

GLOBAL TEA HUT

國際茶亭

TEA & TAO MAGAZINE

January 2019

通聖亭愛之食

茶食

FOOD & TEA

Contents

Issue 84 / January 2019

GLOBAL TEA HUT

TEA & TAO MAGAZINE



DAWN & DUSK

We return once again to our annual tradition of a food and tea issue to start the year. This time, we are sharing a green and red tea powder with you, which can be whisked, boiled or, even better, used to make some of the wonderful recipes you'll find all throughout this exciting issue. We cannot wait to see what you will create!

*Love is
changing the world
bowl by bowl*

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By Editorial Department

**Special thanks to Katherine Aplin
for her baking skills!*



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Lopa van der Mersch, USA



黎明
&
黃昏



recycled & recyclable



Soy ink

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From the editor

In January we settle into boiling tea, drinking more Five Element tea and aged oolong teas. It is cool here now, which is great tea-drinking weather. We can even go for some outdoor tea sessions. A long session outdoors on a cool afternoon, boiling a tea into finer and finer bowls as the sun sets, is one of the greatest joys of a year in the life of a Chajin. There are lots of guests in the winter, so the Center is always extra full around now, and these breaks down by the river drinking boiled tea, for example, are a wonderful respite for us.

Welcome to a new year of Global Tea Hut! We are so excited to share another twelve months of tea with all of you. January is always a great time to share our affirmations for the coming year—all that we hope to achieve and share with you throughout this new year of exciting tea adventures.

There are always so many areas we want to improve around here, but this year we hope to get closer to our long-standing environmental goals when it comes to Global Tea Hut. First, you may have noticed, the envelopes finally have no more bubble paper inside, forever and ever! It took us a while, but we finally found a way to get envelopes without bubble paper, making the entire envelope, tin and magazine recyclable and also made from recycled materials. The new tins are thrice-recycled, for example. And how about those new screw-on tops? Way better and still with a tight seal. They are also flat on top, allowing you to stack more of them in your cupboards. We also hope to keep the impact of the gifts very low this year, using little to no plastic in their packaging as well. We also will strive throughout this year to find new ways to package Light Meets Life tea and teaware with less bubble paper, using newspaper, for example, in the outer packaging. This all furthers our goal of protecting our beloved Mother Earth, who is the magic behind the tea we love.

In the coming year, we hope to continue translating much more tea wisdom for you, including another chapter in our Classics of Tea series, with annotated translations of antique tea texts, as well as modern authors, providing as many sources and viewpoints on tea history, processing and lore as possible. The more members there are in Global Tea Hut, the greater our budget to translate more articles and travel more, offering a journalistic approach to tea regions—not to mention, finding new and exciting teas to share with you. Last year, we expanded our ethnography of tea-growing regions and translations, both of which are trends we hope to continue. We plan to move into Korean and Japanese translations and travel there as well in the coming year(s). You can expect much more variety in authors, destinations and wisdom in the coming year! We hope to expand your tea wisdom each and every year, finding great new stories, culture, teas and types of teaware to explore together!

Finally, we hope to expand membership this year to create the resources we need to move magazine production to its own office and hire some full-time help, so that we can expand the magazine even further. In 2017, we moved to a brand-new office for the shipping of Global Tea Hut, which has allowed us to cut costs and find more environmentally-friendly materials because we can now warehouse more. It has also created accommodations that have allowed us to invite servers to our ten-day courses. This year, we hope to do the same for the front end, moving the photography and magazine design base out of the Center and in to its own office space.

You can help us achieve these goals by spreading the word about Global Tea Hut to friends and family, as well as on social media. All your support is the inspiration that keeps us working so hard!

This month, we once again continue our tradition of exploring food and tea, with amazing recipes that all use tea as an ingredient. We hope you enjoy cooking with our two amazing tea powders: Dawn and Dusk. We love cooking, and have spent years creating the ideal diet for our ten-day courses. These treats are fun to make and enjoy, and that they use tea as an ingredient makes them even more exciting. These teas can, of course, also be whisked or boiled if you choose. We love our traditional themed issues, like the Elevation issue, the Zen & Tea issue or the Classics of Tea, because they are a way of creating our own Global Tea Hut traditions. Like our annual trip, these traditions bring us closer together as a global tea family. We can't wait to see photography of your creations on social media all throughout this month! We will choose the best photography of these dishes to receive some extra tea powder free. Tag us at [#gthteatreasures](#) to win a free Expansion Pack!



—Further Reading—

This month, we recommend re-reading the first two food and tea issues from January 2017 and 2018, as you will find our diet philosophy covered in detail, including how it relates to tea practice. You may also want to read the Tea of the Month articles for September 2015 and April 2016 to learn more about powdered tea!

TEA OF THE MONTH



Over the course of this month, we will be cooking with tea. Cooking is a huge part of the service work here at the Hut. Last year, we shared with you our diet philosophy and practice. We try to make cooking a practice in and of itself here at the Hut, viewing it as a part of our Cha Dao, feeding those who come by for tea, whether for a day or a ten-day course. We always pair our meals to the tea we serve, the activities of the day and the season. Along with the practice of making food mindfully, calmly and as an aspect of self-cultivation, we also try to infuse our meals with love and kindness, nourishing heart-mind and body. In this issue, we have a ton of great recipes for treats that use tea powder as an ingredient, combining our love for tea and cooking.

We have ordered two beautiful tea powders for this month, which we are calling “Dawn” and “Dusk.” These teas are wonderful to drink, but we have created and shared them with you more for using to make any of the recipes in this issue, all of which can be prepared with either Dawn or Dusk. We also have an Expansion Pack, discussed on p. 59, so you can get some larger quantities of these teas to make more of the wonderful dishes, and whisk or boil the tea. We were able to send more of these beautiful teas because we used the gift funds to get them, and because of the amazing and boundless generosity of Mr. Xie who has once again shown up and donated much of the cost of this amazing tea.

Our red tea, “Dawn,” is made from *Four Seasons Spring* (*Si Ji Chun*, 四季春). Though you could perhaps call *Si Ji Chun* a hybrid, it is a natural, wild varietal that arose in Muzha. Since it is a more natural varietal, it is heartier than the others. These trees yield buds at least four times a year, which is where its name comes from. “*Si Ji Chun*” might also be translated as “Four Seasons *like* Spring,” referring to the fact that this bush can produce as much in other seasons as in spring. It is also thought to be the youngest of the Three Daughters, coming into commercial production in the 1980s. Our red tea is what is called a “honey fragrance (蜜香)” red tea. This is caused by the same katydid that chew on Eastern Beauty tea, which we discussed extensively in our September 2018 Extended Edition. This makes the tea sweet and delicious, which is perfect for baking treats!

The tea was withered for a long time, rolled for a long time and then piled once more before roasting it dry. The long withering ensures the deep oxidation needed for making red tea. It is deep, dark and extremely fragrant. The grinding brings out a lot of the flavors and fragrances, making this tea a powerful drink and wonderful for cooking with.

Our green tea is made from Kingfisher Jade (*Tsui yu*, 翠玉). *Tsui yu* Oolong is a hybrid which came to life in the 1970s after decades of research. In the Taiwanese index it is TW #13, though farmers often refer to it as “2029” or just “29.” The leaves of *Tsui yu* have veins at 80- to 90-degree angles, though they are long and arrowhead-shaped. When you stand back from a field of *Tsui yu*, the leaves have a bluish-green (kingfisher) tint to them and they are more vibrant, with lusher foliage than all the other four varieties we will discuss here. *Tsui yu* dislikes cold weather, so it can’t be grown at very high altitudes. It is predominantly grown on Mt. Zhu and in the lowlands around Ming Jian, where our Tea of the Month comes from. *Tsui yu* has a flavor of seaweed, lima beans and often fruit. It is more famous for an aroma of wildflowers and an aftertaste of fresh fruit. Some say it tastes of lotus or lilac, others say cassia or peach. Much of this depends on the terroir, the season and the skill of the producer. The Qi is Yin. It centers you in the heart.

The green tea was picked, slightly withered since it includes some leaves, though mostly buds, fired and rolled, then dried. The added mature leaves add breadth and depth to the tea, making it more flavorful, full of Qi and strength, along with the sweetness provided by the buds. It is a wonderful and very flavorful tea. One of the issues we often have with tea treats is that they use weak matcha and you often cannot taste the tea in the dish as a result. We wanted the flavor of the tea to shine through, so we made this tea bolder, and we have also included a red tea for the dishes where you really want to taste the tea.

Both of these teas are ground by machine for several hours to get the grain size down to extremely small particles, which makes these teas better for boiling, whisking or cooking with, as they will blend with the water, liquid or other medium better and offer more flavor and fragrance. This is an exciting month!



Dawn & Dusk (黎明 & 黃昏)



Mingjian, Nantou, Taiwan



Red & Green Tea Powder



Taiwanese




~800 Meters



A DEEPER SESSION

Further Exploration into Our Tea of the Month

 ver the course of this month, we will be drinking and cooking with powdered teas made from green and red teas. We thought it would be worthwhile to explore more deeply the ancient traditions of eating tea leaves as well as the production, processing and preparation of powdered teas through time. We hope this exploration enriches your experience and inspires you to enjoy cooking with these teas, not to mention a session of boiled or whisked powdered tea as well.

On May 1st, 1965, Chinese geologists who were studying the strata of rocks in Yunnan discovered the remains of an ancient hominid, which they named “Yuanmo (元谋).” Consensus dates Yuanmo to the Middle Pleistocene period, which is from 781,000 to 126,000 years ago, making him the oldest hominid ever discovered in China. Some scholars even believe that Yuanmo inhabited the area earlier than this, and some new dating techniques using rocks found around the site date him to the Early Pleistocene period. Yuanmo was a type of *Homo erectus* called by paleoanthropologists “*Homo erectus yuanmouensis*.” These hominids

are named for their upright bearing, the development of their frontal lobes and handicrafts they produced. *Homo erectus* emerged around two million years ago. Early specimens have been found in West Africa and Asia, so there is an active debate amongst scientists as to whether *Homo erectus* emerged in Asia or Africa. Another example was also found in the north of China in the 1920s—famously called the “Peking Man.” *Homo erectus* eventually went extinct around 100,000 to 140,000 years ago, evolving into other descendant species of hominid and coexisting with still others. It was amongst the longest-lived species of hominids, existing for well over one million years! There is no consensus about the relationship between *Homo erectus* like Yuanmo and modern *Homo sapiens*. Are the Yuanmo and other *Homo erectus* our ancestors or another type of hominid that lived alongside our ancestors? Either way, their discoveries influenced our evolution and development.

Since tool use first developed more than 2.5 million years ago, Yuanmo was already well-versed in the creation of tools, artifacts and even rudimentary shelter. They were also amongst the

first to control, tame and harness fire, which was one of the most important developmental stages in our evolution. *Homo erectus* species like Yuanmo were the first hominids to live as hunter and gatherers, with a developing language and culture, communicating in what paleoanthropologists call “proto-language,” as they were incapable of the range of sounds we use to communicate. This is something between our complex languages and the non-verbal gestures chimpanzees and other great apes use to communicate. They were the first hominids to form tribes, hunt and gather communally and pass on the skills and wisdom of these activities as culture to their descendants. They were also the first to care for the infirm, elderly and weak, bridging the animal and human realms. This implies that they also had abstract values, ideas and possibly even rudimentary cosmological and mythological ideas, as well as ceremonies, rites and rituals in basic forms—both for connection to each other and the handing on of traditions, and also for funerals, recognizing the loss of spirit in deceased loved ones, perhaps from dreams of the loved ones returning.



Yuanmo is especially important for us Chajin as there is a very real potential that these early hominids were the first humans to discover tea, pushing the use of tea back many millennia if this were true. So far, all the evidence suggesting that tea was a part of Yuanmo's life is circumstantial, but more research may indeed uncover a relationship. All the *Homo erectus* throughout Africa and Asia were nomadic, and often hiked for many kilometers a day in search of food to gather and/or animals to hunt. In other regions, there is evidence of early hominids chewing on caffeinated plants to energize their long hikes. Since Yuanmo inhabited most of Yunnan, from the Himalayas down to the Lincang River, it is likely that they encountered tea. Tea was born around a million years ago in the Five Mountains of central Yunnan, as current genetic research is proving (Ming Feng, 鳴鳳; Mang Fei, 忙肺; Mei Zi Qing, 梅子菁; Wu Jia Zhai, 武家寨; Da Xue Shan, 大雪山). By the time Yuanmo was wandering these mountains, tea trees were abundant, and it is very possible that these early hominids chewed the leaves as they hiked or even boiled them for nourishment.

Anthropologists studying more modern hunter-gatherer societies have found that they have a very clear, and often nutritionally accurate, hierarchy of food sources, so that they will always make intelligent choices about what to gather on any given day and in what order. If three food sources are available at that time of year, for example, they will manage their time so that they gather the rarest and most nutrient-dense food first, only then moving on to the next and so on. This nutritional wisdom surprised anthropologists, since the people did not pass on any overt oral tradition to their children about what foods to gather and when. The children learned from watching the parents and participating in the gathering. Part of this wisdom is, of course, learned through experience, passed on through trial and error and a growing body of innate cultural understanding from generation to generation, but the lack of overt communication suggests also an intuitive connection to Nature that is more spiritual than intellectual.

