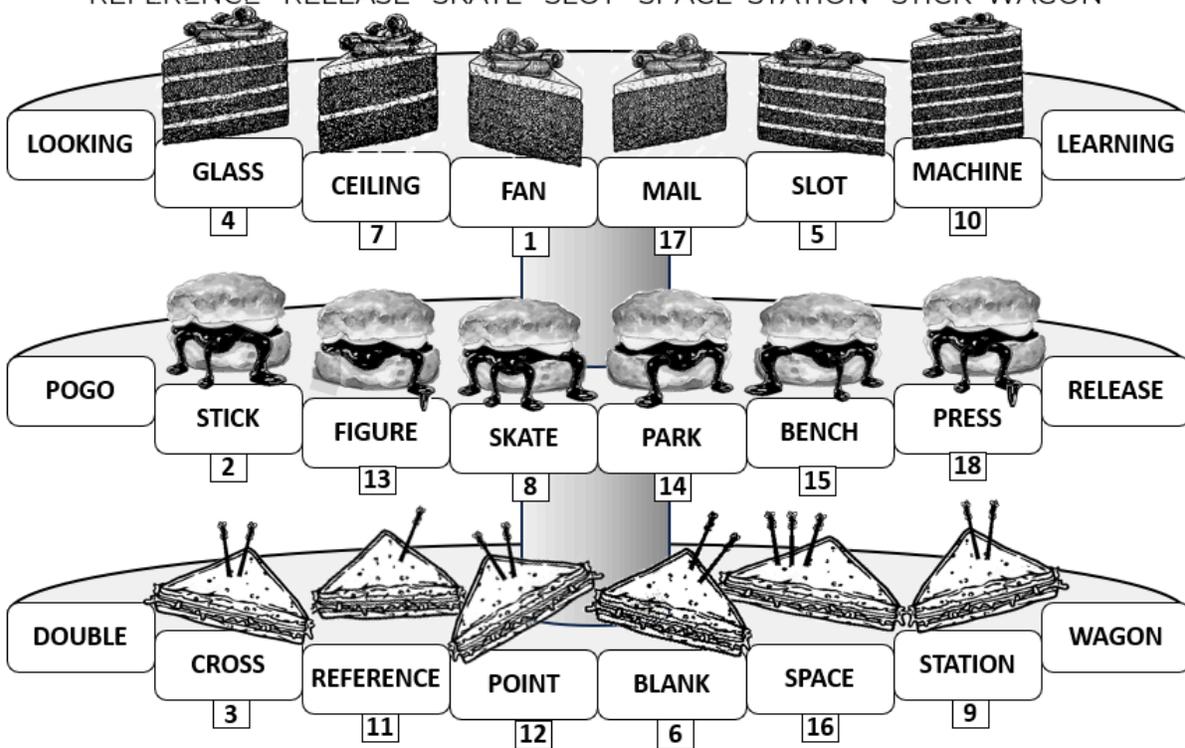
TEA TIME

Tiered Stand Solutions

In the flavor text, “every pair of consecutive items is appropriate” is mentioned. Looking at the word bank, there are many pairs of words which make two word phrases or expressions, like POINT BLANK and SKATE PARK. Using the starting words in the tiers and process of elimination, we can arrange the words in this order.

Tiered Stand Items

BENCH BLANK CEILING CROSS ~~DOUBLE~~ FAN FIGURE GLASS
~~LEARNING~~ ~~LOOKING~~ MACHINE MAIL PARK ~~POGO~~ POINT PRESS
 REFERENCE ~~RELEASE~~ SKATE SLOT SPACE STATION STICK ~~WAGON~~



Next, we extract the letters from each filled in word according to the index provided by the food item above it. For example the slice of cake above GLASS has four layers, so we take the fourth letter of GLASS = S. Or the scone above PARK has two jelly-drips, so we take the second letter of PARK = A. Next, we order the extracted letters by the numbers underneath the words to get a clue phrase: FIRST LETTER OF A NAME. This gives us the clue for the final answer, which we know is 7 letters long, INITIAL.

