

# Founder of Dilmah celebrates 70 years as tea maker

This month, the founder of [Dilmah](#), Merrill J. Fernando, celebrates both his 91st birthday and 70 years as a tea maker, providing inspiration to the industry and tea lovers alike.



Merrill J. Fernando, Founder of Dilmah

## ***Dilmah's market partner BPI (Beverage Partners International) commemorates the milestones with a few words:***

“Fernando dedicated his life to tea in the 1950s, when he realized that the concentration of ownership in the tea industry lay in the hands of a few large corporations. As the industry became commoditized, inferior leaves, blends and picking techniques were being employed in order to maximize profits at the expense of flavor.

Determined to protect and reclaim the tea crop that his country produced with such care and artistry, Merrill spent the next four decades creating Dilmah - a brand founded on a passionate commitment to quality and authenticity in tea.

Building on a lifetime of expertise in producing the best hot tea in the world, the magic of Dilmah can now be enjoyed as a chilled soft drink in the Iced Tea category.

When you drink Dilmah 100% Single Origin Ceylon Iced Tea, you are enjoying real Sri Lanka tea, endorsed by a true tea lover and maker. Unlike the multi-origin blends commonly found on supermarket shelves, it's made using only traditional, Single Origin loose tea leaves, hand-picked and packed at origin. This minimal processing means it maintains its rich, authentic flavor and natural antioxidants.”

At the end of last year, BPI and Dilmah moved into the ready-to-drink segment with the launch of Dilmah Elixir of Ceylon Iced Tea range. BPI [predicted](#) that consumers will prioritize the combination of flavor and high-quality artisan ingredients, along with the growing global demand for craft beverages.