Often, modern researchers get stuck in approaching our ancestors and their cultures through the lens of

“we are so clever and they were not.” Of course, the brutality and certain other ideals in ancient societies makes this easy to do. There is truth in it, but it is also misleading. There are ways in which our ancestors would find us to be stupid as well. For example, imagine setting up a stall to sell bottled water in some ancient Chinese village. People would consider you mad. And isn't it madness that our bodies are more than half water and we have polluted the drinking water to the point that we cannot consume it anymore? Of course, our intellectual and technological advancements have allowed us to explore this universe in ways our ancestors could not imagine. We understand a lot more about our world and how it works, and do not rely on metaphoric or mythological explanations to understand natural phenomena. We can use empirical observation and create testable models that not only help us understand our world, but also work with and develop this knowledge in application to our lives. However, there are other types of intelligence that we have lost in exchange for this great intellectual prowess: more direct, instinctual body wisdom.



Nowadays, our education is so heavily textual that the average person doesn't respect a truth unless it is conveyed in neat, rational language. And clearly we couldn't survive or prosper as individuals or as a species without our ability to think systematically in a linear way. However, there is another, non-verbal and direct kind of knowing that relates to the world in a different way—the way of the Dao and all our tribal ancestors. Of course, we should not desire to return to such an age. It had its challenges, like, for example, the fact that the more tribal we are as a species, the more war there is. Nevertheless, certain aspects of our ancestors' lives should be reincorporated into our development, like their direct, non-verbal connection to Nature and its living wisdom. They felt a part of their environment, whereas we feel separated from Nature. This connection offered a place in the cosmos, as opposed to a feeling of alienation. Nature's unity was for, not against, them—even the challenges of survival were a part of the cycles of life, as opposed to philosophical "enemies" to combat.

The development of a nonverbal wisdom based on direct non-conceptual communication with each other and Nature, with the body and its wisdom, as well as the ancestral light handed down in the body, as well as Nature wisdom learned from watching mountains, stars, wind, water, plants and animals—this body of wisdom informed our ancestors' lives. Certainly, they also learned intellectually through trial and error: testing, making mistakes and learning from them. But along with this growing knowledge of which plants were poisonous and what to do when lions come, there was a deeper/direct wisdom that was not memorized, but lived. And this wisdom of the heart also informed their decisions: guiding their movements, helping them find shelter and to know which plants were medicinal. And it is through this doorway that Tea moves into the human story. She still fulfills this function ceremonially for Chajin to this day, and has for millennia.

This is why we believe that early hominids like Yuanmo would have known deep in their hearts to chew tea

leaves, and why they later would have known to boil them: because She told our ancestors. She didn't speak in concepts, but through intuition. Whenever the first bond was made, whether through Yuanmo or later *Homo sapiens*, the first connection and love was certainly born of this direct Nature-wisdom that comes out of a life lived in harmony with the biorhythms of the body, evolved over millions of years and filled with the genetic wisdom and light of our ancestors, and a harmony with one's environment, which is necessitated by survival. Our ancestors had to be listening all the time, and with the whole being, not just the ears. The song of the forest, no doubt, led them to Tea. She was a chemical message to us from the plant kingdom, offering healing light and deeper connection to the body and to Nature through the mountains, rain, stars and sunlight in the leaves and spirit of this world as it lives and grows through the cosmic tissue of Qi changing form. We believe our ancestors "knew" medicinal plants through communicating and "listening" to the forest.



茶 We use these Tang Dynasty-esque cakes to create our version of Tang tea. We roast the cakes over charcoal until the fragrance is gorgeous. We bring water to a boil, add salt and then add broken pieces of the cake. After stirring the tea and letting it boil for some time, we then ladle this delicious and frothy liquid joy into bowls and enjoy for at least an hour or so...

Eating Leaves & Boiled Brews

In the early days, tea was often taken as nourishment and medicine. First the leaves were chewed to invigorate hunter and gatherers on their hikes. Eventually, they started to boil tea. Early shamans boiled tea as medicine for all kinds of spiritual afflictions. The tradition of tea doctors “*cha bo shi* (茶博士)” continued in China for millennia. Ancient tea drinkers did not view health in restorative terms, attempting to get “back to normal,” especially when that “normal” is based on the body alone. Healing was viewed as harmony with Nature and the spirit world. And it was transformative, rather than restorative, which means that the illnesses were seen as opportunities to evolve to higher complexity and grades of energy rather than getting “back to the way things were.” Illnesses all had physical and spiritual causes and symptoms, and always pointed towards a need for change, achieved through ceremony, herbs, acupuncture and magic. The shaman guided the pa-

tient through ceremonies meant to create a new balance rather than restoring the old one.

When tea was eaten, it was often boiled with ginger, spices, other medicinal herbs, sugar and even chilis. Leaves were also eaten as salad, roasted and mixed with other dishes, pickled or cooked with sauces, peanuts and oil. Some of these dishes still survive today in Yunnan, Laos, Myanmar and Vietnam. These soups would have been consumed ceremonially in shamans’ huts and also as hospitality in the homes of aboriginal people when guests came over. Then and now, tea was as much an act of kindness and sharing as it was a powerful herbal formula for spiritual harmony with the self and Nature.

Eventually, some tea producers began to compress tea into cakes for a host of reasons including practical factors like storage and transportation, but also due to the quality and essence of the tea itself. The cakes were made

of the best quality ground buds, and buds and leaves in lower quality versions. This method of tea production was popularized in the Tang Dynasty (618–907). Much of what we know about these cakes comes from the *Tea Sutra* (*Cha Jing*, 茶经) by Lu Yu. (We have translated and annotated this text in the September 2015 issue.) The tea was harvested, steamed to de-enzyme, ground, compressed and dried. These cakes were much smaller than the puerh cakes we’re used to seeing, and different in constitution as well. The steaming and crushing resulted in a very different kind of tea than most of us have ever seen. (There is a Korean tea called “*ddok cha*” that is made into similar cakes, and even strung through holes like Tang tea.) In the *Cha Jing*, Master Lu says the best tea cakes, made from tender, juicy leaves, would have a yellow hue with wavy crests across the surface. Perhaps we can imagine a string of yellowish cakes freshly picked just the day before.

According to the *Cha Jing*, the cakes were roasted over a flame, maybe giving them a flavor akin to fine oolong, especially when they were well-roasted. Then, the tea was ground and put into a paper envelope. After it cooled, it was ground by hand into the amount of powder one intended to use in the session. Water was brought to a boil and a bowl set aside to temper the brew later. Salt was also added to congeal the brew and smooth out the water. The ground tea of those days was a very rough powder, nowhere near the consistency of today's tea powders, especially matcha. This was added to the boiling water and the bowl of water taken out earlier was added back in to temper the water. Then the tea liquor, frothing from the boil, was ladled out into bowls. This ceremony was a refined and distilled version of what shamans and Daoist mendicants had been doing for centuries, using skill and a deep knowledge of the elements of fine tea to take the art to new heights without sacrificing its spiritual potency.

Lu Yu spoke of understanding water and fire, and using the highest qualities of both. He also suggested that a Chajin needs to know how to select tea, evaluating the cakes by smell and appearance to choose the right tea—the quality of which would be based on the raw material used, which means the trees and terroir, and the skill of the processing, both of which he mentions specifically in the *Tea Sutra*. After that, the Chajin needs to understand teaware, its production, materials and quality. Lu Yu devotes a whole chapter to selecting the right accoutrements, well-crafted from the right materials and in the right shape, size and grace to facilitate skillful tea preparation. Finally, the Chajin needs to first understand and then cultivate proper method, harmonizing the skill of tea preparation with the body and soul so that it becomes second nature. All of these elements form the basis of a tea practice today, as they did in Master Lu's time. (They are the basis of gongfu tea practice, for example.)

Understanding water and fire, selecting tea and teaware and brewing the tea properly is an enhancement of the ceremony, bringing skill, tradition and refinement to the spirit of tea. Oftentimes, authors mistakenly assume that the *Tea Sutra* is merely a manual for tea brewing on a practical level in the way of a modern camera manual, which lists the materials and their operation. However, nothing could be further from the truth. All throughout the *Cha Jing*, Lu Yu hints at the deeper and subtler levels of tea. Also, his many other books have been lost to us, so we do not know if this manual was actually one of many books on the topic. Also, more importantly, we must remember that Lu Yu did not live in a society based on a materialistic, scientific worldview. The reduction of any aspect of life, including tea, to just materials and their functions would have been so foreign to a Tang Dynasty Chinese that even the concept would have been unthinkable. Lu Yu's life included myth and mystery, rich rites



and rituals, prayers and temples visited weekly. He believed in gods and mythical beasts like dragons and chimera that haunted the mountains, immortals that could fly and the possibility of achieving that state through alchemy and meditation. His worldview was deeply spiritual and filled with daily, weekly and annual connections to his ancestry, to Nature and the cosmos and to all the spirits, ghosts, demons and creatures that filled his world. In light of that, the idea that one would hike for days to a sacred spring and say prayers to the spirits before gathering water, then carry treasured tea and teaware to some other distant peak and spend all day and night brewing tea amongst the trees and stars—the idea that one would do all that merely for the sensual, physical flavor and aroma of the tea would have been absurd to him. In fact, the idea that the world or people were just conglomerates of “stuff” would have been outrageous. His worldview was inherently spiritual, in other words.

Master Lu’s teaware was covered in alchemical symbology. He certainly enjoyed the flavors and aromas of the teas he prepared, but his worldview included absolutely and fundamentally no separation of body and spirit. He worked with tea as much as spiritual elixir as he did for enjoyment and relaxation. This was religion, not hobby. And therefore the development of what were simpler ceremonies in previous centuries into a refined and resplendent art was in honor of something higher. This is perhaps akin to any transcendent art, like music, for example. Music starts with a deep love for the soul and a desire to connect with and share the spirit with others. Great music all comes from and leads to the heart. The absolute best music crosses through the heart’s gate into the spirit realm, as does all true art. In honor of that, the musician begins to learn, growing their knowledge and honing their skills to be a better, more refined and honed channel for the soul of music. Talent without soul is just virtuoso

so for its own sake, and is ultimately hollow and forgettable. But when skill and talent are refined in honor of the soul, great things happen to the artist and to those who experience that art. Tea ceremony is no different.

Lu Yu was surely not alone, but his work is all that survives physically, though more travels the non-verbal, energetic spirals of what has been transmitted to us through our tea lineages. He represents the shift from the crude and simple ceremonies of the forest to a refinement of the process. If this refinement loses touch with the forest from which it comes, divorcing itself from Nature and into the purely human realm, we lose all the soul of the art and of Tea. Refining our practice and abilities should be through and for the soul of Tea, from Yuanmo to Lu Yu, passing by old Shennong on the way. The refinement of tea brewing is an offering of hospitality to our guests, a way of cultivating ourselves and a way of honoring the spirit of Tea. That is Cha Dao.

Brewing Methods Over Time

Ofentimes, authors lead us astray with the idea that Chinese people “boiled tea in the Tang Dynasty (618–907), whisked it in the Song (960–1279) and then steeped it in the Ming (1368–1644).” This common sentiment is very misleading, though, as it is a very reductionistic representation of the Chinese empire, composed of hundreds and hundreds of ethnicities, languages and cultures. China has always been a vast place, inhabited by countless peoples with very different lifeways, and any attempt to oversimplify the history of these many peoples is often centered around one ethnicity, ignoring the indigenous peoples for example.

Saying that “Chinese people boiled tea in the Tang Dynasty” is akin to saying that “Americans wore bell-bottoms in the 1960s.” Though this is true, it is misleading because not all Americans wore bell-bottoms. It is more accurate to say that “it was popular amongst certain segments of society to wear bell-bottoms in the 1960s.” In the same way, it

was popular amongst certain people to boil tea in the way Lu Yu describes in the Tea Sutra. This doesn’t mean that all people in China were brewing tea in such a refined way with expensive accoutrements. Aborigines in Yunnan, for example, continued boiling tea in the ways they always had, mostly with ginger and other spices. In fact, Lu Yu himself disdains such brewing methods in his work, which is evidence of their popularity throughout his age.

In the Ming Dynasty, the first emperor rejected the complicated and very refined process of whisking tea for the simple, whole-leaf steeped tea that he had grown up with as a peasant and monk, suggesting that steeping tea obviously was going on amongst farmers and peasants long before he popularized it at court.

When we say that Chinese people made tea in a certain way during a certain era, we really mean the court—the upper echelons of society who wrote the historical account of what happened at that time. The scholars and nobles de-

fined the trends of their time, though their lifestyle may not have resembled at all the life of simple people, let alone distant indigenous or ethnic minorities that spoke their own language and were so removed culturally and geographically from the court that its ways had very little influence over their lives. In general, all of history suffers from this myopia since literacy rates decrease the further back in time we go, and also do so along class lines since only the upper classes read and wrote, leaving us only their account of things. The fact is that China has always had a plethora of brewing methods and traditions, which, for the most part, flourished simultaneously. Some were mainstream, some were championed by the court and nobles and others were only practiced by small groups in certain locations. But the history of tea is rich in spirit, myth, meaning, methodology and practice, and we shouldn’t let over-reductionistic statements that break brewing down into eras and prevent us from celebrating that diversity.



抹茶 WHISKED TEA

In the Song Dynasty (960–1279), the processing of tea changed and the ability to grind finer-grained powder allowed for the creation of a new kind of tea cake that was intended to be whisked in bowls. Tea in the Song Dynasty shared in Master Lu's mystical pursuit of foam: the fine, smooth and creamy bubbles that make tea delicious and defined the well-prepared bowl of tea from the ordinary. This pursuit is most likely what influenced the shift in tea production to finer powder that bubbles more, as well as the changes in brewing that also facilitated more and more glorious, white, cloudy foam—suggesting the mountains where sages “cloudwalk,” their distant hermitages above the mists, fogs and clouds that separated ordinary folks’ world below from the Heaven realms above.