Sandwiches Solutions

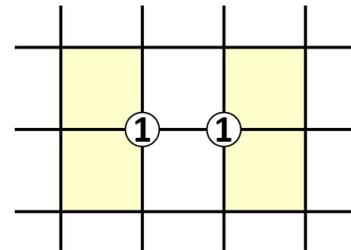
This is a puzzle called slant in the Simon Tatham puzzle collection, although it likely is known by other names as well. In this puzzle, these are the realizations that need to be made to solve the grid:

1. Any 0 needs all diagonals avoiding the circle
2. Any 2 on the border needs both diagonals touching
3. Numbers where some information is already known can sometimes be solved. This is true for example when a 2 has two diagonals avoiding it or 2 diagonals touching. For 3 this is true when there are 3 diagonals touching or 1 diagonal avoiding. Etc.
4. Loops cannot be formed, so once there are three diagonals that form 3 sides of a diamond, the fourth diagonal needs to point the opposite way that the diamond's side would
5. #4 is true when the diamond is 1x2 in lengths

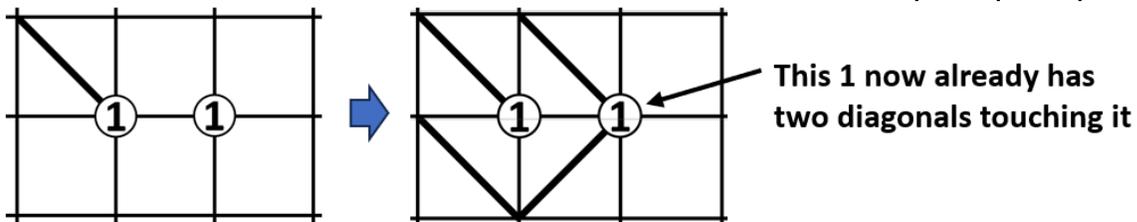
Using the above five observations, most of the grid is completely solvable.

Note: At this point, skipping to the extraction, it's possible to get the first letter and the last 3 letters of the 5 letter answer. C _ _ E A M only has one reasonable option given the scones theme, so if you get stuck with the rest of the grid you can skip that part entirely!

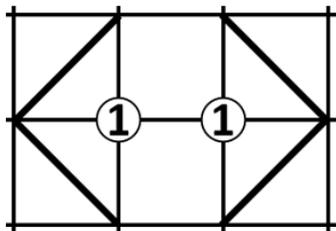
6. Any time there are two 1s next to each other, the diagonals behind them (in the shaded squares at right) must avoid touching those 1s.



Here is why it's not possible one of them touches the 1s:

