

GLOBAL TEA HUT

TEA & TAO MAGAZINE

May 2020

TEA & ZEN

PART II

10

ISSUES



INNER RESOLVE

Wow! One hundred issues—one hundred months we have gathered here together to share tea, learn about tea production, history, art and lore. We are so grateful for your support, so we are sending an extra tea: this year's Elevation! And we have a super exciting Tea of the Month as well. What a journey this has been. Let's celebrate!

*Love is
changing the world
bowl by bowl*

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青山
陳年生普



recycled & recyclable



Soy ink

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From the editor

In May, the weather in Taiwan gets very warm and outdoor tea is no longer an option. The good news is that May is the time of year when tons of tea samples start rolling in and we start choosing this year's Light Meets Life cakes, as well as receiving the teas we have ordered for future Global Tea Hut issues. And this year is extra special, as we have had a huge influx of tea donations from tea friends throughout Taiwan and China.

As I have mentioned in the last couple of letters from the editor, and as you have no doubt noticed, the inventory on our website has increased dramatically in terms of tea. This started in an unplanned, serendipitous way. When many of our tea friends heard about the closing of Tea Sage Hut and the fundraiser for Light Meets Life, they contacted us and said something like, "I don't have much money to help you out, but I do have a lot of tea." As a result, we have received dozens of teas to sell to raise money for Light Meets Life. Let me tell you just one inspirational story related to this...

Our dear brother and teacher, whom many of you have met on annual trips, Master Tsai Yi Zhe, came over for tea. After some quiet tea, he smiled and said to me that he had some aged oolong that he had bought in 1998 when his tea house opened. He had bought very high-quality organic Li Shan tea and put it in nice jars to store so that he would have aged oolong to share when the shop was thirty, or even fifty years old. He thought he would open it on the thirtieth anniversary of the teahouse, in 2028. Now, incidentally, some of you know that one of the proudest days of my entire life was around two years ago when, out of the blue, Master Tsai started calling Light Meets Life "*our* Center" instead of "*your* Center"—that "*our*" brought tears to my eyes. Well, chatting about his Li Shan oolong after a deep session of Wuyi Cliff Tea, he made me cry again. He smiled and said that he would much rather that the special Li Shan tea he has aged in his shop would be sold to support "*our* Center" than to drink it himself... I was blown away. What a gift! It's worth more than gold to have the support of such a beautiful tea brother! And this is only one such beautiful story of tea donations that have rolled in ever since the announcement that Tea Sage Hut was going to close.

We have allowed the donors to set the prices, if they want, which means many of the aged sheng puerh cakes on the site now are based on the price they paid when the cakes were new, doubled to raise money for Light Meets Life. The thing is that these teas' market value has more than doubled in some cases, and I have even read some comments on tea forums that the teas on our site cannot be genuine as they are too cheap. Well, now you know why. We hope you take advantage of this—not only to raise money for Light Meets Life, but also to get ahold of some great teas as well. Master Tsai's amazing 1998 Li Shan tea and many others are currently on our website.

This influx of donated teas has also opened an ongoing experiment that will be part of our plans for Light Meets Life. As we have discussed, a lot of the rush and stress of the last ten years has been related to the fact that we opened Tea Sage Hut without a clue. Some of you may not know this, but for the first few years there wasn't even a donation box. Joyce and I spent our entire life savings hosting people in the early days. Then, years of stress ensued concerning how to maintain a free Center for people around the world; as more and more people started showing up, this became more and more challenging. Tea Sage Hut operated at a deficit almost every month. In other words, donations almost never covered expenses, forcing us to find alternative revenue, like this magazine. We do not want to repeat this with Light Meets Life. We haven't solidified all our plans, but we are aware of the problems that need to be addressed before we open. One such issue is that we need Light Meets Life to be financially sustainable from the beginning. And we are committed to at least putting a strong effort towards keeping it free—donation-based, as Tea Sage Hut was. So, the experiment of selling all these teas will be a part of "market research," if you will, to test and see if tea sales can cover the projected costs of running Light Meets Life.

Can you believe we have reached the 100th issue of Global Tea Hut?!?! Unbelievable! Whether you have been here since the beginning or have joined more recently, we adore you and the inspiration you provide us. As a thank you, we are sending out an extra tin of tea this month: Our beloved Elevation! Drink that and our epic Tea of the Month (another donated tea) as we look back at 100 issues of this amazing experience!



—Further Reading—

This month, we recommend reading through as many prior issues as you can. Why not stand back and have a look at your library? Why not grab a few random issues down from the shelf and help us celebrate just how far we have all come together? And what an archive...

TEA OF THE MONTH



ver the course of this month, we will be drinking “Inner Resolve (青山),” which is the perfect name for the tea we share, as we pass through worldwide adversity. The Chinese, Qing Shan, actually literally translated to “blue green mountains,” which, of course, describes a scene that is so archetypal of Chinese poetry, painting and philosophy. Like mountains, the phrase is often synonymous, especially in classic Chinese, with “persistence.” We have chosen to change the English to “Inner Resolve,” even though it is an inaccurate translation of the literal or metaphoric Chinese. There is a magic when the two meanings are combined: Through inner resolve, we find the beautiful blue-green mountains, moved by mists that occasionally drift by. The cloud cover induces forgetfulness, but when we sit for a powerful tea session, as this month’s will no doubt be, the mists, while still there, no longer obscure the mountains, but rather enhance their beauty.

With all that we have faced, it was time for a powerful Tea of the Month—some strong medicine to right your inner resolve this month. With all the offers of tea donations coming in for Light Meets Life, we thought we could use one here in Global Tea Hut as well, sharing one of the most valuable teas we ever have. We are also going to keep this one cheap in our Light Meets Life fundraiser, so you will be able to get a cake or a tong at an incredible price (see pp. 51-52 for details).

Inner Resolve is made from old-growth tea from Bulang Mountain (布朗山), probably Lao Mane. Lao Mane is located in Old Mane Village of Bulangzu Township, Bulang Mountain, Menghai County. It is located 70 km from the Menghai county seat. It has a tea growing history of over 900 years. Today, there are 535 acres of preserved ancient tea gardens and 140 of new tea gardens. Lao Mane lies at an elevation of 1,700 meters. Tea mountains stretch in a continuous chain traversed by ravines. The climate is warm and provides ample sunshine. Rain is plentiful and the soil is rich. We cannot be

certain that this is where Inner Resolve comes from, but it is very likely. (We are certain it is not Banzhang tea.)

The trees were about eighty to one hundred years old. This tea was produced in 2001 or 2002 (we cannot get an accurate handle on which), by a Hong Kong tea vendor who traveled to Yunnan seeking something out of the ordinary, and of better quality. A Taiwanese friend of ours purchased a large quantity in 2004 and has aged it in his warehouse ever since. He recently offered us one of a few different teas at a price that was all but donating the tea, and barely above what he paid back in 2004. As Wu De mentioned in the Letter from the Editor, this kindness has always been a part of the Hut, but is happening more often as we move towards making Light Meets Life a reality.

As sheng puerh ages, it tends to spend its first twenty or thirty years going through seven-year cycles. Of course, we are talking about normal storage in Southeast Asia, without the tea being kept in overly humid conditions. Storage is complicated, and we recommend reading more in our archive of past issues, but relatively this tea was stored very well, without too much or too little humidity. It is in its third stage, where the reddish, spicy, bitter-herb flavors are starting to deepen and move towards the browns that will characterize the tea more and more as it develops into an “aged puerh.”

“The last thing in is always the first thing out,” as Master Lin always says, which means that when we brew a tea like this, the storage is the first thing we taste. For that reason, some of us may want to have a longer rinse for a tea like this. Once the leaves do open, though, you are greeted by a spectacular casket of flavors and aromas, ranging from the powerful fragrance of the leaves themselves to all the miraculous changes that age has brought. The energy is amazing, and a long session will leave you calm and centered for the rest of the day. This is a tea to appreciate, savor and linger over, taking the proper time to thoroughly enjoy such a rare and outstanding tea.