Chinese people have always worshiped mountains. The character for a holy person is literally a “mountain person (仙).” The mountains are the Earth’s movement upwards towards Heaven, representing the balance of Yin and Yang. Tea is also of that holy realm, bringing the essence of the mountain to society. Through the whisking of tea, frothy clouds transport the Chajin back to that mysterious realm of immortals, far above the dust of the world filled with the choking trials and tribulations of mundane life. The final bit of foam that clings to the bowl after the last sigh of satisfaction emphasizes a shift beyond the struggles of life to the misty realm of the spirits.

Over time, tea processing grew more refined, as did the teaware and brewing methods, enhancing precision and creating more fluidity and grace through an increasing economy of movement. The tea cakes were harvested, steamed, ground and compressed, as cakes had been in the Tang Dynasty, but with more skill and refinement, resulting in a much smaller density of particles. The tea was ground into a fine powder and placed in a bowl, usually “*tianmu* (天目),” and water was added from an elegant ewer, and the tea was then whisked into a frothy dream of deliciousness. The whisk itself was flatter than modern ones, with thicker tines, and the bowls more rounded.

In 1107, the emperor Song Huizong (宋徽宗) composed his scroll on tea, entitled “Treatise on Tea (*Da Kuan Cha Lun*, 大觀茶論),” which was a marvelous first in many ways. Very few “Sons of Heaven,” as the emperors were called, brushed their own thoughts onto paper in this way; and the treatise contains thorough descriptions not only of tea preparation of the time, but also farming, harvesting and processing of tea into cakes, which all occurred very far from the isolated king in his palace. (We have translated and annotated this marvelous text in the April 2016 issue.) The emperor seems to have learned enough to start a farm and factory should he have chosen to. He was an amazing character indeed, and the fact that he found his way into the Story of the Leaf isn’t so surprising, given the charisma and erudition rarely shown by other emperors. And indeed, no other emperor before or after is known to have prepared his own tea by hand.

It was around this time that Chinese culture and religion began to influence Japan, and travelers brought back Buddhism, tea and other influential ideas, art and culture. The influences between the two countries had already been going on for some time, but it was in the Song that it reached a peak, with many Buddhist pilgrims traveling to the mainland. At that time, whisked tea ceremonies also migrated to Japan where they have evolved into their own beautiful, growing tree that thrives even today, despite the fact that whisked tea all but died out in China after the Song Dynasty with the first Ming Dynasty (1368–1644) emperor, Taizu’s (1328–1398, 明太祖) ban on powdered tea cakes. (You can read about this in the April 2017 issue.)

By the seventeenth century, Japanese tea masters had contributed to the philosophical underpinnings of the practice of making and drinking a bowl of whisked powdered tea and named it “*Chanoyu*,” which literally means “water for tea.” Eventually, Japan developed its own powdered tea for these ceremonies, called “matcha.” Matcha is referred to as powdered tea, but matcha should by no means be thought of as simply ground-up leaf tea.

It is a precise combination of leaf cultivation and fresh leaf processing and the blending methods of a skilled farmer that results in a powdered tea that possesses an astonishing array of invigorating tastes, a velvety texture and a rich, vivid, emerald-green color.

Matcha is manufactured from the fresh leaf of tea bushes that are grown in the shade under tented canopies. The tea bushes that yield these teas spend most of their spring growth cycle flushing under a tented cover away from sunlight. After the first initial growth spurt in the spring, a trellis is erected over the tea bushes, and densely woven netting is draped over the trellis and secured. These days, the simplest netting is made from dark, woven plastic; the most traditional and expensive netting is constructed of fine straw. These arrangements, called a “*tana*,” cover both the top and sides of the trellis (it is roomy enough for tea-pluckers to work inside), and the netting blocks roughly 90% of the sunlight from reaching the plants. The plants, nevertheless, still grow, and a peek under the netting reveals elongated leaf sets that have stretched towards the light.

The reason for shading the bushes is to increase chlorophyll production in the plants by reducing natural photosynthesis in the leaves. The extra chlorophyll changes the balance of the natural components of the leaf, but especially affects the proportion of:

茶 *L-theanine* (amino acid),
which is responsible for flavor

茶 *Caffeine*,
which controls bitterness

茶 *Catechins* (antioxidants),
which give tea its texture

This forced change in leaf chemistry yields a leaf which is soft, and tea that is slightly astringent, with the sweet and buttery undertones that high-grade Gyokuro and matcha are known for. Additionally, fine matcha contains a high degree of “*umami*”—the quality of rich mouthfeel derived from the presence of certain amino acids as the fifth element of taste, along with bitter, salty, sour and sweet.

OUR TEA POWDERS: DAWN & DUSK

Our Teas of the Month are not matcha, but rather a green tea and red tea ground to powder. They were not shaded and were not processed in the same way. The green tea, Dusk, is composed of both buds and leaf sets which were harvested, withered for a short time to remove moisture (not really to oxidize), so that the leaves will be limp enough for processing. Then the tea was pan-fired to de-enzyme the tea and arrest oxidation. After that, Dusk was rolled briefly to break down the cells, giving it a bolder breadth than most green teas. The tea was then dried in an oven set to a low temperature. After it cooled down for some days, it underwent two grinding processes. The first is rough and breaks the leaves down. Then the stems are sifted out and the tea is ground a second time into a much lighter powder suitable for boiling, whisking or cooking with.

Dawn, on the other hand, is made in much the same way as all red teas: it is harvested and withered/oxidized for a very long time—usually twelve to twenty-four hours in troughs with heated fans that allow the farmers to control airflow and temperature. After that, it is rolled for a very long time, until all the cells are broken down and the tea leaves resemble a paste. Then, the tea is piled and further oxidized for an hour or two before being roasted dry. Unlike the green tea, the roasting of this tea does more than just dry the leaves; it actually changes the chemistry and flavors of the tea. Beyond that, Dawn also rested for some time before it underwent the same two grindings as Dusk, creating a finer and finer powder to use in tea preparation or cooking.

Both of these teas are very unique, especially Dawn. The farmers in the Mingjian Organic Co-op never make powdered red tea, except when we order it. It is a very special tea indeed, offering many unique brewing and cooking experiences. These tea powders connect us to the history of tea in a profound way, allowing us to eat and brew through all the ages of tea—from cooking to boiling to whisking tea. The magic is that in this way we consume the whole leaf, as opposed to just the liquor decanted from steeping tea in

hot water. We take in the whole of its essence this way, digesting and becoming tea in what may be a more intimate way. We therefore invite you to walk through this very modern window into the entire history and heritage of ancient tea, exploring that world through cooking treats, boiling concoctions in a cauldron and whisking frothy paths to cloudwalk the stars!

Aside from providing this month's tea, which you are sure to love, Mr. Xie Yuan Zai (謝元在) is a very important part of the scenery at our Center, and will be very important for many of you as well, because so many of our visitors come here with a curiosity about how tea is processed. It is very important to experience with your own hands just how difficult it is to make tea, so that in your own soreness you will develop a tremendous respect for the Leaf. This respect isn't just in the billions of years of evolution, or in the Nature we always wax poetic about: the wind and rain, sun and moonshine, minerals, mountain and water that flow from roots to crown. It is also in the blood, sweat and tears of generation after generation of farmers. And there is a deep reverence in seeing just how much mastery, skill and, dare we say, "art" in the crafting of the Leaf. And so, with great joy we take as many of our guests as possible to a few different farms to try their hands at tea processing. It is amazing to make your own tea, and take it home with you. If you didn't have enough reasons to come stay with us, here's another: Mr. Xie has formally invited each and every one of you to come to his farm and make tea, eat a nice lunch and take the tea you picked and crafted home with you!

Mr. Xie is a third-generation farmer in Mingjian, Nantou, Central Taiwan. Mingjian is lower altitude, in the foothills of the central mountain range. In the last few decades, such lower altitude tea has been adumbrated by the popularity of the teas grown higher up. Though areas like Hsinchu and Miao Li counties, where Eastern Beauty is grown, have struggled since high mountain oolongs have come to dominate the market, Mingjian has prospered by providing lower-priced teas for export, or large-scale produc-

tion for the bottled tea market (often called "Ready to Drink" or "RTD"). Mr. Xie's family has grown small scale productions of oolong tea over three generations, since before the higher teas even existed.

Like so many other farmers, Mr. Xie started to get the nagging (coughing, wheezing) feeling that these chemicals were harmful to his family, his community and his land. When his wife almost miscarried their second child in 1997, he had had enough. Despite opposition from friends and family, Mr. Xie made a commitment to become an organic tea farmer, no matter the cost. He first attended some organic farming classes held by the Mokichi Okada Association (MOA).

From 1997 to 2000, Mr. Xie and his family struggled to maintain their principles. His tea was sub-par, and he lost most all his customers. His father, who had been worried when he suggested upsetting the status quo in the first place, was very critical of his decisions. Organic farming is difficult, and it requires a radical change in farming and processing methodology—changes that would take time to learn. Rather than give up, as many would have done, Mr. Xie got a part-time job as a painter and carpenter, working day and night—either painting or farming—to keep his family afloat. Finally, in the early 2000s, his acumen for organic farming improved to the point that he was able to take his teas to market again. Mr. Xie's work hasn't stopped with his own farm. He knew that he would have to keep improving his skills, creating new and better teas, and help show his neighbors the value of organic farming, especially since their land and his are close enough to influence each other. He formed a co-op with other farmers and began teaching locals to shift to organic methods, offering them equal shares in their combined enterprise. As more people have joined this local group, the incentive to do so has also increased. To date, more than twenty farmers in the Mingjian region are organic, including Mr. Xie's immediate neighbors.

Mr. Xie's kind heart shows in his teas. He cares deeply about tea and the Earth and Global Tea Hut.



Brewing Tips 冲泡技巧 完成好茶

Dusk and Dawn tea powders are really more for baking, cooking and making treats with, and we hope that you at least try one of the delicious recipes from this issue over the course of the month. Remember that we will be choosing a few winners who post pictures to [#gthteatreas](#) to receive an Expansion Pack of extra powder. Otherwise, you can learn how to order extra powder on p. 59 if you want to try more recipes or drink the tea and cook with it. You probably do have enough tea to try a bit of each one whisked or boiled and make one of the recipes as well, but we hope you will make more of the dishes offered in the coming pages, as that is the point of this month's magazine. Still, we won't leave you without some basic instructions for whisking and boiling these teas, if that is your preference.

Of course, you can whisk this month's tea just like you would matcha. Place three large scoops from a *chashaku* (a bamboo spoon for tea), or roughly a large tablespoon of either Dawn or Dusk powder into a large tea bowl. It helps to wash and preheat the bowl, but then you also have to dry it with a clean tea towel (*chakin*) so the powder doesn't stick. First, add just enough water to cover the powder, pouring around the edges of the powder as opposed to directly onto it, and letting the water flow over the powder slowly. Using your whisk, called a "*chasen*," slowly stir the powder into the water in circular movements. Keep your kettle to the side. (Take it off the heat and put it on a trivet, as we don't want the water to be too hot.) Add a nice, long pour of water to the edges of the bowl and begin whisking in circular and chopping motions. The circular motions stir the liquid towards the center and then the chopping motions blend the powder and liquid. Add six more dollops of water from as high as you can without splashing. This increases the foam, which makes whisked tea delicious—the more bubbles, the creamier and richer the tea will taste. Be sure to enjoy the tea quickly as we don't want the foam to dissipate. If you are handing the bowl around a group, you may have to re-whisk the tea halfway through, especially Dawn as red tea's foam lasts for a shorter time. This will keep the bowl frothy and delicious.

You can also boil this month's tea if you want to, which is quite fun. Bring a cauldron of water to a boil. Using a large wooden spoon or a chopstick, spin the boiling water into a vortex and quickly dump it in a small bowl with a couple tablespoons worth of tea powder into the center of the whirlpool. This will distribute the powder throughout the boiling water. You can further stir the concoction if you like, perhaps making witch noises as you do. You may also want to add a tiny pinch of mineral salt, like Himalayan salt, to the brew, which will make it smoother and more full-bodied. You can then ladle the tea into bowls and enjoy. If you are going to drink more than one bowl, you may want to stir the cauldron once more before serving the second or even third round. This is a fun way to enjoy this month's tea, and will be a very special ceremony for you and your loved ones.



茶道



Whisked Tea

Water: spring water or best bottled
Fire: coals, infrared or gas
Heat: hotter, fish-eye, roughly 90–95 °C
Brewing Methods: boiled tea or whisked tea (both are fun)
Steeping: boil for three to five minutes (whisk until completely frothy)
Patience: three to five if boiled

Boiled Tea

茶 Try whisking the green tea especially. Turn the liquor in circles and then using a chopping motion to create froth. Repeat the spinning to keep the liquor turning as you whisk.



TEA SAGE HUT FOOD

FROM FARM TO TABLE

茶人: Shen Su (聖素), Matthew Grohne
& Morgann DéMarks

Around two years ago, we started renting the large farm next to the Center and incorporated farming into our lives and ten-day courses. So far, we are growing and harvesting around thirty percent of our own food. We hope to increase that to half in the coming years. Growing our own food has changed everything here. The diet of our courses has six to eight years of thought, practice and trial and error behind it, including tailoring the meals to the activities and particular teas drunk on any given day. Those who come here to serve a course are encouraged to use cooking as a practice, making mindful food filled with love and kindness.

THE DAO OF FARMING BY SHEN SU (聖素)

Our center, Tea Sage Hut, is located in the small city of Miaoli. It is tucked away down a back road and surrounded by rice paddies and intensely planted vegetable gardens. Miaoli is a small government town, so the young adults typically move away to the bigger cities for education and work opportunities while the younger and older generations reside in town. It's not uncommon to see grandparents and grandchildren out in the fields tilling the land and tending their small vegetable gardens. A few years ago, we were fortunate that our landlord offered us a small plot of land, just a minute from the Center, where we could grow food. It was marshy and pocketed with dying cherry blossom trees due to the heavy moisture in the soil, but it was land nonetheless, and it had potential—with some hard work!