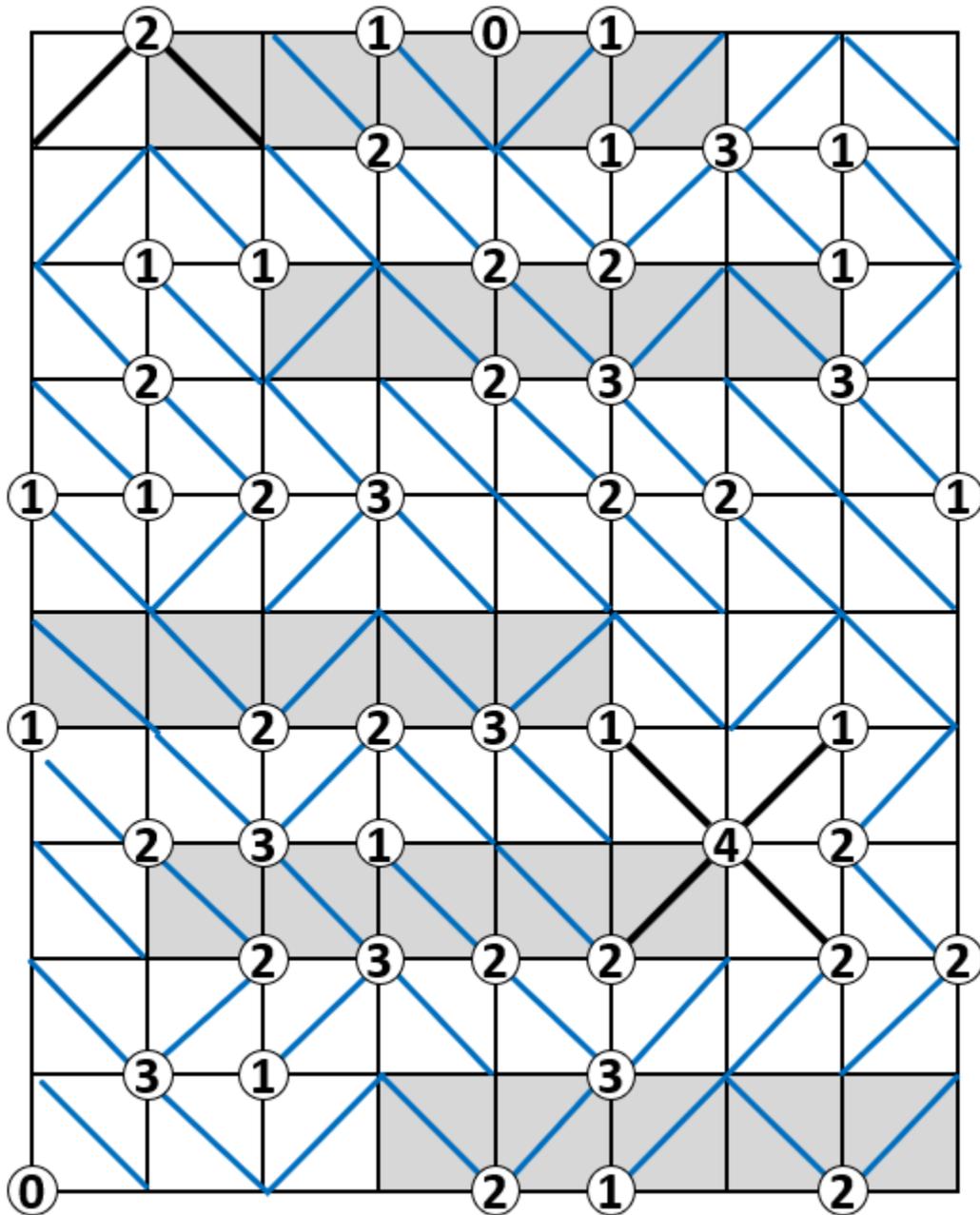


So instead, it needs to look like:



This additional observation is then enough to solve the top half of the grid.

Here is the solved grid:



Now converting the 5 sets of 5 highlighted squares in the grid into binary, using the bolded flavor text to tell us / is 1 and \ is 0, we get the final answer: CREAM.

Scones Solutions

Each sandwich is made by putting the spread word inside the bread word, adding one letter somewhere, and getting the sandwich word. The three words are the answers to the crossword clues. The first sandwich is (TRIO) + MANY + [M] = MA(TRI[M]O)NY = MATRIMONY. Below is the full grid of solutions.

Spread		Scone		?		Assembled Treat
(Another word for)						
Group of three TRIO	+	A lot MANY	+	M	=	Marriage (9) MATRIMONY
Item in an atlas MAP	+	Coastal feature SHORE	+	E	=	Common Puzzled Pint code (9) SEMAPHORE
+ (Present tense of)						
Circular in shape ROUND	+	Sorrow for others PITY	+	F	=	Deep insight (10) PROFUNDITY
Cat or hamster, maybe. PET	+	Earnings INCOME	+	L	=	Unfinished (10) INCOMPLETE
Type of clear liquor GIN	+	Of sound mind SANE	+	U	=	Optimistic in a tough time (8) SANGUINE
Comprehend written words READ	+	Comprehend visual information SEE	+	N	=	Woo with song (8) SERENADE
Creative expression ART	+	One of seven deadly sins PRIDE	+	G	=	Gifted pear tree occupant (9) PARTRIDGE
+ (Secret Ingredient)						
Circle constant in math PI	+	Verbal remark COMMENT	+	L	=	Remark of praise or admiration (10) COMPLIMENT

Reading down on the secret ingredients column, we get:

Another word for ME + Past tense of FLUNG + L. Using the sandwich rule one last time, we get:

I + FLING + L = FILLING.

So our final answer is FILLING.