Inner Resolve (青山)



Bulang, Yunnan



Aged Sheng Puerh Tea



Bulang Aboriginals



~1,700 Meters





Puerh Tea Quick Reference Chart

普洱快速参考指南

TEA GENRES

Along with brewing guides, we thought we would devote some of these Tea of the Month sections over the next year to creating “Quick Guides” to various types of tea. Over the years, we have explored the genres of tea in great depth in the “Deeper Session” section of many Tea of the Month articles. But tea is complicated, and so we thought it would be helpful to boil down this information in a cauldron and serve up a single bowl that can be used as a basic review, a reference chart and an aid to study. We’ll start with puerh.

The word “puerh (普洱)” is not pronounced “poo air,” as most Westerners do; the second character (洱) is pronounced like the “er” in “her,” minus the “h.” It sounds like the noise you make when you are thinking: “errh.” Puerh is a place. It was the market center where all the tea grown in the region was brought to be traded and/or sold. Later, all the tea from Yunnan came to be known as “puerh cha (普洱茶)” or “tea from puerh.” There are many markets today, like Kunming in Yunnan or the biggest puerh market in Guangzhou, where producers trade and sell tea. Many producers and factories nowadays have contracts with particular farmers and buy their crops directly. Since the tea produced in Yunnan is so unique, puerh has come to warrant its own category of tea. There really is no way around this.

Puerh tea is sometimes put into the black tea category (remember, this isn’t red tea, which is mistakenly called “black tea” in the West), but it actually should have a category all its own. Traditionally, all puerh was fermented before consumption, whether artificially in the case of shou or naturally over time in the case of sheng. As we’ve mentioned elsewhere, tea lovers back in the day considered new, sheng puerh as “unfinished” and rarely drank it, except to see how it was aging. Therefore, all puerh tea was fermented and fit nicely into the black tea genre, which is categorized by post-production fermentation.

These days, however, much more sheng puerh is consumed young than old. And since sheng puerh vastly overshadows shou in quantity and in historicity (shou only dates back to the sixties or seventies), sheng obviously typifies puerh tea.

One solution to this change in tea production/consumption would be to put young sheng puerh in the green tea category and aged sheng along with shou in the black tea category. But that seems much more confusing than just giving puerh tea its own genre. We think that since it’s the oldest tea, and from the birthplace of all tea, puerh deserves its own genre!

Now that we have some basic background information, let’s move on to some charts that we can use as review, reference or even as study guides as we attempt to come to a general understanding of this magnificent genre of tea.

MAO CHA



茶 All puerh tea begins with “mao cha (毛茶),” which translates as “rough tea.” Mao cha refers to the finished leaf as it leaves the farm to be sold directly to factories, small and large, or independently at market. This term is not exclusive to puerh; it is used to refer to any unfinished tea, like oolong that has not yet been roasted, for example.

PUERH AT THE FACTORY



SHENG vs SHOU



Green puerh (*sheng*, 生), often called “raw” or “uncooked,” is produced without any fermentation (*fa xiao*, 發酵) during the production or compression of the cakes. The fermentation of these cakes occurs slowly through an aging process that takes seventy years to reach complete maturity. These sheng cakes are by far the more valuable of the two varieties of puerh and represent the traditional method of puerh production.



Black puerh (*shou*, 熟), often called “cooked” or “ripe,” is produced through a processes that ferments the tea to varying levels before it is compressed. Called “*wo dui* (卧堆)” in Chinese, this step in puerh production is akin to composting. The tea is piled, moistened and then often covered with a thermal blanket to increase internal heat. Sometimes previously fermented tea is introduced to promote certain bacterial growth. The process could be stopped at any time, though a typical, “full” fermentation runs from forty-five to sixty days. Different factories may adjust the length of time that a tea is piled based on their recipes, the kind of tea they use, or the desired level of fermentation. Most older shou tea was fermented only partially, whereas the majority of shou produced today is stronger, fully fermented tea.

PARTS OF A PUERH CAKE

普洱茶餅的部份

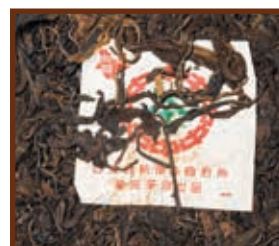
Outer Wrapping (bao zhuang, 包裝)

Wrappers are almost always made from natural fibers. These surround the cake itself. They help identify vintages and to some degree protect the cake. However, since the wrappers are made from natural fibers, there are more bugs that eat them than the tea. Many cakes' wrappers have nibble marks on them.



Inner Trademark Ticket (nei fei, 內飛)

A *nei fei* is a small piece of paper mixed in with the tea and compressed into the cake. This is to verify brand and/or vintage even if the wrapper is lost. That can still be hard when it comes to vintage tea, as many *nei fei* are the same for years at a time.



Inner Receipt (nei piao, 內票)

This is a paper that is sometimes inserted between the cake and the outer wrapping. Not all cakes have them. They often contain details about the production, region and sometimes even advertising. Some vintage *nei piao* even have broken English ads promoting the health benefits of puerh.



Bundle (tong, 桶)

A *tong* is seven cakes wrapped up in bamboo bark. Sometimes bamboo twine is used to tie them, while other tongs are tied with metal. Traditionally, a *tong* was always seven cakes, but nowadays some are five.



Case (jian, 件)

Cases were traditionally twelve tongs bundled together, or eighty-four cakes. They were usually tied together with more bamboo twine for shipment. Nowadays cases can have more or less cakes, and are often cardboard boxes as opposed to the traditional bamboo *jian*.



Big Label (da piao, 大票)

Da piao were big brand labels that were attached to each *jian*. This sometimes is still practiced, but it was more prominent in previous eras. They often detail the batch, recipe, etc. We have one from the Antique Era (pre-1949), which is beautiful.



SHAPES OF PUERH CAKES



Discus (bingcha, 餅茶)

The discus ages better than other shapes. Traditionally, they were 357 grams. However, nowadays they can be as small as 100g and as large as 1 or even 5kg. Those compressed using the traditional stone mold will be looser. Some *bings* are compressed very tightly. Those are called “iron discus (*tie bing*, 鐵餅).”



Bowl/Nest (tuocha, 沱茶)

These open, nest-shaped cakes are usually smaller than *bings*. Traditionally, they were from 75g to 250g, and most commonly 100g or 150g. Nowadays, there are huge ones as well. In the old days, more buds were put in *tuocha*, making them sweeter. They are also compressed tighter, so they age slower.



Melon/Pumpkin (jing gua, 金瓜)

Like a *tuocha*, these are bowl-shaped cakes, only with ridges that make them look like a pumpkin or melon. This is one of the oldest shapes, often given to honored officials—even the emperor himself. They can be many sizes, and stacks of them, from larger to smaller, are often used to decorate shops and for good luck.



Mushroom/Heart (jingcha, 緊茶)

Mushroom cakes are typically 250 grams. They were mostly exported to Tibet. The Chinese literally means “tight tea,” but the words sound like heart in Tibetan. And the Tibetans found these cakes to be heart-shaped.



Brick (zhuancha, 磚茶)

Bricks are also ancient shapes, and amongst the oldest teas ever found. Like mushrooms, they are almost always 250 grams. There are smaller and larger ones in modern production. They are also usually tighter than *bings*.



Square (fangcha, 方茶)

These flat and square cakes aren't as old as other shapes. They are often 100-200g in size. Sometimes they have pictures or characters compressed into them for luck or decoration. They are always tight in compression, as they are machine-pressed.