We had to dig up and remove most of the trees and then channel water around the perimeter of the property before we could design our first garden beds, which took a handful of days with the help of many Tea Sage Hut

guests. It was a communal effort from the beginning that quickly found its place in our course schedule and has since played an integral part in the guest experience at our Center. The soil was like heavy, wet clay in many areas, or dry and rock-hard in others. It took a while before we amended the land to an arable state. We drew up a rough draft of the land and designed our first few garden beds. We made three arching beds to create a circle that focused on a central garden altar where we planted a beautiful Camellia tree with flowers as red as altar lamps. Our initial plantings and harvests were small and inconsistent as we learned to grow our own food using simple and organic farming methods.

Farming as a Practice

In India, it was and still is common for monks in many traditions to beg for food. This was part of their culture. This allowed monks to humble themselves amidst laypeople, nourish themselves and focus their time on self-cul-

tivation through meditation practice, rather than farming and cooking. When these monastic ways of life came from India to China in the form of *Zen* (*Chan* in Mandarin), begging for food wasn't part of Chinese culture. It quickly became apparent that an alternative method to begging for food that suited monastic life would be necessary if Zen were to survive, and survive it did!

Simply put, it became necessary for monks to farm, grow and cook their own food as a community. In one sense, this meant less time for focused spiritual work and meditation, especially because farming and cooking are not quick tasks to check off a list; they require great deals of time, effort, planning and preparation. In another sense, however, if begging for food facilitated spiritual work in some cultures, then farming and cooking food could do the same in others. Just because it required more time and effort away from the meditation cushion did not mean it couldn't become a spiritual practice itself. There is a Zen affirmation: "This is my practice!"

食 招 待





It contains a lifetime of lessons, but simply put means that practice is not separate from everyday life. Whatever it is you are doing, it has the potential to become part of your practice with the right orientation, no matter how mundane it may appear on the surface. This was the mindset with which to approach the need for farming in a monastic setting and in a culture that didn't generally accept begging for food. *Farming is my practice!* This is the mindset that we do our best to carry on in modern times as we farm clean, healthy food at Tea Sage Hut.

Farming is Important

Growing your own food is important for so many reasons. Perhaps the most important is that anytime we get closer to the source of something—be it our water, our clothes or our food—we feel much more connected to it. And when you feel more connected to

something, you respect it more. If you own anything that is handmade and you personally know who made it, you are more likely to treasure and preserve it. This is because you care about the connection it has to the source of its creation. We live in a world of disposable items whose source we often know nothing about, so we don't have a real sense of connection to our belongings, making them easy to throw away, replace or disrespect. Because food is such an integral part of our everyday lives, knowing where it comes from by growing it yourself is a rare privilege these days that puts you in contact with its source—Nature! In a world of disconnection and distraction, connection to source is everything, especially to something as important as food, and especially when the feeling of disconnection to Nature is so strong. This is the deep importance of farming food.

Almost everyone has a proverbial green thumb to some degree. Everyone who comes to the center to attend a

ten-day course marvels at how joyous it is to work outside at the farm, to get their hands dirty, smell the soil and to palpably experience where their food is coming from. When you start growing your own food, you are immediately reconnected to the land, the soil, the local ecology, the seasons and weather patterns. Growing food puts you in contact with the rhythm of the natural environment. As well, it lends itself to more self-sufficiency, healthy exercise, and even has the potential to save your wallet. Growing your own food is both a literal cultivation of the land and also a form of self-cultivation, when you orient towards it skillfully, as discussed above. *This is my practice!*

Farming & Tea

In our daily prayers before our meals, we reflect that food is amongst the most important medicines we will take on this day. Clean, healthy food is



茶 Starting a farm was one of the greatest changes to happen at the Tea Sage Hut. We love growing our own food, and hope to continue this trend into the future, serving as much as half of our own food! When guests come for ten-day courses nowadays, they get the chance to serve on the farm one morning. They all love the experience of getting their hands in the dirt and participating in the creation of all the wonderful food that they eat over the ten days of the course. Not only does farming our own food connect us to the Earth, but it really does result in more delicious meals with a greater vibrancy that lasts throughout the day. We welcome you all to come and try for yourselves!

essential to our wellbeing, and as cliché as it is, we are what we eat. To take that slightly deeper, we are the environment from which that food comes from as well. Again, that's why connection to the source of your food is so important. When you know where it's coming from and you experience the connection between yourself and the environment, you are more likely to care for it, protect it, or at least less likely to pollute it. Countless times I've heard stories about conventional farmers who spray chemicals on their land but reserve a small plot for themselves without the use of any chemicals. They know first-hand how concentrated, unhealthy and hazardous those chemicals are. Of course they don't want it on their food! Though they farm the food themselves and are closely connected to its source, there are many factors veiling them from the truth and influencing this ignorant behavior: profit-motivation, corruption and lack of education to name only

a few. This is true in the world of tea and food production. Tea, as well, is a heavily industrialized crop and when conventionally grown has a hugely negative impact on our environment and therefore ourselves. This and more was covered in depth in our extended September edition all about organics.

Our *primary* approach to tea is as a Way of Life, which in part means we orient towards tea as medicine as well. As Wu De often says, "The leaf is the tree's expression of its relationship to its environment." So too, our food is the soil's expression of its relationship to its environment. Tea and food are both medicines; they nourish and balance us, and it is glaringly obvious that effective, healthy medicine must be grown in a healthy environment. You cannot have medicine that facilitates health when grown in an unhealthy environment. You cannot supply unhealthy, dirty tea or food to the public and save only clean reserves for yourself when you understand your inter-

connection with others and the environment. Their health is your health. Your health is a reflection of the environment's health.

So, it is our responsibility as tea lovers to see the relationship between food and tea, in their production and consumption, and act in a way that considers the source of these things and our immediate interconnection. Both food and tea, as medicines, are asking us to be in harmony with ourselves and our world.

Impact of Growing Our Own Food

Guests love being at the farm, but perhaps what is most impactful outside of that direct experience is the fact that everything they plant won't actually be used during their course. Their crops won't be harvest-ready until at least the next ten-day course.

This means that past guests planted the vegetables that are in their meals, and that future guests at the Center will use their vegetables. What a beautiful cycle to be a part of! After all, Tea Sage Hut is a donation-based Center, and contributions of time and energy in the form of service are often the most helpful type of donation, and that is automatically integrated into the entire farming experience.

It's a small and impactful detail, but this farm has actually improved our relationship to our neighbors as well. There is one old grandma in particular who also shares a nearby plot of land. In the past, she struggled with certain aspects of our community, but that all changed after we started growing food just like she was. Now, she always stops

by with a smile on her face, giving us farming tips, sharing her harvests and often scolding us gently for planting certain crops too close together! She even brings her nephew to the Center quite often now to enjoy the beautiful koi pond in our courtyard.

As for the future, this small-scale plot of land acts as a model for our food production system at Light Meets Life. There, we envision larger plots of land, a greater variety of seasonal crops, and farmers, servers or guests who tend the land daily as part of their practice. We also want to incorporate as much of our own food as possible into our diet as we work towards self-sufficiency. It is our hope that this model inspires other communities to do the same. There may even come a

time when we can invite organic farmers from around the country and host agricultural workshops to teach and promote sustainable methods of farming both food and tea. In this way, like guests sharing food with future guests, our current Center will share its model of farming with the future center and all of its guests and residents. And together, we can step closer to the source of our food and medicine, and till the gardens of connection, respect and harmony with Nature.



COOKING MEALS AT THE TEA SAGE HUT BY MATTHEW GROHNE

I write this as I sit at the Tea Sage Hut, having just finished serving my second course in six months. Anyone who has visited the Hut—whether sitting a course, serving a course or dropping in as a guest—knows the importance of food in the culture here: food is hospitality, connection and medicine, and meals are an opportunity to come together as a community and share in the nourishment that supports our practice. Meals are also a time for reflection and an extension of one's meditation practice. Indeed, breakfast is held in silence each morning immediately following an hour of sitting meditation. However, before any of that happens the meal must be prepared, and assisting with that process is one of the main responsibilities in serving a course.

I rarely cook at home. Often, I return home from work tired and with neither the will nor the energy to spend time in the kitchen preparing a proper meal. Instead, I tend to resort to quick, simple foods that require little or no preparation, even as they tend to be reasonably healthy. This is in stark contrast with the approach taken at the Tea Sage Hut, where every meal is prepared with forethought, care, time and attention, regardless of energy or the level of busyness. Honoring the participants of the course, as well as any other guests to the Hut, is of the utmost importance to all aspects of life here, and the preparation of meals is perhaps one of the most obvious expressions of this honoring.

Honoring through food at the Tea Sage Hut has several facets. First and foremost, it means preparing food that is healthy and conducive to a life of tea. What one eats affects the overall functioning of the mind, body and spirit, and thus affects one's tea practice in ways seen and unseen. Each meal at the Hut is meticulously planned so that those eating the food are left feeling light, energetic, calm and satisfied—important when one is putting effort toward meditation, working during service periods and taking in vast amounts of learning related to tea.

Secondly, guests are honored in the preparation of food that is not only nutritious but also delicious. Sensitiv-

ity developed through tea and meditation on the part of those designing the meals is leveraged toward making more and more delicious food for guests, and meals served during the day are often reflected on later in order to further refine them. In my experience, the result of this intention is that guests (including myself) are startled by just how varied and tasty the meals are, even as the general format (grain with fruit and/or nuts for breakfast, a macrobiotic compilation for lunch) for the meals remains consistent.

The third way that guests are honored through food at the Tea Sage Hut is through the time and energy that it takes to prepare each meal. Meal preparation generally takes at least an hour for breakfast and at least two hours for lunch, with two to three people in the kitchen. Nearly everything is made from the raw ingredients, with many of the vegetables having been grown in the Hut's own garden or farm plot, planted by previous attendees to a course. In that way, the time given toward any meal goes even beyond the time cooking, and into the planting and harvesting of the ingredients. Like tea, the process has no beginning.

Finally, guests are honored through the attention and care brought to each meal. At the beginning of this course,

it was suggested that we turn each meal preparation period into a meditation—lighting incense, saying prayers and approaching the whole process with mindfulness and care. In other words, we were encouraged to bring the meditative mind out of the meditation hall and into the kitchen. Meal preparation is often performed with minimal speaking and close attention to each chop and stir. I don't know whether that intention and energy changes the food at a perceptible level or not, but it does change the mind of the one preparing that food.

Resources, skills, time, spirit—all of these can be given in an act of generosity. When I think of the approach to living at the Tea Sage Hut, generosity is one of the main things that comes to mind. And in no place is that more evident than in the kitchen. Honoring and care is present at each step, and are an essential part of caring for those who sit for a meal. It is my sincere hope that each of you have the opportunity at some point to taste both the food and the generosity here!



LEARNING TO COOK BY MORGANN DÉMARKS

I was raised on fast food. And if the food I ate didn't come with a toy, it came from a box in the freezer, a can in the cupboard or a bag in the pantry. I never understood the concept of "homemade" because no one was at home to do the making. My dad wasn't around, and my mom worked two jobs and went to school. "Homemade" was the peanut butter and jelly or grilled cheese sandwich a nanny handed to me. And on the extremely rare occasion that my mom cooked a meal (because she is actually an incredible cook), the energy that was used to make that meal came from a place of obligation or aversion as a response to the trauma she experienced throughout her childhood having to single-handedly cook and clean for her parents and five brothers and sisters.

That was my relationship to food.

Fortunately, at the age of twelve, I arrived at the decision to become a vegetarian. And although it wasn't a conscious decision stemming from health/environmental concerns but rather from the solace I felt from my profound fondness of animals, I felt fortunate to have that affection steep into my way of being. This meant nothing in a household of adamant flesh-eaters; it was barely even acknowledged, let alone supported or praised, but it was allowed and that was enough. So, although my journey down the rabbit hole of processed and pre-packaged continued, it just took a turn in a different direction.

As I got older—much older I should say—I started to finally wake up to what I was being introduced to and ingesting into my body. It was actually around the time I began meditating and sitting retreats regularly. Through meditation, I was able to pay close attention to what my body was asking for, and deeply listen to it after I ate food that supported a daily meditation practice. Having the luxury of eating vegan food for an extended period of time on retreat really allowed me to see how it not just affected my continuity of practice, but how it was also distinctly transforming my spirit, body and my mental state. This was the impetus for another shift in my food orientation. Back home I began to seek

out food that mirrored the meals in monasteries. Still feeling intimidated and out of place in the kitchen, I moved away from the chains of fast food to the threads of vegan/vegetarian restaurants whose food was clean and ethically sourced. And of course, this new avenue of eating shifted so much in my life exponentially. However, financially it wasn't realistic or sustainable. That has been my life, up until now...

Now, I write these words approaching the second month in a one-year commitment to service here at the Hut. In less than two months I am proud to say that my relationship to food, and the kitchen, has changed drastically. When I arrived here, I was not just scared, but petrified, about what I knew was waiting for me just around the corner... preparing meals. With zero experience and a failed attempt to do so last time I was here (I burnt the breakfast!), I was consumed with fear and limiting storylines. How can I do something so important for others that I have never been able to do for myself? But that exact question is what kept me stagnant in my growth. It wasn't my lack of experience or the knowledge that I thought I needed to attain in order to make a meal; it was the permission I wasn't giving myself to do so. It was the comfort I was hiding behind and the shame I was drowning in that created a barrier between me and the next step in the evolution of my practice with food. And the moment I arrived here and it wasn't just about me anymore, my fear, my feelings of inadequacy, my embarrassment, everything changed, yet again.

