Stop 180 Kid’s Tour – Cool Temperate House Overview, Tea Plant

This is one of the newest greenhouses at Smith Garden. Plants here can’t survive outside in really freezing weather (sfx: teeth chattering) but they don’t need to be in a tropical climate either. (sfx: monkeys/parrots) That’s why this room is called the Cool Temperate House- it’s not too cold and it’s not too hot!

We divided this greenhouse into four sections, each representing a region of the world that has areas with a temperate climate like this - Asia, Latin America, Africa, and Australia. As you begin to explore, you’ll discover plants from each of these regions. (sfx: possible ethnic music for each) Maybe you’ll find tea from Asia, avocados from Latin America, coffee, from Africa, olives and figs from the Mediterranean region.

Something else you’ll discover after spending some time in this greenhouse is the amazing number of products these plants produce that we use in our lives everyday! Take the tea plant for example. You might think it looks like something you’d find growing in your backyard. But tea plants actually are originally from Asia. When you take a look at the plant’s leathery leaves, with their saw-toothed edges, you wonder how anybody ever got the idea to use them for making something to drink! But tea drinking has been popular for a long time… one of the oldest living tea plants in China is almost 800 years old!