ERAS OF PUERH TEA

普洱茶年代

Antique Era (Gu Dong Cha Nian Dai, 古董茶年代)

This era of tea includes all the tea that was produced prior to the formation of Communist China in 1949. All of the factories from that time were private businesses, and none had anywhere near the output of those today. Many of these trading firms also dealt in other goods as well, like rice and other agricultural products. Puerh tea was just one commodity amongst others. Some of them were even owned by single families, like the legendary *Song Ping Hao* (宋聘號) and *Tong Qing Hao* (同慶號). They were often small, rural houses where tea and other products were all processed completely by hand.

Masterpiece Era (Yin Ji Cha Nian Dai, 印級茶年代)

The start of the Masterpiece Era began with the creation of the state-run factories, like Menghai, which is still in existence today (though it is privately owned now). In order to control and stabilize the production of tea in Yunnan, the “China Tea Corporation, Yunnan Branch” was created. They had their own logo, brand and trademark—established in 1950, and registered with the central government in 1951. This trademark is the now famous “8-Zhong Tea” character that is in the center of all the cakes from the Masterpiece and later Seven Sons eras. The character “zhong (中)” means “middle” or “Middle Kingdom,” viz. China. Eight of them surround the character for tea (茶) since that number was considered lucky. It also symbolized the goal of distributing Chinese tea to all eight directions of the world. Masterpiece Era cakes are for the most part all Red Mark (紅印) or Blue Mark (藍印).

Seven Sons Era (Chi Tze Nian Dai, 七子年代)

The Seven Sons Era began in 1972 with the formation of the now-famous “China National Native Produce & Animal By-product Import & Export Company (中國土產畜產進出口公司雲南省茶葉分公司),” often referred to as the “CNNP.” The new agency would take control over all the puerh production during the period. The three main factories of the time period were Menghai, Xiaguan and Kunming. During this time, the production of puerh tea increased as a result of a growing foreign market. More tea was exported than ever before. As a result, more of these teas are floating around the vintage market than their predecessors, though some of these famous vintages are also now starting to become rarer and more expensive. Some of the earliest cakes from this era are just now starting to reach maturity, and connoisseurs are all interested in tasting these vintages as well as the earlier ones.

Newborn Era (Xin Sheng Nian Dai, 新生年代)

Different authors end the Seven Sons Era at different times. Many modern factories are still producing cakes with the same packaging designs as those made during this era, and the continuous production of that design makes the delineation between the Seven Sons Era and what scholars call the “Modern” or “Newborn Era” difficult indeed. However, most puerh historians end the Seven Sons Era sometime in the mid to late 1990s. For us, 1997 is a good time to mark the end of this era because the private orders made by tea merchants to the national factories increased drastically after 1997. In addition, different kinds of wrapping styles emerged alongside the Seven Sons style. Since the beginning of the Newborn Era, the production and variation of puerh tea has increased in a whirlwind of volume. Also, more single-region tea is being made these days, and there has also been a dramatic increase in what we call “Boutique Tea,” which means private, small productions made by shop owners or puerh lovers who travel to Yunnan themselves to see the trees and order cakes to their taste. We are in the Newborn Era now!



FACTORY CODES

- 75** *These two numbers refer to the date in which this processing method began, so that in the case of this tea, processing began in 1975. It unfortunately doesn't describe the date of the actual tea, as many production processes are carried on for many years.*
- 4** *This digit refers to the average size of the leaves used, often called "leaf grade." So this tea is composed of 4th grade leaves.*
- 2** *This last number refers to the factory that produced the cakes. So this cake was made by Menghai Tea Factory (勐海茶廠).*



過去珍貴的秘訣

Many state-produced cakes have a four-digit production number. This trend began in the late 1960s or early 1970s and consequently doesn't apply to very old antique puerh. These were internal factory batch codes originally and were only known and used by factory workers and merchants who ordered from them. Nowadays, however, the old recipes have become famous, and many companies, small and large, are trying to reproduce the famous "7542" or our favorite, "8582." Consequently, it's worth knowing a little of what these codes are about.

Basically, the first two digits are the year in which that production was first started. If a particular mixture/processing procedure marketed well, it was then continued the next year, sometimes even for decades to the present. In other words, if the first two digits are "75," this means that this particular production method/mixture was first begun in 1975. This doesn't mean that the tea itself dates to 1975. It could be a 2006 cake. It just means that the recipe itself began in 1975. The methods used to blend and process puerh tea into cakes are often experimented with until better formulas are developed.

Brewing Tips

冲泡技巧 完成好茶

This month's tea, Inner Resolve (Qing Shan, 青山), can really only be brewed sidehandle or gongfu. It is very difficult to brew a compressed tea leaves in a bowl. If you are very committed to that brewing method right now (we understand a commitment to the basics; it is very important for beginners and for periods of time even amongst more seasoned Chajin), we recommend doing your best to keep the leaves whole as you break it up. Then, use just a few whole leaves in the bowl. While we are on the topic of compressed puerh, we thought we could offer some advice for breaking up compressed teas like sheng puerh. Remember, half-broken cakes are not ideal for storage or drinking. When you do decide to drink a cake of tea, break the whole thing up and leave it in a jar for a month before drinking. This allows the innermost parts to air out.

Traditionally, puerh tea and dian hong come in cakes. The best shape for storing puerh is a discus (*bing*, 餅). Seven discus cakes wrapped up in bamboo skin together is called a "*tong*" (桶). When bamboo grows, it sheds its skin all over the forest floor. The flora in Yunnan is all lush and large, growing to great heights in the rainforest and subtropical climate. The bamboo is also huge there, which is why there is enough to cover seven cakes. This wrapping protects the tea from mold, humidity and damage. Traditionally, puerh lovers buy at least a *tong* and a cake of teas we love and want to age. Just as the whole cake ages better than a broken one, a *tong* ages better than loose cakes. (By the way, we will be offering *tongs* of this amazing tea, Inner Resolve, on our website.) The tester cake is used to taste the tea every year or so in order to decide when we want to start drinking it. When we are ready, we carefully take a cake out of the *tong* and break it up completely into a jar, closing the *tong* as best we can, and start enjoying our tea after it has sat in the jar for a month and "refreshed," as we call it in the puerh world. (This just means that the inside of the cake has been stale and needs air to "wake up.") The tester then continues to be a gauge for when we want to open the second, third, etc. cakes.

The art of breaking up a cake of tea, or piece of a cake, requires some skill, and therefore practice. The goal is to damage the leaves as little as possible. The ideal tool is a puerh knife, which is blunt, so it won't cut, but has a nice point to get into the cake. Patience and practice are the keys to success, as in all things Cha Dao. You have to find the right place where the knife can go in easily. If you are pushing, breaking or experience force, then that is not where the cake "wants" to break. Traditional, stone-pressed cakes are easier to break than machine-pressed ones, which are often too tight for ideal storage anyway. Most stone-pressed cakes will break in half easily, often starting from the cloth indentation on the bottom side of the cake. Otherwise, the rim of the cake is a good place to start inserting the knife and feeling around for a loose space. When the knife is fully inserted, you want to then use leverage to pry the layers of tea apart. This will open a pocket into the cake that will cause the least amount of damage to the leaves. It is impossible to not create some little bits, but that is okay as bits are important in brewing a proper pot of tea as well—we just want to avoid breakage as much as possible. Small bits are what lend color, flavor, aroma and energy to the earliest steepings, before the leaves have opened up.



Water: spring water or best bottled
Fire: coals, infrared or gas
Heat: very hot, fish-eye, roughly 95-98 °C
Brewing Methods: gongfu or sidehandle (gongfu is better)
Steeping: longer, flash, flash, then growing (especially when brewing gongfu)
Patience: 15-25 steepings gongfu

茶 When brewing a compressed tea, you have to be much more careful about the amount of leaves you use, as the tea will expand quite a bit. Try starting with less than usual.