I am now in the kitchen every day, uncomfortable and uneasy while cultivating confidence little by little. I am making meals on my own and continue to learn by assisting with the preparation of the more complex ones. Every time I prepare a meal, I am humbled by the lessons in every chop, every peel, every boil, every stir. I'm so appreciative of the immeasurable support both in and out of the kitchen from all of my tea brothers and sisters here and how their mere presence alone creates more opportunities for me to turn this practice into ritual. More and more,

food has become medicine for me. It is fuel; it is life. The more I view it through this lens, the more I can share it with the love and harmony it fills me with. And the more I participate in this beautiful cycle, the more I am able to approach each meal with the same reverence that exists when I hold a bowl, the same reverence that exists when I sit on the cushion. I'm excited to continue to expand on this path and would be honored to share and prepare a meal for you on your next visit to the Hut.



✿ *This is our "Winter Bowl," for the days when we need a hearty lunch. We use ingredients from our own garden to make it. It has salad, including micro-greens we grow on shelves at the office, roasted potatoes with herbs from our small herb garden, steamed pumpkin, fermented radishes and massaged cabbage with passion fruit mixed in. It is a favorite of guests. We often serve this on farming day, to help nourish the guests after a morning of hard work on the farm. This bowl is warming and very kind to the belly.*

冬暖碗



KOMBUCHA

THE MAGIC OF FERMENTED TEA

  **Connor Goss**

Kombucha is a wonderful way to combine a love for cooking and a love for tea. It is much more of a beverage or tonic than a Dao, like tea preparation, but you can turn the process into an alchemy of self, as you can anything in life. We often receive questions about making kombucha at home, especially from guests who try our home brews when they visit the Center. We asked our own Global Tea Hut kombucha expert and professional, Connor Goss, to write about his experience brewing kombucha. He has done so at the Center, at home and professionally for a kombucha company. He not only explains the method so that you can all have a try at home, but also discusses some of the science, history, alchemy and lore of kombucha. This healthy tonic is a wonderful addition to a healthy diet, bringing tea, fermentation and microbial balance and other helpful digestive aids into our lives in a delicious and nutritious way.

As many of you have likely noticed, there has been an incredible surge in the popularity of kombucha within the world, especially within those who are more health conscious. It is not hard to notice how saturated places are now with kombucha; just walk down the aisles of your local supermarket or health food store and you will be overwhelmed by the vast ocean of different flavors and brands of kombucha available to partake in. Which one do you choose? The choice may seem difficult to make, as each brand has its pros and cons, e.g., some are sweeter or some are more carbonated, many are pasteurized leaving little in the way of bacteria to become acquainted with, some are flavored with cold-pressed juices and others with all manner of things that do not seem like they belong in a bottle of kombucha—really who thinks to put chia seeds in their kombucha? Ultimately, I would suggest making your own! This is the easiest course of action, requiring little to begin your journey with kombucha brewing, and then you know what is going into your kombucha as well as beginning to cul-

tivate a relationship with the microbial world that is everywhere. Fermentation in general is a wonderful way of beginning to connect more deeply to place, to where you call home, learning through a relationship of reciprocity about the many microorganisms that inhabit it. Kombucha brewing in particular is a beautiful way of beginning to befriend these little living beings, that often are forgotten about until the fruit you left on the kitchen bench a few days too long has begun to transform into a vibrantly covered fuzzy offering to the microbial world—especially if you are a Chajin! What better way to begin fermenting than learning the alchemy between tea and fermentation. Kombucha brewing is the alchemy between humans and nature, both working closely together to create something that could not have been created alone.

The History of Kombucha

As often is the case with anything in the world, we humans love to weave interesting stories and origins around

the things we make and consume, in the hopes of them appealing more to others. Kombucha has not escaped this in the least. It seems to be now steeped in part science and historical evidence and equal part mysterious origins. You will likely at one point or another in your journey with kombucha come across the stories of it being thousands of years old or perhaps only a few hundred years old. The same goes for the apparent magical healing properties of kombucha. I would recommend, especially in regards to the latter, that you drink your kombucha with a healthy dose of skepticism, listening more to your own body than the many wild claims that float out in the world, much like the brown stringy globs of yeast in the bottom of your kombucha. There is a growing movement towards a greater understanding of kombucha through science now as it enters into mainstream culture, and hopefully this will provide consumers especially with a better understanding of what is actually in your bottle of kombucha and whether it is beneficial to drink. At the end of the day, though, your own experience with drinking kombucha is



more important than what is perpetuated online and by kombucha companies. If you enjoy drinking kombucha, then drink as much as your body responds favorably to! Moderation, as with all things, is important here. There is always a fine line between medicine and abuse, which we follow by listening to our own bodies. This applies to the entire practice of plant medicine, including tea, and should, of course, also apply to kombucha.

Alchemy

Kombucha is a way of communing with the microbial world. It is an alchemy that has blossomed in recent years as kombucha finds its way into all sorts of previously unimagined places. It is a beautiful symbiotic relationship between bacteria and yeast. The exact microbial composition of kombucha varies tremendously depending on many known and unknown factors, such as the tea that you use or how long you leave your kombucha to ferment each time. However, the more commonly found bacterium in kombucha are

called *Acetobacter* and *Gluconobacter*. Alongside these acetic acid bacteria that produce kombucha many different yeasts have been found to inhabit kombucha, more commonly: *Saccharomyces*, *Zygosaccharomyces* and *Brettanomyces*. If anyone is going to seriously brew kombucha, whether on a larger scale at home or commercially, understanding what bacteria and yeast are present in your ferments is absolutely vital! This knowledge acts as an invaluable guide when it comes to brewing kombucha, as you can slowly adjust your brewing to suit the particular bacteria and yeasts using both scientific measures and intuition.

How does one make kombucha? Well, really it is incredibly easy, requiring little in the way of brewing instruments and ingredients. Kombucha brewing is an interesting meeting of science and intuition, and finding the balance between the two. Too much of either will result in either kombucha made without love and influence the bacteria and yeasts that produce kombucha, which are living beings so the environment they live in will influence what they make, or the other possibili-

ty is that without any roots in science, you will have very inconsistent batches of kombucha or worse. You have to listen and adapt to the process.

It is rather amazing that our ancestors could work with fermentation processes with such precision and grace despite the fact that they did not have an understanding of the microbial world (which by definition is microscopic). In puerh tea, for example, the processing evolved over centuries to incorporate the myriad bacteria, fungus and yeast that ferment the tea. Our ancestors also made alcohol, cheeses and kombucha with only a sensitivity to the process, listening and adapting as they went. There is alchemy in this process: an alternative science based on synthesis rather than analysis, bringing elements together as opposed to dissecting them to understand them. I don't think these two perspectives need to be antagonistic, though. We can work with both of them, learning from the science of the microbial world to achieve more consistency and also transforming ourselves through becoming the brewing process. We *are* Tea in a life of Cha Dao.

WHAT YOU WILL NEED:

- 茶 *Scoby (It should be nice and plump with a gorgeous white color.)*
- 茶 *Starter tea*
- 茶 *Some nice organic red tea—whole leaves, not tea bags!*
- 茶 *Organic cane sugar*
- 茶 *Great spring water, filtered rain water or filtered tap water if you do not have access to clean rain water*
- 茶 *Vessel for brewing—glass or ceramic will be suitable*
- 茶 *Basic kitchen supplies for brewing tea and mixing things*
- 茶 *Love!*

HOW TO BREW:

You firstly will need to find yourself a scoby and a nice starter tea. These can be acquired from a friend or from an online distributor. Make sure the scoby you get is plump and healthy! It should feel alive, humming with vitality. I would advise to be careful when buying a scoby online; many online distributors dehydrate their scobies for convenience, which can be done properly, but it is much easier for your first time brewing kombucha to have a scoby that is still alive fully. The starter tea should be very strong. It should not be too sweet. It should taste like a nice clean vinegar without any yeasty notes.

For the purposes of this article, we will be making approximately two liters of steeped tea. However, this is a basic recipe, and the ratios can be adjusted according to personal preferences for future batches.

- 1) Begin by boiling the filtered water in a small pot.
- 2) Once the water has reached a boil, remove from the heat source and place about 18 grams of red tea into the pot, cover with a lid, and allow to steep for fifteen minutes.
- 3) Strain the steeped tea, being careful to remove all of the leaves before then adding 150 grams of sugar. Stir well until all the sugar has dissolved.
- 4) Leave the sweet tea to cool until it reaches room temperature. It is im-

portant that you never add hot liquid to the kombucha as it will kill much of the bacteria and yeast.

- 5) Once cooled, place the sweet tea in your desired brewing vessel, then add the starter tea, stir gently until both are well mixed. Then place your scoby on top of the liquid. The scoby may sink initially, which is okay! This sometimes happens and should not be a cause for concern.

- 6) Cover the brewing vessel with a piece of cloth and rubber band or cord tied tightly. Place the vessel somewhere that is warm, ideally above 23°C. Then leave your kombucha to ferment for about one or two weeks depending on the temperature in the brewing environment.

- 7) Throughout the fermentation period, regularly check on your kombucha to see how it is fermenting. The longer that your kombucha ferments, the more acidic it will become, so leave it until it reaches the desired sweetness and acidity. I personally love a slightly sweet, acidic kombucha, but some people prefer one that is much sweeter. It is completely up to personal preference, and this is one of the great benefits of brewing kombucha at home—you get the best possible bottle of kombucha for you! You can adapt the sweetness and vinegarity to your taste and to the needs of your body, mind and soul, adding other herbs if you like, as well.

- 8) Once the kombucha has reached its desired state, harvest the kombucha, leaving about 250ml of starter for the next batch and the scoby. The remaining kombucha can be placed into tightly sealed glass bottles. This is where the second fermentation begins. The second fermentation usually takes a few days depending on the weather; the longer you leave it the more carbonated it will become, too long and the bottles may explode. You can add whatever flavorings you want to the second fermentation. I often prefer not adding anything so that I can taste the tea in the kombucha, but sometimes I will add ginger and turmeric or various fruits. This is a whole world within itself.

- 9) Leave the bottles until the desired amount of fizziness and then refrigerate immediately. And that is it! You now have a limitless supply of kombucha to enjoy.

Kombucha is a vast world, so hopefully what has been written here can help inspire you to explore further the microbial world through fermentation. The best way to learn more is to begin fermenting and experimenting with different teas, flavors, temperatures, etc. May we all find deeper connection to place through cultivating a relationship with the microbial world, with all the delightful living beings that give us such an abundance of foods and beverages that allow us to celebrate life!



Tea Powder



Recipes

Learning to love cooking can play an extremely beneficial role in our health and well-being. As a result, we will learn to make space for cooking in our lives, which connects us to Nature through the fundamental act of sustaining our bodies. As our world speeds up, and technology plays a more meaningful and influential role in our lives, many of us forget to connect to the basics on which our whole life is founded: our breath, drinking and eating, sleeping well, exercising, etc. And these natural biorhythms also connect us to our world, the cosmos and the Dao. Finding time to cook is a lot like drinking tea, in that it helps relax us into our natural biorhythms.

As we go beyond the need to make space for cooking to an enjoyment of cooking, we start to study nutritional science and wisdom more often, read more labels and become more conscious and aware of the effects foods have on our bodies, adapting our diet to suit our physical, emotional and spiritual well-being. We are free to make time in our day to cook healthy food for ourselves and our loved ones, and we are also free to enjoy cooking. This brings awareness to our connection to the earth, settles our hearts into our daily rhythms and is a way of serving those we love.

Everyone knows that when food is made with love, it is always more delicious and nutritious, which is why eating out will never be as healthy as learning to cook. But many chefs in restaurants also cook with great skill, so obviously the talent and practice is not the only element in food. There is also the soul. This is very akin to tea, where we seek to bring heart into our daily lives through the ceremonial rite of making tea each and every day with all our being. If we can infuse the act of preparing and drinking tea with all our body and soul, we can live in this way. Like music, it is not enough to have talent, nor to practice many hours and become very skilled. Virtuoso for its own sake is just showing off. The talent and skill we gather must be in service of the soul of that work, as the best musical skills and talent are channeled through the soul of the music. Cooking is a similar activity, and like tea, it can be a part of our daily lives, infusing our everyday mind with peace, light and love. In that way, cooking becomes a practice that transforms our hearts, making us peaceful and receptive to Nature.

Food cooked with love gets infused with that juju. There is no literal way to describe the difference between a home-cooked meal made with the same recipe as that made by a chef, even if the chef has more skill and talent. They may have passion, and a love for cooking, but they rarely love the people they are cooking for in the restaurant. Cooking starts with a love for the self, Mother Earth (who made all the ingredients we are using) and those we serve. The more we enjoy the process of cooking, the more our food will be imbued with such a light.

In order to deepen your love for cooking, or perhaps to ignite the fire if you haven't yet realized that you are free to make time to nourish your body and also free to enjoy doing so, we are offering some recipes this month. All of them are treats—the types of dishes that make loving the process easy and fun. All of them use tea as an ingredient, as we hope that your love for tea can help inspire or deepen your love for cooking. You can use either the red or green tea powders, Dawn or Dusk, to make any of these dishes.

We recommend calming down and breathing for a minute or two before starting. Close your eyes and put your hands on your heart. Breathe deeply and follow the breath to your diaphragm with your mind. Be embodied. Feel the rhythms of life flowing through this precious body. Before you open your eyes, smile at this body—a big, bold smile from the heart. Then make these treats out of joy, with a love for your body, mind and soul, as well as those you serve.