Desserts Solutions

You need to fill in some squares in each of the 8 grids, and you are given the total filled in squares for each row and column. Also, for each of two sets of four puzzles, you are given the total number of spices used in squares in that position for those four grids. Note that for this solution, we mark squares with the ingredient used as filled in and squares missing that ingredient with a dot. You can immediately get started by putting dots in all the rows and columns that have 0. That completely solves the northern and northwestern grid. From there you can use the clues to solve each set of four grids. Here are the solutions:

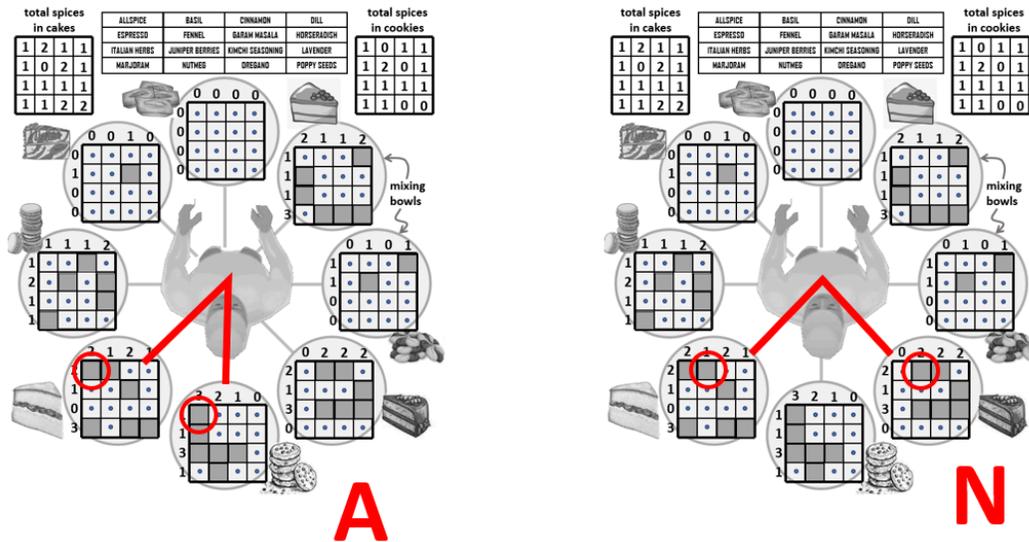
1	2	1	1
1	0	2	1
1	1	1	1
1	1	2	2

ALLSPICE	BASIL	CINNAMON	DILL
ESPRESSO	FENNEL	GARAM MASALA	HORSERADISH
ITALIAN HERBS	JUNIPER BERRIES	KIMCHI SEASONING	LAVENDER
MARJORAM	NUTMEG	OREGANO	POPPY SEEDS

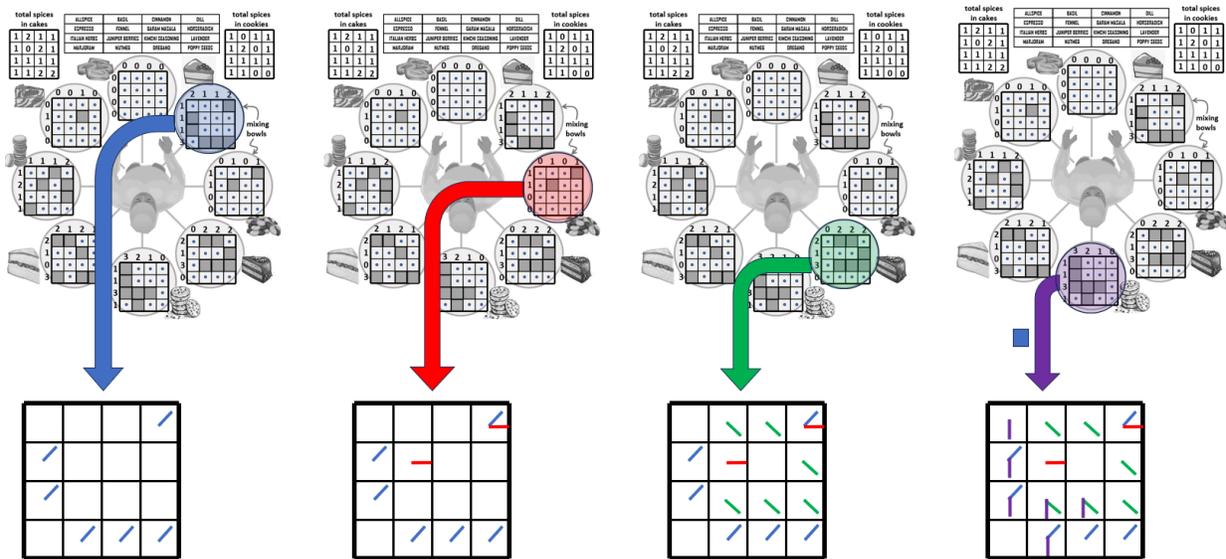
1	0	1	1
1	2	0	1
1	1	1	1
1	1	0	0

Finally, as suggested by the lines meeting beneath the chef's feet and the fact that each position in the grid (ingredient) has exactly two cardinal directions (desserts) where it's filled in, we use semaphore to get the final answer. For example, the top-left square is filled in in the southern