國海茶廠出品

0036

無盡時間的茶學習和靜坐

茶亭



Inside the Hut

茶人: Wu De (無的)





To celebrate the 100th issue of Global Tea Hut, I thought I would look through my writings over the last several years and put together a patchwork article discussing Global Tea Hut, the Center, our tradition and my role in it all. I will use the threads of now and the future to embroider this quilt into a relevant article that will help those of you who are new get to know Global Tea Hut, the community and myself. And for those of you who have been around for a while, this will be a chance to clarify our mission and to understand more deeply what it is that Global Tea Hut does and why.

Let's start with the basics. There are two main aspects to our organization: Light Meets Life and Global Tea Hut. Global Tea Hut is this magazine and

the community who receives it. Both are operated on a non-profit model, with all the proceeds returning to the Center or to improve the magazine. We have already applied for official non-profit status in the United States and are waiting for IRS approval. Each one is worth understanding a bit more, as there are some differences.

Light Meets Life (光壽無量) is our future Center, where we will host free, donation-based courses on all things Cha Dao. We hope to include linear classroom courses on subjects like tea farming and the seven genres of tea, training in tea brewing at several levels, including Gongfu Tea for beginners, intermediates and advanced students, as well as Zen and Tea retreats that are more meditation-focused. All of these courses will be taught by teachers in

our lineage of tea brewing, following the approach and methods we practice here, which are a combination of Soto Zen practice, Shao An (紹安) gongfu tea brewing and our bowl tea ceremonies. Light Meets Life will also be a working tea farm, allowing guests to help grow, harvest and process tea. We hope to use the proceeds from the tea we sell on our website along with the tea we produce on the farm to cover all expenses so that Light Meets Life can be free to guests from around the world. Our experience running our now-closed Center, "Tea Sage Hut," for almost a decade, hosting thousands of guests, has helped us streamline what courses we should offer, as well as the logistics and problems that running a free Tea Center brings. We hope to solve all these issues in the creation



of Light Meets Life, creating and then bequeathing the world's best Tea Center to future generations of Chajin.

Global Tea Hut is an ad-free monthly magazine that comes with tea. One of our primary goals in this magazine is to promote sustainable tea production around the world, which is free from agrochemicals. We do this by using our combined purchasing power to buy the large quantities of tea necessary to send a tin of tea with this magazine to more than sixty countries around the world. We also do this by promoting organic farmers and translating and authoring as many articles on the topic as we can. Another of our goals is to translate as much tea information from Chinese to English as we are able to and can afford. Several of the largest tea publishers in Taiwan have donated their entire

body of work, spanning decades, to Global Tea Hut, and most issues have a translation of some contemporary author. We currently have several issues that represent the largest English publications on that particular tea topic to date. We also translate classic Chinese texts, and annotate them to make them more understandable to the modern reader. We have so far translated texts from the Tang (618–907), Song (960–1279), Ming (1368–1644) and Qing (1644–1911) dynasties. We hope to eventually release these all together in one hardbound book. Our third goal is to connect tea lovers around the world and help establish and facilitate tea communities. For now, we use our app to do this, but we have plans to expand into other engines that we feel have the potential to connect Global

Tea Hut members from the pages of the magazine to meeting and sharing tea in person.

Finally, our last goal in publishing these magazines is to promote a more spiritual approach to tea, as ceremony, meditation and connection to Nature. To us, Tea is a Way of life, a Dao that leads to insight. We try our best to convey this approach in a way that is not preachy, and to make sure that readers of this magazine feel that the magazine is holistic, covering tea from many approaches, traditions and ways of seeing and preparing tea. We hope that readers feel free to learn about tea history, science, production, folklore and preparation as much or more as they learn about the spiritual side of tea. This aspect of the magazine is worth expanding upon.

TEA & SPIRITUALITY

茶與靈性

People sometimes wonder why it is that a tea center focuses so much on spiritual matters. Some people view tea as a beverage, a hobby or perhaps a cultural art and therefore better left to the profane. They wonder why the tempest in such a small cup. Why the fuss? Why not just drink tea? Some are tea lovers, and yet still have difficulty swallowing a sense of the sacred with the infusions they brew. It is likely, however, that such people have difficulty finding the sacred in anything. The answer as to where the spirit, life and Dao of tea issue from is threefold: The practical, the nature of the Leaf and the virtue of the highest arts. Each of these three aspects of this tradition and life is complete on its own, addressing why tea is sacred to us and why the brewing and imbibing of it is a ceremonial rite.

On the most basic level, we drink tea in a spiritual way because we are spiritual people. It seems obvious, but still needs to be stated that people who are interested in spiritual matters, and in cultivating themselves towards greater spiritual heights, will both view tea as an aspect of a spiritual life and a means of cultivation. All spirituality, in whatever method or tradition, is about cultivating wisdom and kindness. And when one has chosen a life of wisdom and compassion, everything is a spiritual tool, and every daily act a chance to learn and grow, transform and transcend.

Most people who are on a spiritual journey find little reward in materialism or sensual pleasure. This isn't a rejection of the world, but rather an insight into its true nature as transitory and therefore beyond grasping. Some confuse this for an aversion towards or rejection of beauty or pleasure. Quite the contrary, the enlightened revel in beauty and pleasure; they just avoid concluding such experiences in craving for more or a desire to possess. This desire to possess is delusory because there is no such thing as property or ownership in anything other than a social, legal sense. We all come and go from this world naked, without any of this, including this self. There is little lasting

pleasure in the world, and sensuality is but the shadow of true joy, which is the soul resting in its true nature and heart. Also, sensual pleasure is so often a means of escape; rather than addressing and curing our malady, it but allays the symptoms, providing temporary comfort. It is like weeding without taking out the roots.

As a result, most spiritual people are already approaching tea from a sense of depth and understanding. They are seeking medicine, rather than sensual pleasure. The joys of preparing tea are welcomed, but rarely primary in their relationship to tea, which is more about self-cultivation, connection with Nature and sharing a heart space with others in communion.

Simply put: Let the worldly tea drinker drink tea as a beverage or hobby. There is nothing wrong with that; and vice versa, those of us on a spiritual path find in Tea a friend, ally and teacher throughout our journey. Spiritual people drink tea spiritually, and of course they do!

Though we could drink tea spiritually arbitrarily, just because we are spiritual people, the fact is that tea has a deep and vast history with many lineages that approached it in a spiritual way. It was ceremony for centuries before it was a beverage, and it was thus to all four of the great family trees of religion in Asia. To the aboriginals who discovered tea, it was a sacred plant medicine; to the Daoists it was Nature alchemy; to the Buddhist it was an essential mindfulness practice; and to the Confucians it was a way of ceremonializing humaneness and social etiquette to cultivate integrity and kindness.

There is a deep and ancient heritage of tea ceremonies all throughout Asia, and you have but to scratch the surface of any tea being prepared here to find that this religion is buried deeply just beneath the surface of the industry, commodity, beverage or hobby. Most Chinese, for example, will nod their heads while casually sipping tea if you recite some deep, religious poem about an ancient tea lineage or ceremony, or even state some proverb or spiritu-

al insight that comes from drinking tea. Though these lineages are mostly ghosts that haunt the modern, commercial production and consumption of tea, there are also living traditions, like ours, that are still practicing ceremonial tea. Of course, we have adapted to this modern age, but we have tried to preserve the purity of the spirit of the ceremonies we practice—the same spirit that was practiced by ancient shamans, Zen and Daoist monks, and by wandering poets who consumed tea alone in the mountains.

So while it is possible to drink tea in a spiritual way because you are trying to live a spiritual life, and there is nothing wrong with being more mindful and reverent in anything you do, there is also a great heritage and history behind this practice, going back thousands of years. In fact, the vast majority of tea drinkers that have walked this earth practiced ceremonial “spiritual” tea.