VEGAN TEA LATTE

維根茶拿鐵

INGREDIENTS:

- 茶 1-2 teaspoons of Dawn or Dusk tea powder
(Depending on how strong you like it...)
- 茶 2 cups of any nut milk or soy milk you prefer
(We recommend making the nut milk fresh yourself!)
- 茶 a few dashes of coconut milk to sweeten
- 茶 sweetener of your choice (If you like it sweeter.)
- 茶 tiny pinch of Himalayan salt (Binds and adds foam.)
- 茶 water

Optional:

- 茶 Mint can be great in these drinks
- 茶 You can sweeten with blended apple
- 茶 You can also add some lemon juice

This is one of our favorite treats, and a great choice for using your Dawn or Dusk. This recipe is simple, quick and really hits the spot in the afternoon, especially if your energy is starting to lag. It is also a beautiful and delicious refreshment to offer guests when long sessions won't fit the schedule: refreshing and delicious hospitality! The varieties of ingredients and ways of adapting this recipe are really limitless: you can blend in fruit, making this more like a smoothie, for example. As with all of the recipes in this issue, we invite you to play, learn to love cooking with tea and sharing treats. Post your creations: [#gthteatreats](#)

PREPARATION:

If you plan to use mint, apple, lemon or any combination of them (all three are great and apple/lemon is a superb combination), blend these with the dashes of coconut milk and sweetener (if you want) and set them aside. Make your nut milk. (There are many recipes online. You may have to do this a day in advance.) Fill some glasses with the nut milk. Make sure you leave plenty of room for the tea liquor on top! You may have to adjust the amount of nut milk based on the size of your glasses.

We recommend whisking the tea powder of your choice by hand, using a bowl (*chawan*) and a whisk (*chasen*), but you can also use a blender if you want. (Hot water makes much more froth!) It is also nice to put ice in the glasses before you add the blended tea. Whisk or blend thoroughly until the tea liquor is very frothy and then pour it over the milk. We love to hand it to our guests just like this. The tea slowly cascading into the milk is gorgeous, and they can mix it themselves if you serve with a sustainable straw or mixing spoon!

“I thoroughly enjoy these dairy-free milky delights! I find them to be light and refreshing on a warm and sunny day, perfect for a post-meal tidbit, an on-the-go treat or a gentle morning pick-me-up. I prefer the taste and consistency of the green tea. However, if your palate tends to take the path less sweetened, the red version is the one for you. I, myself, prefer my lattes on the sweeter side, so I customized them both with a dash of maple syrup. Both blends are equally creamy and cooling and would be the perfect, easy-to-make, complement to any health-conscious diet.”

Morgann DéMarks



CHIA PUDDING

奇亞籽布丁

INGREDIENTS:

- 茶 1-2 tablespoons of Dawn or Dusk tea powder
(Depending on how strong you like it...)
- 茶 1½ cups of nut milk or soy milk (per person)
(We recommend making the nut milk fresh yourself!)
- 茶 a few dashes of coconut milk to sweeten
- 茶 sweetener of your choice (If you like it sweeter.)
- 茶 3 tablespoons of chia seeds per person
- 茶 1 cup of berries and/or nuts
(We recommend blueberries/raspberries & walnuts.)
- 茶 water
- 茶 1 sprig of mint as a garnish

Chia pudding is a go-to healthy breakfast, snack or late-night treat. The Chia have a massive amount of nutrients, including protein and Omega-3-fatty acids, and hardly any calories. They also help clean out the gut. The consistency is also wonderful, and with some nuts, berries and tea powder, the flavor is amazing. We know that many of you also enjoy chia pudding, but have you made it with tea powder before? We think that the difference will blow you away! Post your creations: [#gthteatreats](#)

PREPARATION:

Blend the nut milk or soy milk with the coconut milk and sweetener (if you want any). Whisk the tea in a separate bowl or container with 1/2 a cup of water. You can blend this, but we recommend whisking by hand with a bowl (*chawan*) and a whisk (*chasen*). As soon as the tea is whisked, mix it into the milk concoction thoroughly. Pour the liquid over the chia seeds in a bowl and stir thoroughly with a whisk or fork. Stir again every few minutes for fifteen minutes. You can then put the bowl into the refrigerator for a few hours or even overnight. (The longer you soak the chia, the better the pudding will be—up to one night, that is.) After the pudding has soaked for enough time, you can mix it once more and serve. Either mix in the berries and nuts or just put them on top. (We also recommend toasting the nuts, maybe even with some honey or maple syrup if you didn't add any earlier.) Garnish with mint!



“ This chia pudding is among my all-time favorite desserts! The unsweetened version makes for a great breakfast. I love the lightness and texture of this dish. Fresh berries add sweetness and juiciness and are a nice contrast to the chia. Green tea and mint make the pudding come alive with freshness and vibrancy. This is such a versatile dish that can be enjoyed as a small snack, dessert or a meal. The toppings can be customized to suit the occasion—the only limit is your imagination. Best of all, it is so easy to make and takes almost no time at all. ”

Jaanus Leplaan





VEGAN TEA PANCAKES

維根茶鬆餅

INGREDIENTS:

- 茶 1-2 tablespoons of Dawn or Dusk tea powder
(Depending on how strong you like it...)
- 茶 1 cup of any nut milk or soy milk you prefer
(We recommend making the nut milk fresh yourself!)
- 茶 1 tbsp. ground flax
- 茶 1½ tbsp. coconut oil, melted
- 茶 1 cup gluten-free all-purpose flour
- 茶 sweetener (2 tbs sugar or substitute)
- 茶 2 tsp. baking powder
- 茶 ½ tsp. salt
- 茶 any toppings of your choice

Pancakes are a treat everyone loves. We usually make them for breakfast whenever one of our long-term volunteers has a birthday at the Hut. These pancakes are vegan and gluten-free with a nice tea flavor to boot. You may want to try different toppings as syrup can overpower the flavor of the tea, though it is the classic way to go. We save this recipe for special occasions. Having this month's tea powder to cook with is such an occasion, we think! Post your creations: [#gthteatreats](#)

PREPARATION:

Prepare the flax: In a small bowl, whisk together the flax and 3 tbsp. water. Then add the coconut oil and set aside. In a medium bowl, mix the flour, sugar, baking powder, salt and tea powder together. (The flax should be a gooey consistency.) Stir everything until it's well incorporated.

Heat a large pan over medium-low heat. Melt the coconut oil in the pan and then pour in the batter carefully (you may want to use a pitcher for this). Make pancakes in any shape and size you like. Cook until you see that the edges of the pancakes start to puff up, about two to three minutes. Flip over and cook for another two minutes. Serve with your favorite toppings. They are great with maple syrup, of course, but we also like berries, coconut, coconut milk or vegan yogurt. There are limitless possibilities for this one!

“I love pancakes. It's my favorite food. These pancakes are naturally sweet so you won't need to add much maple syrup or any other sweeteners. However, pancakes tend to be on the drier side, so maple syrup or honey is a nice touch for a chewy and moist texture. The flour that's used makes the green pancakes feel a bit full in your mouth, but the matcha balances it out with a burst of freshness. The red ones have an interesting roasted flavor that goes nicely with the sweetness. They are both incredibly delicious, but I'll definitely have the matcha pancakes again soon. ”

Joyce Peng



TEA BROWNIES

茶布朗尼

INGREDIENTS:

- 茶 1 cup + 2 tbsp. of nut milk or soy milk
(We recommend making the nut milk fresh yourself!)
- 茶 ½ cup + 3 tbsp. oil
- 茶 1 tbsp. pure vanilla extract
- 茶 2 tbsp. loosely-packed flaxmeal
- 茶 1 cup spelt or all-purpose flour (gluten-free)
- 茶 1 cup unsweetened cocoa powder
- 茶 ¼ tsp. + ⅛ tsp salt
- 茶 ½ tsp. baking powder
- 茶 ½ cup brown sugar or ½ cup coconut sugar
- 茶 ⅓ cup unrefined sugar or stevia baking blend
- 茶 ⅔ cup shaved high-quality chocolate

Icing:

- 茶 2 cups coconut milk or cream
- 茶 1-2 teaspoons of Dawn or Dusk tea powder
(Depending on how strong you like it...)
- 茶 1 tbsp. powdered sugar
- 茶 1 tsp. pure vanilla extract

PREPARATION:

Preheat your oven to 200 °C. Whisk the nut milk, oil, vanilla and flax until it's well-mixed. Use oil to grease a baking pan or line it with baking paper. In a separate bowl, mix all the other dry ingredients—the flour, cocoa powder, salt, baking powder and sugars. Flake or shave some chocolate from a high-quality organic bar of your choice. Pour the wet ingredients into the bowl of dry ingredients and stir until it is smooth. Then pour into the prepared baking pan. Bake for around fifteen minutes, watching for the brownies to firm up. (We stick a toothpick into them—when it comes out clean, they are done!) Refrigerate the brownies overnight after they have cooled down.

To make the tea icing: Refrigerate the coconut milk/cream overnight. The cream will separate from the liquid/water. Scoop out the cream and put it in a bowl. Add the tea powder, powdered sugar and vanilla and whisk until it's thick and creamy. Refrigerate for an hour before icing the brownies and serving them.

Cut the brownies into squares or rectangles and apply the icing with a butter knife. You may want to dust them with tea powder one more time, both for flavor and to make them more aesthetically pleasing!



美味



TEA BLISS BALLS

茶福球



RED TEA BLISS BALLS:

INGREDIENTS:

- 茶 1-2 tablespoons of Dawn tea powder
(Depending on how strong you like it...)
- 茶 ¾ cup chopped almonds
- 茶 ½ cup cacao powder
- 茶 2 tbsp. flax seeds
- 茶 ¼ teaspoon sea salt
- 茶 1½ cups oats
- 茶 2½ cups Medjool dates
- 茶 ¼ cup coconut oil, melted
- 茶 ¼ cup shredded unsweetened coconut

GREEN TEA BLISS BALLS:

INGREDIENTS:

- 茶 1-2 tablespoons of Dusk tea powder
(Depending on how strong you like it...)
- 茶 ¾ cup raw cashews
- 茶 ¼ cup raw pistachios, shelled
- 茶 2½ cups Medjool dates, pitted
- 茶 ¼ cup shredded coconut, unsweetened
- 茶 2 tsp. baking powder
- 茶 1 tbsp. coconut oil

PREPARATION:

Red Tea Bliss Balls: Blitz the almonds in a food processor for about thirty seconds, until finely chopped and even. Add the cacao, flax seed, salt and oats. Process for another twenty seconds, once again until the mixture is smooth. Add the dates and melted coconut oil. Process for two to three minutes more, until the mixture is well-blended. Test the consistency. If it is too dry, add more coconut oil; if it is too wet, then add more of the dry ingredients (cacao and/or oats). This is the fun part! Roll the mixture into bliss balls in your hands and roll them in shredded coconut. Place them in the refrigerator for about an hour. (Poke them to check when done.)

Green Tea Bliss Balls: Place all the ingredients into a food processor. Process for one minute or until finely chopped and blended. Then, scoop out balls of the mixture. Once again fun ensues! Roll the mixture between your hands to create some evenly-sized balls (size is your choice). Refrigerate for at least fifteen minutes, then enjoy. (Poke them to check.)

“I’ve got a bit of a sweet tooth and love for tea, so they didn’t have to ask me twice to try these treats. I’m often busy all day serving the Tea Sage Hut and an afternoon snack like these Bliss Balls is just what I need to keep me going into the evening. The red tea and chocolate Bliss Ball was my favorite in terms of flavor and energy, but I loved the grittiness of the green tea pistachio one. Luckily, I got to enjoy both! They both were a nice boost/snack for a day of service, and with a little bit of tea flavor, which reminded me of why I was tired in the first place.”

Shen Su



TEA GRANOLA

茶麥片

INGREDIENTS:

- 茶 2 tablespoons of Dawn or Dusk tea powder
- 茶 3 cups rolled oats
- 茶 2 cups nuts and/or seeds
(We used almonds, walnuts, sunflower, flax and chia)
- 茶 ¼ cup brown sugar
- 茶 2 tablespoons melted coconut oil
- 茶 ¼ cup + 1 tablespoon maple syrup
- 茶 2 tsp. vanilla extract
- 茶 pinch of Himalayan pink salt
- 茶 1 cup dried blueberries

Granola is a wonderful breakfast or afternoon snack, especially covered with your favorite nut milk. This tea-inspired granola is one of our favorite snacks. It is high-energy and perfect for after a workout. Wu De loves some seed granola in the afternoon after he exercises. Adding tea powder on it makes it more energizing and delicious. Dawn and Dusk both make for different granola experiences worth trying. Post your creations: [#gthteatreats](#)

PREPARATION:

Preheat the oven to 120 °C. In a large bowl, combine the oats, nuts/seeds and brown sugar. (If you have nut allergies, you can substitute seeds. That goes for all the recipes in this issue, actually!) In a separate bowl, combine the oil, maple syrup, vanilla and salt. Pour this over the oat mixture and toss to coat. Spread mixture out onto two baking sheets and bake for one hour to one hour and fifteen minutes, stirring every fifteen minutes. (This is important!) Remove from the oven and let cool for a few minutes. Sprinkle green tea powder over and toss to combine. Add in the dried blueberries and toss again, then enjoy with or without nut or soy milk. (We also add coconut flakes and cacao nibs for extra goodness!)



“Wow! What a flavor explosion! This simple snack completely exceeded my expectations. It was excellent on its own, but the added ingredients took my taste buds on an adventure. I dressed it up with coconut milk, blueberries, coconut flakes and cacao nibs. They all sweetly danced with the earthy tea, turning this snack into a fortified meal. Its versatility would bring a burst of flavor by the handful to any plane ride or road trip or be the perfect clustered companion for any vegan morning milk, yogurt or smoothie. It's a great snack or breakfast.”