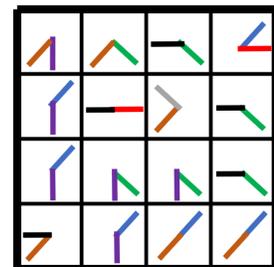
and southwestern grids, which makes A in semaphore. The second square in the top row is filled in the southwest and southeast, making N. Continuing this way gives ANSWER IS EGG SHELL, so our final answer is EGG SHELL.



One suggestion for how to solve the puzzle from this point forward with the least amount of back and forth searching is to draw a “summary” four by four grid in which to write the semaphore symbols. Then, visiting each mixing bowl just once, place the appropriately angled line in each square of the grid for each spice that was used. This is shown below:



After visiting all eight bowls, the final semaphore grid would look like this:



Mmm.. Tea Solutions

Crossword Clue Answers

Answers are formatted as ANSWER: LETTERS IN ANSWER IN ALPHABETICAL ORDER

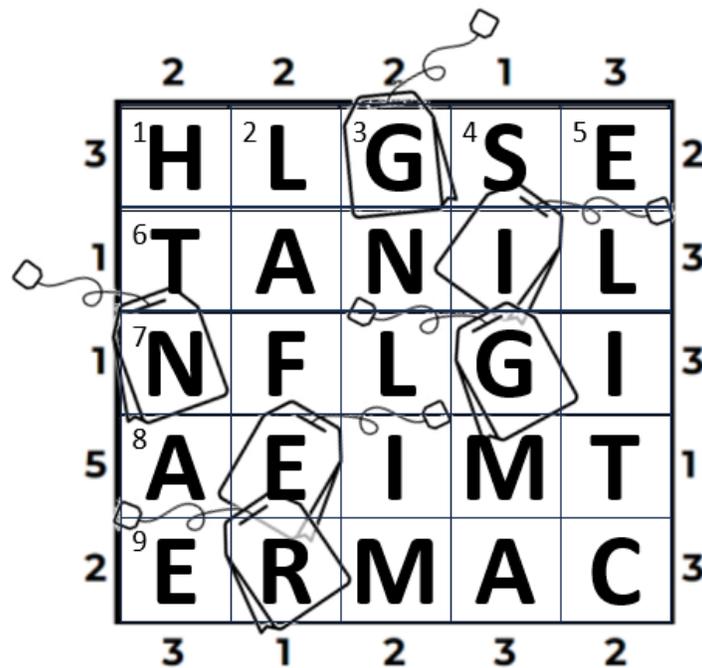
Across

- 1 EGG SHELL: EGHLS
- 6 INITIAL: AILNT
- 7 FILLING: FGILN
- 8 TEA TIME: AEIMT
- 9 CREAM: ACEMR

Down

- 1 ATHENA: AEHNT
- 2 FREE FALL: AEFLR
- 3 MINGLING: GILMN
- 4 SIGMA: AGIMS
- 5 ECLECTIC: CEILT

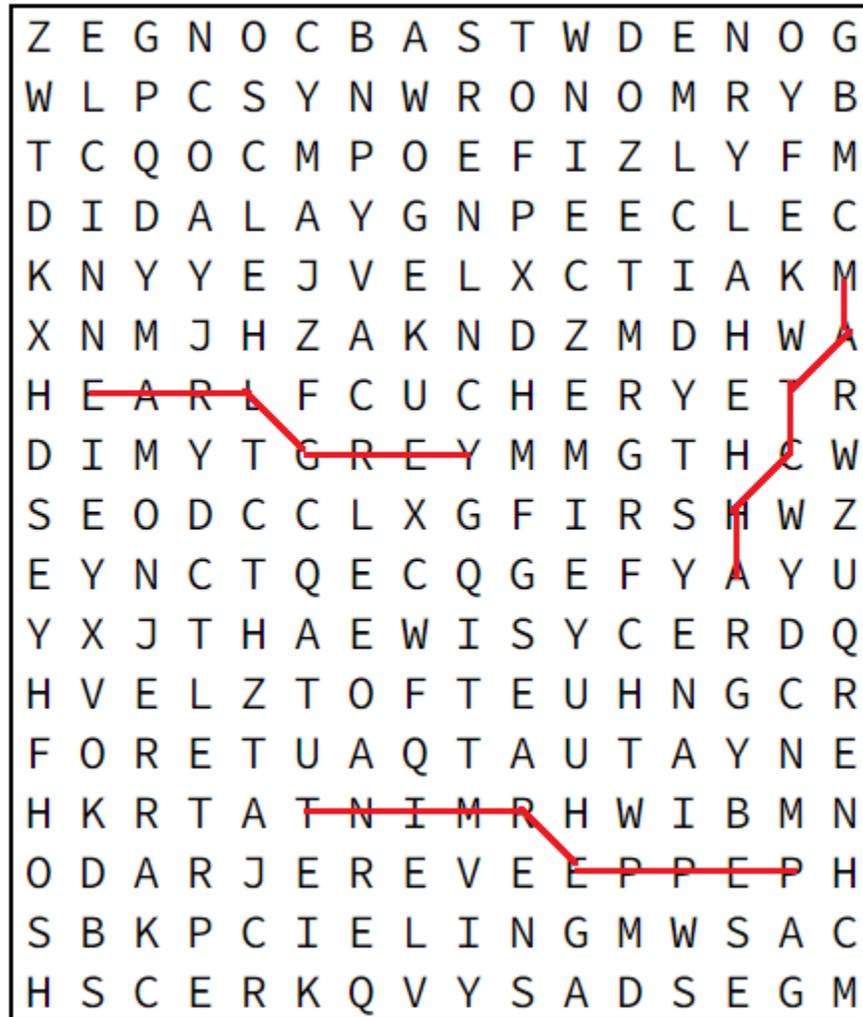
Filled in Grid



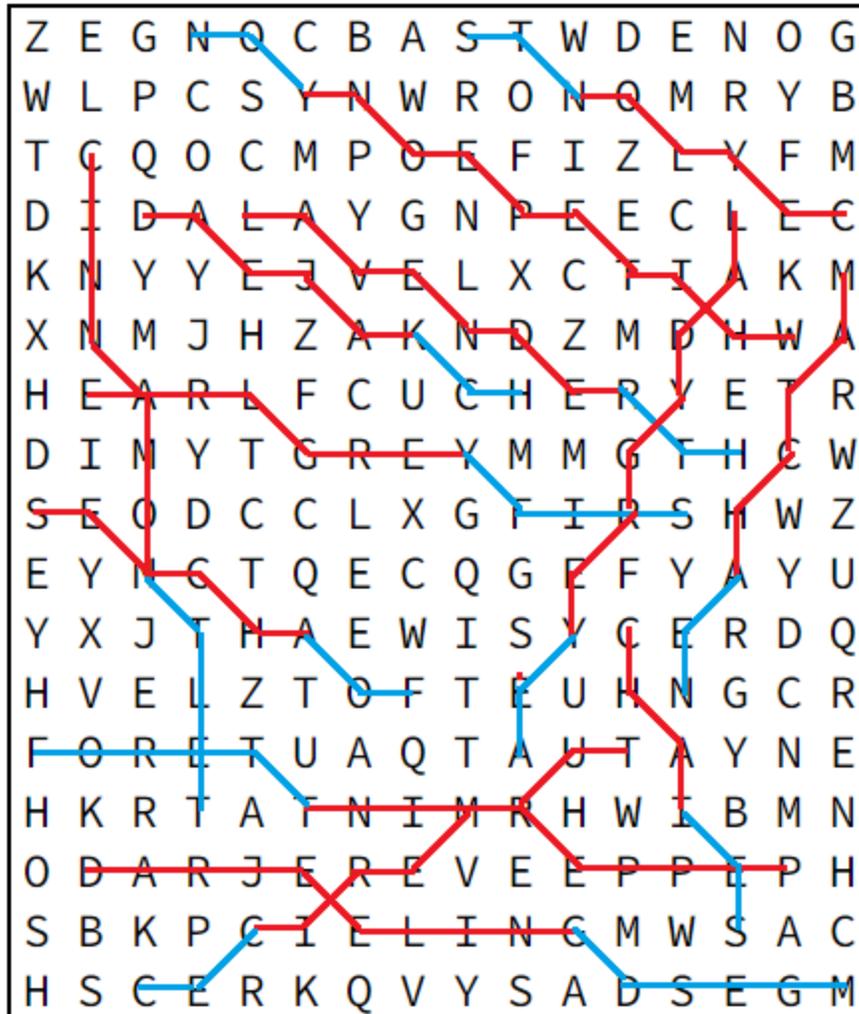
Reading the tea-bagged letters gives the answer: GINGER.