I practice a vegan/vegetarian diet, and I feel the same way about it as I do my more “spiritual” approach to tea: *I try to not be annoying about it*. No matter how or why someone loves tea, as a tea lover we have way more in common than we have differences. I love tea geekery, tea art and collecting—I love all things tea. And I love sharing tea and talking about tea with anyone. I always seek common ground with tea lovers and am happy to discuss any aspect of tea, though my heart is more focused on ceremonial tea and its relationship to my practice of Zen meditation, as well as the opportunity to connect with Nature, myself and others in silence. Actually, though, from a Zen perspective, the worldly parts of tea are as powerful in terms of cultivation as the spiritual ones. We hope that you feel like this magazine finds a balance, offering both. We aim to cover tea from as many perspectives as possible, excluding only advertisements and overtly industrial or market-based articles and, of course, any tea that is destructive to the environment, which means our own health as well. It is all one web, after all...

A close-up photograph of a person's hands holding a green ceramic cup. Steam is rising from the cup, and the person is wearing a dark grey sweater. The background is dark and out of focus.

Tea as a "Her"

You may have noticed that in this, and other issues of Global Tea Hut, we often capitalize "Tea." We do this to honor Tea as a plant spirit, an entheogen. Entheogens are plant medicines used by shamans to lead to an experience of the Divine. For thousands and thousands of years before it was ever a commodity, Tea was a plant medicine—a "She" that people worked with as a spiritual elixir. It's time we returned some of that reverence to our modern world. We aren't suggesting a return to olden times or ideas, some of which may be overly superstitious, but rather that more reverence for the Leaf is worthwhile, and we can start that process with the language we use to talk about Tea.

When we speak about Tea as a "Her," it isn't meant to evoke gender—or even to anthropomorphize Tea—but rather to show respect. "It" doesn't feel as nice, and from boats to guitars, we all inherently know that and respect the things we love accordingly! Nothing could benefit us all more than a bit more respect for the living beings that share this world with us, including our plant relatives!



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TRADITION

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Many people will ask us what a Tea tradition looks like, and what our tradition is about. We should be able to articulate a simple, cogent and powerful answer—one that offers greater depth should we wish to explain more. We realize that ambiguity about our common goals frustrates our ability to achieve them together. As a result, we are able to state clearly what our organization is founded upon as well as our future together. This will also be the legacy we leave behind for future Tea lovers with the same interests.

Before expressing the foundation of our work together, it should be made clear that we are an open tradition. We are non-sectarian, and do not promote any worldview, philosophy or religious views—only our approach to Tea. Our community is global, and includes people from all walks of life, each with different ideas about the world and how to live in it. We have realized that a brighter future for this planet is dependent upon more cooperation between all the different peoples, recognizing our common truths and ways we can work towards the mutual happiness of our species: both those who are alive now, as well as the unborn who will inherit the world we leave them. We all love kindness and believe in a healthy, happier earth. We work towards connecting people in heart space rather than dividing them in their minds. Rather than changing minds, we seek to open hearts. We appreciate that our circle is connected to all the other circles, small and large, hoping to have a positive effect on the entire web. Ultimately, our tradition is like a department in one large company called “Earth,” and our goals should not just further the happiness and prosperity of our members, but help promote a brighter world for everyone now and in the future.

Similarly, we do not endorse any particular insights that arise from drinking Tea. We recognize that the alchemy that occurs between Tea and any given individual is unique, and that the lessons and insights that help

guide them are their own truths, to be held up as such. You might say that we provide the space to meet the great ambassador from Nature to humans, Tea, and a bit of the etiquette you’ll need to spend time together, but the topics you’ll discuss and what you will learn will be entirely up to you.

We are dedicated to promoting, cultivating and expressing an awakening of harmony through Tea. We believe that Tea wisdom which has no connection to any financial motivation, good or bad, is very necessary in this mod-

ern world, and therefore strive to build schools, centers and other Tea spaces in the true, ancient spirit of Tea—leaves, water and wisdom shared out of love and towards connection with Mother Earth, ourselves and each other.

We see this tradition very simply, as three easy-to-understand principals. Each one can be expressed in a sentence, or expanded upon for hours. Understanding the principles that bind us as a community will make us stronger, and bring form to our current and future goals.

This tradition is our brewing methods. We have these ways of preparing Tea and the reasons that we use them. Our aim is not to compare them to other ways of preparing Tea or to declare them the best. They are ours, and they work. That they work for us is enough. We realize that many people in the world brew Tea in many different ways, and that there is power in them all. We don’t take pride in our brewing methods because they are better than others, but because they are *ours*—the ones handed down to us—and because they work. They are each worth a lifetime of study and practice, and each suits a particular aspect of Tea: gongfu for grace and finer Tea; bowl Tea for meditation, simplicity, in offering friendship, as well as mindfulness.

This tradition is in our approach to Tea, as Nature, plant medicine and self-cultivation. Our approach to Tea is also what binds us together as a community. Realizing that Tea is a leaf grown in the mountains, we see that it is Nature and are full of respect and love. Recognizing that Tea is plant medicine, we see that Tea can heal people, body and soul. And we also approach Tea as an aspect of self-cultivation. Tea can help us to cultivate ourselves, and then amazingly be a means of expressing our insights to others nonverbally. Without words or concepts, there is no agreement or disagreement, only heart space. We do not learn to *make* Tea, but rather to *serve* it. There are many approaches to Tea in the world—some people drink Tea as a beverage, some for pure enjoyment. We acknowledge these aspects of Tea as well, and are happy to just enjoy some tea now and again, though our primary approach is one of Nature, plant medicine, self-cultivation as well as sharing heart space with our fellows.

This tradition is a community. Most importantly, this tradition is a group of people, each with their own lives, their own relationship to Tea, truth and insights, and each one with a unique value. As these methods of brewing and approach to Tea were handed down to us, this tradition connects us to previous Tea lovers, Tea sages and teachers; and as we hand it down, we will travel with it to future generations as well. We are, therefore, a group of people who practice these brewing methods, along with the approach mentioned above, and do so together. We create Tea family: bonds of support and love to help each other in our Tea journey and in our lives. Our communities should have no “us” and “them,” no “inner” and “outer,” as we hope to foster connection amongst all people towards common goals of loving-kindness, and a greener, happier world. We aim to build Tea communities, centers and schools that train people in our brewing methods, our approach to Tea and to serve Tea in a heart space to their greater, surrounding societies.

THE ROLE OF THE TEACHER

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When you elevate another human being, you make their accomplishments impossible. You push them away from you to a place “over there” where holy beings are. Why on earth would I want a teacher who taught things I cannot possibly achieve? If I am seeking to transform myself and my life through Zen and Tea, I need to learn with someone who has gone through what I have and can share their experience and strength with me, while also exemplifying and embodying a version of what I will express if and when I practice more.

The problem with “holy” people is that they aren’t any more holy than a flower, a bug or a gourd full of oil. Sometimes children are wiser than us. They haven’t yet lost their wonder and curiosity, humility and reverence. I was once drinking tea with a few friends, and one of them launched into the story of this great “holy man” she had gone to see lecture the week before and all the “he was so powerful and wise” stuff. All of sudden, the seven-year-old daughter of another friend who was sitting there drinking her tea and being well-behaved piped in: “What about his boogers? Are his boogers holy?” In that moment, as everyone laughed, *she* was the old Zen master in that room. And touché! Are his boogers holy? Do you want one? Or perhaps we could go to a worse place, yet (after all, this is Zen) and maybe you could have one of his pubes in your soup? I think you get the point.