Morgann DéMarks





CARROT CAKE

胡蘿蔔蛋糕

INGREDIENTS:

- 茶 ½ cup pecans
- 茶 ½ cup walnuts
- 茶 ¼ cup pistachios
- 茶 2½ cups Medjool dates, pitted
- 茶 2 carrots, grated
- 茶 ⅔ cup shredded coconut
- 茶 1 tsp. vanilla powder
- 茶 1 tsp. cinnamon
- 茶 ¼ tsp. nutmeg
- 茶 ½ teaspoon ginger

Icing:

- 茶 2 teaspoons of Dawn or Dusk tea powder
- 茶 1 cup cashews, soaked for at least 2 hours
- 茶 2 tbsp. coconut oil
- 茶 1½ cups coconut milk, refrigerated for at least 12 hrs.
- 茶 1 tbsp. coconut sugar
- 茶 1 tsp. vanilla powder

PREPARATION:

Pulse the nuts in a food processor until they break down into pieces but retain some texture. Add the Medjool dates and pulse again until it becomes a sticky, nutty mixture. Add in the remaining ingredients and blend until fully combined and well-blended. Place your mixture in a cake pan and chill in the refrigerator while you make your icing. (You can use any shape of cake pan you want.)

After your coconut milk has been refrigerated overnight, the cream will separate from the liquid. Open your coconut milk and scoop the hardened cream from the top and place into a food processor or blender. Add the rest of the coconut-tea cream ingredients and blend until smooth and creamy. (Taste and add additional coconut sugar if you want it sweeter. You can use another type of sweetener as well. We recommend not going overboard, though, as this will overpower the taste of the tea powder.)

When the icing is finished, spread it on top of the chilled base and freeze the cake. Before serving, top it with pecans, pistachios and/or coconut flakes. (You could also serve it immediately, but if not, you will have to freeze it for some time.)

QUINOA COOKIES

藜麥餅乾

INGREDIENTS:

- 茶 2-3 teaspoons of Dawn or Dusk tea powder
(Depending on how strong you like it...)
- 茶 ½ cup cashew butter or sunflower seed butter
(We made our own peanut butter with goji berries!)
- 茶 1 tablespoon flaxseed meal
- 茶 3 tbsp. water
- 茶 ¼ cup maple syrup
- 茶 1 medium banana, mashed
- 茶 ½ cup rolled oats
- 茶 ½ cup quinoa flakes
(if you cannot find quinoa flakes, double the oats)
- 茶 1 tsp. baking powder
- 茶 ½ tsp. ground cinnamon
- 茶 ¼ tsp. salt
- 茶 1 tbsp. chia seeds

These delicious chewy cookies are beloved by everyone here. They are healthy and delicious and can be made red or green, resulting in very different creations. You can also add just about anything into them, including goji berries, other herbs, chocolate from a great, organic chocolate bar, or other goodies and treats. We often make them as a snack after those especially long tea sessions when it is not quite meal time, but you also don't want your guests to leave peckish. They are also great in the afternoon after our service period when everyone is a bit hungry from working in the garden or at the farm. A cookie makes everyone happy! Post your creations: [#gthteatreals](#)

PREPARATION:

Preheat oven to 175 °C. Line a baking sheet with parchment paper and set it aside. Whisk together the flaxseed meal and water and leave it to sit while you prepare the other ingredients. (Blend the nut or seed butter if you are making it yourself.) Then, mix the nut butter with the syrup and banana in a large bowl. Add the flax and water mixture and whisk to combine. Pour in oats, quinoa flakes, tea powder, baking powder, cinnamon and salt, and stir together. Mix in the chia seeds. Mold around two tablespoons of dough into cookie shapes with your hand, and place onto the baking sheet. Gently flatten them with wet hands or with the back of a spoon. Bake the cookies for around fifteen minutes until the edges are golden brown. Remove and let them cool on the pan for five minutes. Enjoy at room temperature or slightly warm. Top with goji berries and a sprinkle of tea powder!



“ Let's be honest, who doesn't like cookies? I definitely do. Nutritional and delicious, these are perfect for a light snack or as a dessert. I love the chewy texture and the subtle tea flavor that adds depth to an already delicious treat. They are so easy to make, I can definitely see myself baking these for a travel or hiking snack or for a quick breakfast bite. I think these are the perfect offering for after a long tea session with some dear friends on a cool afternoon like today. A plate of these will surely send all your tea brothers and sisters home with smiles. ”

Jaanus Leplaan





VEGAN CHEESECAKE

維根起司蛋糕

INGREDIENTS:

- 茶 1 cup almonds
- 茶 ¼ cup shredded coconut
- 茶 3 tbsp. buckwheat groats
- 茶 3 tbsp. raw cacao
- 茶 2 cups Medjool dates
- 茶 1 cup unsweetened cocoa powder
- 茶 2 tbsp. nut butter
- 茶 pinch of Himalayan pink salt

Icing:

- 茶 2 teaspoons of Dawn or Dusk tea powder
- 茶 2 cups soaked cashews (at least 4 hrs.)
- 茶 4 tbsp. coconut cream
- 茶 ½ cup coconut oil, melted
- 茶 3 tbsp. maple syrup
- 茶 2 tsp. vanilla powder or extract
- 茶 pinch Himalayan pink salt

PREPARATION:

To make the base, blitz the almonds in your food processor until you get a dry, crumb-like consistency. Add in the dates, nut butter (you can make your own; we did, adding goji berries for that extra yum), buckwheat, coconut, cacao and salt, and blend again until everything combines very well. (The mix should stick between your fingers.)

Add the mixture to a cake pan (we use a heart-shaped pan to remember to add love to the cake). Press it down firmly with your hands. Place the cake in the freezer while you make the icing. (Put some loving-kindness in with it!)

Drain the liquid off the cashews and blend until they are creamy and wonderful. Add in the coconut cream, coconut oil, maple syrup, salt, vanilla and tea powder of your choice. Process again until well-combined and smooth. It should be creamy and super-delicious.

Remove the base from the freezer and spread the icing across the top with a spatula. Firm it up in the freezer until it is ready to serve. This should take at least an hour. You can then top the cake with some tea powder and serve.

“This cheesecake is incredibly delicious; I highly recommend this recipe! I really enjoy how creamy it is, and the crunchiness makes every bite a textured treat. I also appreciate how mild the tea flavor is, but you can definitely add more if your palate craves more of its presence. It’s a raw cake, and what’s nice about that is that it’s kind to the body and easy to make. (I don’t always want to eat a real cake, but raw cake always feels good.) It would be an especially nice snack after a tea ceremony since the flavors are quite gentle, or, you can share it with tea family you love after cleaning day like I did.”

Joyce Peng



CHOCOLATE TEA CUPS

巧克力茶杯

INGREDIENTS:

- 茶 1-2 teaspoons of Dawn or Dusk tea powder
(Depending on how strong you like it...)
- 茶 ½ cup coconut butter, softened but not melted
- 茶 5 tablespoons almond flour
- 茶 3 tablespoons powdered sugar
- 茶 1 cup chopped dark chocolate (from a good bar!)
- 茶 1 teaspoon coconut oil
- 茶 pinch of teaspoon Himalayan pink salt
- 茶 cacao nibs

These are extra-special, super sweet treats! They aren't as healthy as some of the other recipes in this issue, but they are very delicious and if you use good, clean and organic chocolate, they aren't so bad. You may want to substitute another sweetener for the sugar if you are taking the healthier high road. (That goes for all the recipes in this issue, really.) Post your creations: #gthteatreats

PREPARATION:

In a small bowl, mix the coconut butter, almond flour, powdered sugar and tea powder. Place in the refrigerator for at least ten minutes. While the tea mixture is chilling, melt the chocolate. Place the chocolate in a glass bowl and place over a small pot of boiling water. Add the coconut oil and stir until melted and smooth. Remove from the heat.

Line a muffin tin with eight muffin liners (or use a candy mold). Spoon two teaspoons of melted chocolate into each liner and use the back of the spoon to push the chocolate up the sides of the liner. Then, scoop a tablespoon of the tea mixture into your hands and roll it into a ball. Place the ball into each of the liners and use your fingers to gently flatten it. Then, top each cup with a tablespoon of melted chocolate and use your spoon to spread it evenly over the tea mixture, making sure that the chocolate meets the top edge. If there is extra chocolate, divide it amongst the cups and smooth it out (or just eat it off a spoon, being sure to get some on your face!).

In a small bowl, mix together a bit more tea powder and salt for the topping. Sprinkle the tea salt mixture over the tops of the cups. Add a few cacao nibs to each. Place the muffin tin in the refrigerator or freezer until they are solid. Then enjoy!



“Wow! The inside of these tea chocolate cups is such a treat! The dash of salt in the chocolate really makes the flavor splash to the upper palate like a fine cup of tea. Not to mention, the presentation is gorgeous when it's topped with cacao nibs and green tea powder. This is one of those treats to savor and eat slowly on a lazy afternoon when all your work is done. This was a real treat for me, as I rarely enjoy something this sweet on my own and probably wouldn't ever make this recipe for myself, but it was extra special to have some nice chocolate!”

Shen Su



心到口

愛在烘焙時



TEA PANNA COTTA

茶奶酪

INGREDIENTS:

- 茶 2-3 tablespoons of Dawn or Dusk tea powder
(Depending on how strong you like it...)
- 茶 3 cups of coconut milk
- 茶 ½-1 tbsp. of agar powder (~2 tbsp. agar flakes)
- 茶 ½ tsp. vanilla powder/extract
- 茶 4 tbsp. maple syrup
- 茶 fresh fruit for garnish

This is for those of you with fancy taste. Some people love the texture of panna cotta. And like all treats, this one is vastly improved by the taste of tea, which makes everything great! It is tricky cooking with agar, so this one may take some trial and error to get just right, but when you do, it will be worth all the effort. Post your creations: [#gthteatreats](#)

PREPARATION:

Place the coconut milk and agar in a saucepan. Mix with a spoon and let it sit for about fifteen minutes. (You may have to decrease the amount of agar. It took us a couple of tries to get this one right, to be honest. There is also a different ratio for flakes versus powder.)

Then, add the vanilla and over a medium to high heat, and whisk the two ingredients together until fully combined and the agar powder has completely dissolved. Then, over a low heat, whisk continuously for another ten to fifteen minutes, adding the maple syrup and tea powder slowly (whisk them in). Once done, remove from the heat and pour into pudding molds greased with coconut oil. You can use any shape you like, or even put it into glass bowls, which will be ready to serve after it is chilled. Refrigerate to set. Then decorate with fresh fruit before serving.

“Panna Cotta is by far my all-time favorite dessert so I was super excited about this one! The bitterness of the matcha plays a subtle yet balancing role in this milky sweet surprise. The silky smooth texture is heaven on your taste buds and the richness is the icing on the cake. If you could transform a matcha latte into a dessert, it would be this creamy dream. It melts in your mouth, and it's just as pleasing to look at. The soothing green hue would bring joy and a pop of color to any holiday table. My favorite dessert, only now with tea! This is an exciting recipe!”

Morgan DéMarks



TEA ICE CREAM

茶冰淇淋

INGREDIENTS:

- 茶 2-3 tablespoons of Dawn or Dusk tea powder
(Depending on how strong you like it...)
- 茶 3-5 peeled and frozen bananas
- 茶 ½ cup of frozen berries (any you like)
- 茶 2 cups of any nut milk or soy milk you prefer
(We recommend making the nut milk fresh yourself!)
- 茶 a few dashes of coconut milk to sweeten
- 茶 sweetener of your choice (If you like it sweeter.)
- 茶 tiny pinch of Himalayan salt (Binds and adds foam.)
- 茶 Any type of topping you like:
nuts, seeds, berries, bee pollen, coconut flakes,
cacao nibs, condensed coconut milk, etc.

This is Wu De's favorite snack. He makes this many afternoons, adding all kinds of toppings to his bowl. This is one of the simplest, easiest and most versatile healthy recipes in this issue. Of course, there is a huge difference between the green and red tea versions, but also, on top of that (literally), you can add any toppings you like to make this bowl of ice cream your own special treat! Post your creations: [#gthteatreats](#)

PREPARATION:

There really is not much to this recipe: You freeze your bananas, which will be the base for your ice cream. You can add some frozen berries for flavor if you want, but definitely add your tea powder, some coconut milk and nut/soy milk into a food processor. (You can use coconut milk without the nut milk for a more fatty, creamier and more delicious version that has, of course, more calories. Another great option is to add in some fresh mint leaves from the garden at this stage. This can replace the frozen berries and is especially nice in the summer!) We always start with less liquid, start the processor/blender up, and then add more as we need, slowly so the mixture doesn't get too wet and stays creamy. (Sometimes we also add in other superfood powders, like green powder, acai or even a vegan protein powder post-workout!) When the mixture reaches the consistency of ice cream, use a spatula to get it out and into your serving bowl. Then you can top it with whatever toppings you like. We love a combination of crunchy and chewy things. We often add a handful of dried berries, for example, then top that with toasted coconut flakes, a handful of toasted nuts (almonds are great), sun-dried bee pollen and just a dash more tea powder for an extra bit of tea flavor in each bite.