Bonus: The Tea Menu Solutions

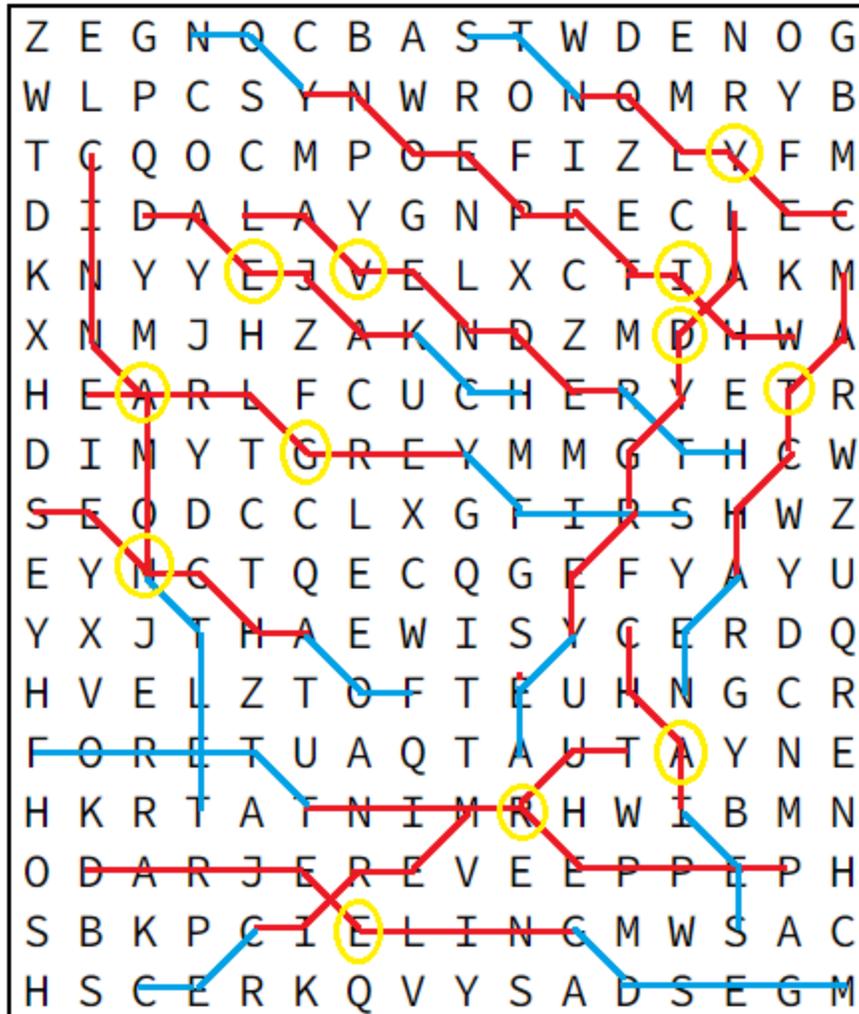
The first bolded part of the flavor text hints at solving this variant word search by looking not at straight lines but ones going off at angles. In this case, each line is made up of several equally long segments going in the same direction, but with the row or column adjusted by one for each segment. The easiest to find first is probably EARL GREY, since EARL and GREY can both be found near each other on the grid in traditional word search format. Here are a few examples.



The second bolded part of the flavor text says they all got some letters added at the end. To add letters to these "lines", one would keep writing in the same direction. So EARL GREY would get FIRS added to it. Here are all the teas, with their extra segments in blue.



Reading these extensions in order of the tea flavors as they appear to the right of the grid spells the message FIRST LETTER OF EACH OF THE SECOND SEGMENTS. Here is the grid with those letters circled in yellow.



Taking those yellow letters again in the order of the tea flavors listed gives the final answer: GARDEN VARIETY. Note that the R in PEPPERMINT and the R in TURMERIC overlap in the grid, and both are used in the final answer.