I think I have a unique opportunity to share some deep truths concerning teachers and students with you, since I am both. I deal with this stuff all the time as a “spiritual teacher.” I cannot control others, of course, and can only do my best to say as often and as clearly as I can that I am not a holy man, not a “master” of anything and should not be on anyone’s pedestal. And, for me, that works enough, but there are still occasionally those who haven’t met me and write such stories or show up with those there-he-is eyes. Conversely, as much as certain people

love to put teachers on pedestals, the smarmy “cool” dudes all love knocking us off. You can’t knock me off, though. I was never up, friend. Fortunately, I am not in danger of getting puffed up or emboldened by such flattery because decades of self-cultivation have offered me a clearer window into my own mind, body and soul. I know what goes on in here. Let me tell you, it is not a “holy” place. My body releases all kinds of unholies! And my mind is sometimes so filthy I wonder if I am possessed. I am nobody’s master. That is not some false modesty meant to sell myself. I am as deranged, bent and broken as any human who has ever passed through this world.

Whenever someone compliments me, I always respond with a heartfelt bow and a “Yes, Zen and Tea are great!” because what they are seeing is the effects of these beautiful practices. It is my way of side-stepping, getting out of the way and letting their respect (their inner bow) go towards where it should be oriented: Zen and Tea!

I was once asked by a reporter why people respect me. It was a good question and caught me off guard. Fortunately, the interview was via email, so I had some time to think. But after a few days, I couldn’t find anything, other than that those people had written stories about me that aren’t true. It is like someone is walking down the road and catches a glimpse into one little corner of my house on a particularly sunny and clean day and thinks, “What a clean and pure house!” Of course, that idea is absurd to the one who lives in the house and knows that it has cockroaches and a leaky faucet, dirty laundry and dishes—don’t even get me started on what kinds of stuff passes through the pipes of the house! But then, after some time, it dawned on me. I found the thing that is worth of respect in me! And I know me better than anyone, so let me tell you, this is the *one* thing: I love the light! I do, truly and completely. I love the sacred, the good and the compassionate. I am not of the light. I am more like a dark

night with a sliver of moonlight. But I do love it! And that is just another way of saying that it is the light we bow to, not the window it shines through. Not this person Wu De, but the Zen and Tea he sometimes expresses.

If you take interest in my story, the good parts or the bad parts, you will miss the Zen and Tea that shines through. When painting, I always tear up the paintings that are full of me. The best paintings come *through* me. The bows of humility allow me to sometimes get out of the way, and a wise word or a proper bowl of tea, brewed by the Dao, not me, can come forth. Don’t confuse me for it, or you will miss out on that transmission completely—you will forget the face of the Buddha. It is from the Buddha and all the dead masters, true masters, that I pass on these practices and teachings. And because I practiced them for some years, occasionally when my big mouth isn’t in the way, my heart speaks for them. Bow to that. We could actually flip this teaching over and say that all people are holy. All are worthy of reverence. We are all wise in our ways and worthy of a reverential bow. But don’t worship living humans.

The important point is that putting humans on pedestals is a bad recipe for all kinds of nonsense, as so many spiritual scandals highlight. When someone pretends they are “holy,” their shadows are all stuffed into closets, where they can fester. This then causes all the judgmental folks to say “see!” and continue trying to knock people off pedestals.

When you put a teacher on a pedestal, you are going to be disappointed. So, let’s just get the teacher test over with before we go any further in this journey: *I fail!* I fail your teacher tests. I fail them because I didn’t get to study the material you are going to test me on. I fail because you are going to grade the test how you like no matter how I answer. And finally, worst of all, even if I somehow magically pass your teacher test, despite not having the material and being arbitrarily graded,



you will just test me again. You want to see me fail! And I *do* fail the morality tests, the pure thought tests the holiness tests, and oh-me-oh-my, the superpowers test! Not a superpower in sight (unless you include bowing). We relish in the scandals of politicians, leaders and other people we have elevated because deep down we know they are just like us. And actually, that *is* holy—that brokenness is sacred. As the Zen master Leonard Cohen said, “There is a crack, a crack in everything. That’s how the light gets in...”

Sometimes people say they “studied with master Wu De,” or even more absurd, we once had to contact a website where someone wrote “studied deeply with grandmaster Wu De!” Such instances are really rare because anyone who actually studied with me will know me and know that I am not master! None of my students would ever use that language, unless they forgot the face of the Buddha! In fact, for anyone with a story of “Wu De the great,” there are others with stories about “Wu De the jerk.” Those stories

are wrong too. I am not holy, and I am not a jerk. I am a complicated human being. I am Wu De.

On a deeper level, the demand for holy men is really a misunderstanding of what an authentic teacher is and does. Why do we define an “authentic” spiritual teacher as one who has achieved becoming something we are not? That is like measuring supreme fishness in terms of flight. Why isn’t an authentic teacher one who is fully human and knows all the despair and darkness we students face and can offer some techniques and wisdom to help see us through our lives with more grace and wisdom? Why are we surprised when the teacher turns out to be an ordinary person? This is exactly the same as saying the aurora borealis is “just a meteorological event.” Human beings are miracles. We are the product of billions of years of atomic energy and hundreds of millions of years of organic evolution! There is nothing wrong with being a plain old person. Zen reminds us teachers, “The first thing you do with every student

is show them your humanity.” And so long as you are misled by a show, you will walk by them and not even notice them. So, let me show you my humanity now:

I am as broken, dented and deluded as you are, maybe more. I have failed at almost everything I have ever undertaken. But I always get back up. For every time I have failed, I have learned and grown stronger. I come from light and darkness, divine hope and ignorant egocentricity. I am beautiful, open, awake, loving and kind. I am also cruel and constricted, lost in my own selfish thoughts and emotions.

I don’t want to be judgmental or critical of other people’s practice, but if you need a guru, a holy man or any elevated teacher who sits on daises above other people, I am not the one for you. If that is what you seek, this is not a right fit. I am not your teacher. I do not want to be worshiped or admired by you, nor to sit above you.

I refuse to be in charge of you or responsible for you in any way. Nor can I heal you, fix you or give you power. You already have all the power you need. You are alive...

Rather than encouraging dependence, we teachers must teach our students to follow their own higher truth—to follow their hearts. Even if they behave immaturely, leave and go attach themselves to some other teacher in dependence, we will have sown the seeds of independence and truth, and in some way taught them to follow their own heart's truth. They obviously will have followed their hearts in the leaving process itself. The decision to leave was theirs alone, after all. And they will need to continue to follow their own truth during the interim period when they left us and went to cling to another teacher. And even before they go we can set an example by following our own hearts and by having frank and open conversations about these issues.

High seats have no place in Zen or in Tea. Some Buddhist traditions say things like, "Bow to the robe, not the person in it." There can be truth in this, if the chair is a symbol and the one who sits in it doesn't get too comfortable there, or worse yet, starts thinking they *are* the chair. This can happen easily if students and teachers are not balanced when it comes to reverence and respect. In Zen and Tea, though, we all sit on the floor.

Violations of a Teacher

To further clarify my role as a spiritual teacher, I thought I would share with you the three violations of a teacher that I avoid. They guide all my practice as a teacher:

1. First, I think it is a violation for a teacher to set themselves up as an intermediary between the sacred and the student. In doing so, the student is then ill-equipped to experience the teachings themselves, or to evaluate their veracity. If the teacher is the go-between—the middleman—between the sacred truth and the student, the student develops a relationship of reliance on the teacher. This is like a doctor who continues treating a patient

despite the fact that she has shown no signs of actual healing. A good doctor should try to end visits as soon as possible, as that would mean that the patient's health was restored. Similarly, a spiritual teacher should aim for the independence of his students as soon as possible. I provide tools for communication with the sacred, and will consequently *never* have that communication on my students' behalf.

2. The second violation is wanting something from students. A teacher is a servant. He/she shouldn't want something from his/her students. The Dharma is priceless and has no charge. Wanting money, sex, respect or fame will only interfere with a teacher's ability to help his/her students.