莓

美味的餡塔





STRAWBERRY TART

草莓果餡塔

INGREDIENTS:

- 茶 1 cup almonds
- 茶 1 cup dates, halved and pitted
- 茶 1 cup rolled oats
- 茶 3 tbsp. raw cacao
- 茶 3 tbsp. cacao powder
- 茶 ¼ tsp. Himalayan pink salt
- 茶 2 tbsp. nut butter
- 茶 1 tbsp. coconut oil, melted

Strawberry Layer:

- 茶 1½ cups puréed strawberries
- 茶 maple syrup to taste

Icing:

- 茶 3 teaspoons of Dawn or Dusk tea powder
- 茶 2 cups coconut cream (refrigerated overnight)
- 茶 4-5 tbsp. maple syrup, adjust to taste

PREPARATION:

Base: Place the pitted dates in a small bowl and cover with boiling water. Leave them for ten minutes to soften. Then, place the almonds and oats in a food processor and grind them both into flour. Transfer the ground almonds and oats to a large bowl. Add the cacao and salt and mix well. Next, squeeze the excess moisture out of the dates and place them into the food processor. Process until you get a smooth, sticky mixture. Add them to the dry ingredients and knead by hand until you get a uniform dough. Finally, add the melted coconut oil. Line a tart tin with the dough. (Make sure you press it in really well so that it's compacted and holds together well.) Pop into the freezer for ten minutes.

Strawberry Layer: Purée the strawberries in a blender until they are smooth. Add a splash of water if needed, then add maple syrup to taste. Pour the strawberry mixture onto the base of the tart and set it in the freezer to harden. (This takes about one hour.)

Tea Icing: Put the coconut cream in the refrigerator overnight so the fatty cream separates from the liquid. Then, scoop the hardened cream from the top of the coconut milk. Whisk it in a bowl until it's fluffy. Add in the tea powder of your choice and maple syrup and mix again until well combined. Pour the tea icing over the strawberry layer, spreading it evenly. Then, place the whole tart back in the freezer to set (for at least one hour). Decorate with fresh strawberry slices and a sprinkle of tea powder before serving.

TEA MOCHI

茶麻糬

INGREDIENTS:

- 茶 1-2 teaspoons of Dawn or Dusk tea powder
(Depending on how strong you like it...)
- 茶 1½ cups sweet rice flour
- 茶 1 cup cane sugar
- 茶 ½ tsp. baking powder
- 茶 ¾ cup coconut milk
- 茶 ¾ teaspoon vanilla extract
- 茶 1 cup water
- 茶 powdered sugar for dusting

We thought we would put in a Taiwanese favorite in this issue. Taiwanese aboriginals and the Chinese have been making mochi for centuries, though the Japanese perfected it. Taiwanese people love this texture, which they call “QQ; so many of their deserts and foods have this type of chewiness (many types of noodles, for example). Mochi is the perfect tea treat for after a nice session. Post your creations: [#thteatreats](#)

PREPARATION:

Preheat the oven to 135 °C. While your oven is heating, grease a square glass baking dish. In a bowl, whisk together the rice flour, sugar, baking powder and tea powder of your choice. In a separate bowl, whisk together the water, coconut milk and vanilla extract. Pour the wet ingredients into the dry ingredients, and whisk until they are smoothly combined. Pour the batter into the dish, cover tightly with foil and bake for sixty to ninety minutes, until the top is set. (Make sure to check on it!) Remove the foil, let it cool, and then re-cover with foil and let it sit at room temperature overnight.

Turn the mochi over onto a cutting board and cut it into small cubes with a sharp knife. Dust the cubes with powdered sugar and more tea powder. (You can use something else as a substitute for sugar, like ground sesame, for example. We just used tea powder for ours.) Enjoy this chewy treat with some whisked powdered tea!



“ I love this mochi! Its gentle taste means I can eat it after tea and still keep the flavor of the leaf. The texture is special and interesting—gooey but easy to chew. There’s a splash of taste that activates all of my taste buds. It would work well as a companion to some of the sweeter recipes in this issue, as it is bright and almost savory. Because it isn’t as sweet as some of the other treats in this issue, you can also taste the tea powder more in this one than in others. I also like that it is traditional and represents Taiwan. It tastes like our home in the Center! ”

Jaanus Leplaan



Global Tea Hut Expansion Packs

EXPANSION IX: DAWN & DUSK TEA POWDERS

Most of these expansion packs are designed to offer you the chance to try more varieties and qualities of tea than we can afford to send you as our Tea of the Month. For many of you, twelve teas may be more than enough, but for those of us who are a bit crazy about tea, it really is not that much. The world of tea is vast, and even drinking twelve teas in one genre really won't give you an idea of what that genre is about. The nuances from mountain to mountain, farmer to farmer, harvest to harvest are also always worth exploring when getting to know a type of tea. For this reason, we invite you to explore well beyond the boundaries of Global Tea Hut. Try to find ethical tea vendors who care about the environment and are offering sustainably-produced teas, as opposed to lame excuses as to why their teas aren't organic, and try as many examples of a tea as you can to expand your education.

Our Tea of the Month samples are all partially or completely donated, which also limits the types of tea we can send. As Global Tea Hut grows, we cannot send rare teas as they don't often exist in the quantities we require or are far too expensive for even the most generous donors. (Sometimes we are donated crazy-good teas that are way beyond our budget, though, like December 2017's Ma Bao or last October's "Undying Lamp" aged Taiwanese oolong.) We are, of course, extremely grateful for their generosity.

When we were contemplating this issue and discussing it with guests to the Center, we came up with the idea of these Expansion Packs. The idea was to create a program by which Global Tea Hut members could buy a few extra teas organized around the theme of that issue, offering the chance to learn more about the topic. This was a great way for all of you to expand your education through drinking more types and qualities of tea as you read these pages. One really does learn way more when reading is accompanied with actual tasting, which is why we knew Global Tea Hut had to come with tea right from the very beginning when these issues were more like newsletters, and completely black and white.

We decided to create these Expansion Packs without profit, so that we wouldn't allow fundraising or any other financial constraints to get in the way of what we see as pure education. They are all just barely marked up so that we can offer a flat shipping rate, and the differences in shipping to various regions of the world are then covered by that.

We also have a space on the website, at the bottom of the Expansion Pack page, where you can discuss them with others, ask us questions and so forth. There is also a section on the app devoted to the Expansion Packs as well, where we hope to see you and discuss all that we have learned from drinking these extra teas together. Let us know what you think!

This month's expansion is a bit different than the previous ones we have done, as it doesn't offer difference in quality or variety, so it is not really expanding in the direction that previous offerings have. For this month, we are just offering 100g-packets of our two Teas of the Month—Dawn and Dusk powdered red and green teas. The reason we are offering you the chance to buy more of these amazing tea powders is so that you can cook all the recipes in this issue, trying each one with both teas as they are all absolutely wonderful in both the red and green versions. If you order these extra packets, you can also then whisk some of the tea and even boil some, both of which are very special experiences worth trying. Since Mr. Xie has offered to donate towards this project, these extra packets are actually quite affordable.

We hope you enjoy cooking all these amazing treats, boiling and whisking these powders and sharing them with your friends and family. Share your treats with us on social media at [#gthteatreals](https://twitter.com/gthteatreals) in order to win a free expansion pack. We hope this inspires you to cook up a storm and deepen your love for cooking and tea!

This Expansion Pack is:

🍵 100g of Dawn Red Tea Powder
🍵 100g of Dusk Green Tea Powder
This Expansion Pack is \$30 + \$10 shipping

www.globalteahut.org/expansions



TeaWayfarer

Each month, we introduce one of the Global Tea Hut members to you in order to help you get to know more people in this growing international community. It's also to pay homage to the many manifestations that all this wonderful spirit and Tea are becoming as the Tea is drunk and becomes human. The energy of Tea fuels some great work in this world, and we are so honored to share glimpses of such beautiful people and their Tea. This month, we would like to introduce Lopa van der Mersch.

I've had a fondness for tea for much of my adult life. I remember going to tea shops in my early twenties and deliberating over whether I was going to drink a Dong Ding Oolong or an Imperial Puerh. On the days I drank tea, I always noticed that it was "a happy day." My husband and I even met, for the first time, over puerh.

But it wasn't until I entirely serendipitously came to the Hut that the doors were blown open and I sat with Tea and Tea sat with me and She spilled the tears from my eyes. How I found the Hut is one of those "twist of fate" stories that make me feel safe and trusting in the divine orchestration of things. I'd just started my "accessible adaptogens" business. We launched at an herb fair, and a gentleman who worked at a tea and tisane company took an interest in our product. Some months later, he offered us a private tour of his business. We happened to be going to Taiwan in a few weeks with a dear friend who had a keen interest in tea. I mentioned this, while there. He nearly fell over with excitement and envy and practically shouted "*You have to visit Tea Sage Hut!*" His enthusiasm was so great I knew we must go. I looked it up and reserved a (very fateful) day visit. An hour into silently drinking tea with Wu De, my seven-month old baby nestled asleep against my chest, I started weeping. Tea was speaking to me. Reminding me. Effortlessly connecting me into that deepest center of myself, the place where I feel I could sit for an eternity, completely content and fulfilled.

We began practicing what we called "Extreme Tea," i.e. "Tea with a crawling baby in the room." I frequently breastfed while pouring or drinking tea, and we did indeed lose a few less-precious pieces to Curiosity. But I'll never forget that time I left the room to go to the bathroom, with my then one-year-old happily playing on the other side of the room, only to return to find him pouring water from the jin shui into the pot, carefully placing the lid, falling down on his diapered bottom, getting up, pouring the water into the cup, plopping down again, getting up, pouring the water from the cup into the pot, plop back down... this went on for several minutes as I watched with those special "mama tears" in my eyes.

Fast forward two years, and Tea has been a mainstay in one of the most chaotic seasons of my life. I can always rely on tea to put me in a meditative state... as if I had been on retreat and had hit that place of "remembering" how to meditate as a natural state... Tea puts me there, instantly. All I have to do is show up. And in the throes of mothering two kids three and under, being able to easily access that state = pure gold.

Our children are growing up around tea, and have sat (and "not" sat!) for many tea ceremonies. We include them as much as possible. And often give the caveat to our guests, "We'll sit in *relative* silence for the first few bowls..." This is our way of working with a full house and tea. In the end, it enriches our life with peace within chaos, and vice versa.



🍵👤: Lopa van der Mersch, USA

Having children and a growing business means I don't get to have silent tea ceremonies as often as I might like, but in the big picture, I remember that I have chosen this, and that Tea is always here with an open heart and arms to welcome me back into connection with myself, my community, and Nature.

We were very grateful to be able to return to the Hut this summer, and to bring our children, for a rare "modified" tea course. As I watched longingly at the Chajin in service all day, forlornly thinking how I couldn't be of service like that for a long time, I realized how I am in direct, constant service: mothering. The way I'm building my company is service. And when I can serve Tea, this particular act of service makes my heart glow and replenishes the well of my being.

Ours is very much a householder Cha Dao practice, complete with Tyrannosaurus Rexes and Play-Doh on the tea table. As much as we try to avoid this, we also try equally to accept our reality as it is.

We are blessed to have just completed construction on a tea house in the mountains just outside Boulder, that we intend to outlive us by at least 100 years and serve many thousands—even millions?—of bowls. If you are ever in Boulder, we'd be honored to serve you tea. Please contact us at boulderteahut@gmail.com.

Inside the Hut

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Welcome to another year of amazing teas, tea wisdom and tea community! We would love to hear from you. Please email us or connect through the website and let us know how you feel about the experience, the magazine and the teas. Let us know if you have any criticism or things you wish were different about this community or experience. Help us to serve you better and to improve what we do! You could also make some suggestions about future topics for us to cover or teas you'd like to try!



Wu De will be in Estonia and Holland this coming February. We hope to see some European friends at these events. The events will be in the second half of the month. Stay tuned to our website for details!



Check out our live broadcasts on Facebook, Instagram and soon YouTube, which we do every month. Also, check out our "Life of Tea" podcast on Soundcloud and "Brewing Tea" video series on YouTube!



We have created a vast array of teaware for this community, both for bowl tea and gongfu tea. There are also some amazing Light Meets Life teas this year, including a gorgeous shou puerh, some dian hong cakes, a sheng puerh and an aged Liu Bao as well!



We are looking for a PR person with experience who can help us spread the word about Global Tea Hut. The job entails contacting blogs, magazines and other periodicals to send sample issues to review, and trying to facilitate interviews for articles, radio, television, podcasts, YouTube channels, etc. Also, if you know anyone with a podcast or video channel who would fit us and would be interested in interviewing Wu De or another student, please let us know. Help us get the word out and grow this amazing community!

Center News



Before you visit, check out the Center's website (www.teasagehut.org) to read about the schedule, food, what you should bring, etc. Make sure you apply early for courses as they fill up fast. This is why we need a bigger, more awesome Center.



The schedule for the first half of 2019 is up right now! There is no need to rush, though, as we will be using a new method for selecting participants in ten-day courses, taking into consideration Global Tea Hut membership and duration. It will be a great year, indeed!



We have been contemplating a big decision for the last year, finally coming to a conclusion: Starting this year, all ten-day courses at the Hut will be 100% tech-free, meaning no computers, cell phones or other devices for the duration of your stay!



We are saving up to buy or lease a van to drive you around during service periods and to take you to the tea farm and mountain to fetch water during courses.

January Affirmation

I honor my body

Every day, I must make time to care for my own well-being. This is not selfish, for the more I gather and become, the more I can serve others. I honor and love my body, nourishing myself through diet, exercise, sleep and meditation.



www.globalteahut.org

The sweetest, tastiest Tea magazine in the world! Sharing rare organic teas, a magazine full of tea history, lore, translations, processing techniques and heritage, as well as the spiritual aspects of Cha Dao. And through it all, we make friends with fellow tea lovers from around the world.

GLOBAL TEA HUT

TEA & TAO MAGAZINE