3. The final violation I try to avoid is promoting any kind of mold that students should then try to fit, whether that mold is based on a copy of the teacher him/herself or on some idea from a sutra or scripture of what proper "spiritual" people should look like. I don't want to create a formula based on copying Wu De, nor based on any scriptural idea of what a student should be. Rather, I try to listen to each of my students' highest selves. I promise to try my best to acknowledge the unique journey each of us is on, and to encourage each of my students towards their own personal fulfillment. Every being has a right to their own Buddha-nature, their own enlightenment. I truly believe that.





TEA IS THE TEACHER

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幕後 Behind the Scenes

茶人: Shen Su (聖素)





Global Tea Hut began in February of 2012. I first visited the Global Tea Hut headquarters, Tea Sage Hut, in April of 2012 and started receiving my first Global Tea Hut newsletters in May that year, in Costa Rica of all places. It was a black and white newsletter back in the day, but still full of the best English tea information in the world, and also chock-full of fuzzy photographs and inside jokes that were suitable for the couple hundred members at the time. I still reminisce and laugh at the “Enlighten-up” section of the newsletter, for in its humor was also some deep wisdom, as is usually the case when we lighten up around our deepest hang-ups and surround them with levity. It’s called “comic *relief*” for a reason. But that section slowly faded away and the

newsletter changed in myriad ways as Global Tea Hut evolved, and its audience expanded beyond the inner circle of tea jokers. That metamorphosis from a simple black and white newsletter to a full-color professional magazine reaching thousands of people in dozens of countries has been beautiful to witness and participate in.

It was truly the powerful wisdom found throughout the entire magazine, coupled with organic samples of tea each month, a connection to tea lovers around the world and the personal experience I’d had at Tea Sage Hut that really made this newsletter *more* than just a newsletter, something very unique indeed—something worth getting involved in, something worth making sacrifices for, something to serve. I didn’t know just how deep-

ly I would get involved in those old-timey Global Tea Hut days, but it has become a major pillar in my life and has stayed strong and true for the last seven years.

The Experience

Global Tea Hut is a magazine, a community, a wealth of tea information, a piece of cultural art, a stunning photography catalogue, a champion of sustainability, the largest English resource on tea and a little piece of snail-mail each month that brings us joy. It’s really a unique experience for many of us, especially on the receiving end when it arrives at your door each month and you get to flip through the pages while sipping away an afternoon,



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learning about all things tea, from Zen and farming, history and lore, to science and processing, art and design and so much more. Along the way you meet farmers and their philosophies, other Global Tea Hut community members, and learn about different tea traditions the world over, both ancient and modern. And hopefully you receive a little wisdom that inspires you to further welcome Tea and ceremony into your life, in whatever way suits your relationship to tea.

For me, the Global Tea Hut experience has been the same in many ways, but different in many others. Certainly, I get to read the magazine and learn from its wealth of knowledge. I can also drink the Tea of the Month, knowing that thousands of people in sixty different countries are drinking

the exact same tea at roughly the same period of time. It's definitely a shared experience that I love, but on the creative and distribution end of things, there are a lot of other aspects I am privileged to participate in.

Perhaps you can imagine what goes into the collaborative process of creating Global Tea Hut each month? At first glance, we need to write articles, take pictures, create the layout and design of the magazine and source tea—easier said than done. Upon closer inspection, more work unfolds: editing is necessary for all of the articles; taking pictures on a phone is one thing, but photography is not only expensive and technical to create but requires professional skill sets and years of training to get to the point where Global Tea Hut is now. Layout and design of the

magazine is another facet where professional software and skills are absolutely essential to create something so beautiful and simple. Sourcing organic teas every month means establishing relationships with farmers and vendors in different regions and countries, which oftentimes results from years of navigating the world of tea. And we haven't even scratched the surface of everything that goes into Global Tea Hut! Each one of those facets goes deeper still. Plus, there are websites to make and maintain, databases and inventory to manage, emails to address, social media platforms to run, office spaces to organize, and we haven't even touched on the business side of things including incorporation, taxes, accountants and financial stewardship to name a few...

The magazine itself is a great metaphor for this because just beneath that thin, glossy, beautiful cover is a tome of wisdom, knowledge and information that sometimes takes months or years to digest and fully integrate into your life. And that's just one magazine, of which there are now one hundred! The point is that all experiences are the result of accumulated energies of greater breadth and depth than we can usually imagine, and Global Tea Hut is no exception. A lot of love, tears and tea go into this each month, and what a rich experience it is!

Behind the Scenes

We all know what it's like to be behind the scenes of something, be it a concert, an art show, a theatre production, a restaurant or just behind the scenes of our own family. And we all know that what goes on behind the scenes is somehow different from what we imagined or what other people imagine. Chefs aren't eating a relaxing meal in the restaurant kitchen—they're preparing it for others. Members of a family aren't posing for a family portrait all the time; they're being a family. Actors (for the most part) aren't in character at home; they need to be themselves off stage. As observers, it's difficult to imagine what goes on behind the scenes because we forget that it encapsulates all of life. And when our understanding about something we're interested in is limited, we naturally want to learn more! That's part of the process of ending up behind the scenes.

When you feel that spark ignite within, you want to learn more about it and get involved in the creation of that spark, so you can nourish that nascent flame within yourself and share it with others, knowing how strongly it impacted you, in the hope that it does the same for others. In doing so, you come to learn that fuel is necessary to make the spark, but the fuel isn't the spark, so you start learning about fuel. The fuel alone can't do anything, so you start learning about the methods necessary to combine the fuel in the correct order and amount to facilitate that perfect balance of air (relaxation and personal work) with fuel (hard work) to receive the spark of inspiration that

ignites it all. This balance isn't as simple as we first thought, requiring a lot of time and commitment to learn. It also involves a handful of people with professional skill sets to gather the resources, organize them and bring them all together in a beautiful and creative way. In other words, that tiny spark of inspiration must land on a great accumulation of energy and resources if it is to become a working fire. And giving your energy to the wood pile that will be burned is a big part of being behind the scenes—we all chop lots of wood around here!

On stage, Global Tea Hut is a moving musical performance that touches the heart and stirs the melodic soul; in a kitchen, it's a balanced, healthy, and delicious seasonal meal on an empty stomach at just the right time; and on the big screen, it's a display of highly choreographed movements, rich character development, a coherent plot line and stunning visual effects that draw on your emotions and make you feel part of the movie. Whatever it is for you, Global Tea Hut was for me the experience that sparked something within and made me want to get involved, like a movie lover who is inspired to become part of the immense amount of work that goes into creating the show. That meant stepping out of the audience and going backstage to see where it all happens, and furthermore, to see if I could help make it happen!

I think it's natural for humans to serve in some capacity or another. It's an interesting phenomenon that we love something so much and then want to learn the skills necessary to continue experiencing it ourselves but ultimately to share it with others. There's a deep connection in sharing something with others, and we all yearn for that to some degree or another, whether we know it or not. That's one reason a tea ceremony is so powerful. Getting involved is the only way to deepen your connection to anything, and when you feel deeply connected, you strengthen the groundwork for love. That strengthening process is critical, because when you get involved—when you *really* get involved with something—you learn everything about it, and that includes *all* the ins and outs, all the quirks and quarks, all of the strong points and all of the weaknesses. Then our love is put to the test.

Certainly, we've all had this experience with a loved one, be it a family member, lover or friend, and most likely we've experienced it in a lot of other aspects of life: What you thought in the beginning became a very different experience once you got seriously involved. We find that person, that community, that movement to get involved with, and then cultivate the groundwork necessary to love through it all, with acceptance, compassion and forgiveness towards ourselves and others. There was a great dog and his master who put it like this: "You must learn to love through the bite." That dog was always saying wise things. Joking aside, he was right, because love based on conditions is conditional love, which isn't what the great saints of great traditions were pointing towards when they encouraged us all to love more. They were pointing at loving through the bite, and when you get involved with another human or a group of humans, it's inevitable that you'll get bit at some point, and you'll eventually bite others as well. It's not good or bad; it's just human nature at this point in our evolution, and so we do our best to work with those challenging situations in as skillful a way as possible, which isn't always so graceful, but is always worth it—the love on the other side is the only real love there is, and so much deeper.

And so, that brings me to Global Tea Hut. Behind the scenes of Global Tea Hut *isn't* what you imagine, but you can all relate because *it is* real and it encapsulates all of life, all the ups and downs and everything in between. It's not just tea enthusiasts drinking tea all day in deep ceremonial states of mind, though that may happen from time to time. It's not a group of tea geeks who focus on linear experiments and write articles all day, though we do geek out and spend a fair share of time in front of computer screens. It's certainly not a collection of tea masters privy to esoteric wisdom, cloudwalking the great tea mountains of China on Sunday afternoons; we only do that every second Sunday. It's not what you think it is, but what you think it is, is probably in part a piece of Global Tea Hut. I can attest that this place is a very real, authentic scene involving humans who really love tea and want to share that love with others.

And I should think that the passion and authenticity certainly shine through to your end of this magazine. We all come with our own set of character traits, but together, we hold a vision of Global Tea Hut that inspires us to continue publishing, printing and distributing this magazine and tea to thousands of tea people around the world every month. Our love is strong enough and the vision of Global Tea Hut great enough that we're willing to love through the bite—the bite of ourselves, our egos, each other and the pain of this world...

This is why the vision of Global Tea Hut is so important, because it's something greater than each of us as individuals and reminds us why we're really here, what we're really working towards, and that helps us to navigate our day-to-day challenges together. That vision includes Global Tea Hut

as a community, a champion of sustainability and environmental ethics, an encyclopedia of the most in-depth English information on tea available to a Western audience, and an example of how to live a life of tea. Behind the scenes, that vision reminds and inspires us to feel honored to do this kind of service—be it writing and editing articles, taking photographs, translating classics, refining layout, weighing tea into tins, responding to emails, managing inventory or packing and shipping envelopes. These are normal tasks by any measure, but they deeply change when fastened strongly to that vision. Remembering this, and with the right orientation, “I have to work today” becomes, “I am privileged to serve today,” because Global Tea Hut is worth serving, and it's a privilege to be part of something so steeped in tea. Behind the scenes, this kind of cultiva-

tion and shift in orientation has been happening from the beginning, which is part of what makes Global Tea Hut so special. Steve Jobs spoke about making a phone that he and his team would be excited to use, knowing that others would be excited all the same. Obviously, more went into it than that, but that kind of intention was at the core of every successful Apple product, no pun intended. We're publishing a magazine and sourcing teas that we ourselves, as tea lovers, want to read about, drink and share with others. More goes into it than that, but that is at the heart of Global Tea Hut. The desire to create this experience comes from connection to a great vision of helping heal human beings and our relationship to Mother Earth. And the work produced from that connection is capable of igniting the spark in ourselves and sharing it with others.



A DAY IN THE LIFE OF GLOBAL TEA HUT

Putting aside the philosophy of “behind the scenes,” here is what an actual day looks like at the Global Tea Hut office on our main shipment day. It’s always been one of my favorite days of the month. While it has certainly evolved from the early days, when we used to sit on the floor and pass tea tins, magazines, and envelopes down a narrow hallway into a tea room and pile them in boxes, the general steps remain the same: weigh tea into tins, check magazines for quality control, pack everything into envelopes, and do so with an amazing tea family while listening to great music. We used to do more things by hand, like writing the name and description of the Tea of the Month, and even hand-stamped and drew little pictures of kettles and bowls on the envelopes, but as membership increased, we have had to make some changes to meet the demand of a growing community. Even though stickers, descriptions and envelopes are printed now, we still do our best to make Global Tea Hut feel like a handmade

gift each month. We also used to do everything ourselves (meaning the volunteers and sometimes guests if they were visiting during that time of the month). As we grew in number, however, we had to hire some local employees to help out at the office throughout the month, preparing and weighing tea tins, checking magazines for quality control, and preparing envelopes for shipment. We now have four local employees who work for Global Tea Hut. It’s been great to have their help and to get some of the local community involved in this global movement.

The main shipping day of Global Tea Hut always falls around the twentieth of the month so that the envelopes arrive to most members near the beginning of the following month. It often takes one to three weeks to arrive, location depending. A lot of preparation has to happen before the twentieth of each month. The Tea of the Month is now prepared throughout the month, which first involves lining the tea tins with rice paper in-

serts, placing the sticker on the lid, and then weighing the tea and enclosing it with a description. Once the magazine is finished, printed and delivered to us, we carefully check the magazines for any printing problems or physical damage. Preparing and printing the address labels takes a surprisingly long time to account for all our wonderful members in so many countries around the world. Once that’s all finished, we’re almost ready for the big day.

One day before Global Tea Hut is set for shipping, we re-organize the entire office to facilitate the packing process. We always prepare the main office altar by cleaning it, placing fresh fruit and flowers, lighting incense, and making new offerings of water, rice and the Tea of the Month. Everyone usually arrives the following morning so that we can ship everything out in the afternoon. Once the process is set in motion, everything happens pretty quickly. We separate the shipping into major regions, including the Americas, Europe, Australia, Asia and then spe-



cial orders that could span any region. The envelopes move down a long line of tables, first receiving an address, then a cardboard slip, followed by the magazine and tea tin, and then finally sealed and organized into shipping bins that stack without damaging the ones beneath them. There's usually one "runner" who moves around from task to task to free up bottlenecks in the line because some tasks are much faster than others. The process is quite refined after all these years, and with about six to eight people we can move through a thousand envelopes in roughly two hours. Once every address has been taken care of, we need a final count before the post office comes to pick everything up. The entire process takes about four hours from start to finish if it's organized well.

Back in the day, when there were less than a few hundred members, we actually went to the post office and lined up, believe it or not, and shipped each one by hand! (That was an excellent way to learn each country by its

Mandarin name.) It started to become a problem, as you can imagine, and I remember the lineups of confused, amused and frustrated locals who had to wait as we occupied a large portion of the post office with our boxes of envelopes. It was clear that we were growing each month, so we eventually bypassed this part of the process and had our envelopes delivered directly from our office to the fourth floor of the post office where they are handled before final shipping. What used to take a four to five trips in the normal post office van is now accomplished by one mid-sized semi-trailer truck. Global Tea Hut is pretty much finished once the crayon-like colored blue bins are escalated up the hydraulic ramp and stacked neatly into the similarly colored, but dark green, semi-trailer truck. It's a colorful ending to the day each month. Then we clean and re-organize the office, only to start another cycle, planning out and preparing for the next big Global Tea Hut day! Life certainly moves in cycles...

平日福

亭中生活的一天



Looking Back

Sharing tea is old. Millions upon millions of people drink tea daily and have done so for millennia. On the great timeline of tea, Global Tea Hut is just a small spark, but all great flames were once just a spark, and this spark is certainly becoming a flame. I hope you all feel part of that. Each cup of tea, each bowl shared, each ceremony fuels the flame of Global Tea Hut; it gives it life!

One hundred issues ago, no one could have imagined how Global Tea Hut would grow, evolve and impact the lives of thousands of tea lovers the world over. I certainly didn't know what would happen, but it's been the ride of a lifetime, full of endless life lessons, countless bowls of tea and the most amazing tea family a Chajin could wish for. Whether I'm updating spreadsheets and managing membership data, shipping out envelopes or sitting down for tea with a fellow Global Tea Hut member, I wouldn't really want to be doing anything else. Given the chance, I would be thrilled to do it all over again! It's the kind of journey I'd always hoped to embark upon. Here's to another eight years, another one hundred issues of Global Tea Hut! I raise my bowl, high as ever, to all of you...



☞ Remember when all the envelopes were hand-written and the tins were so hard to open? What a time that was. Believe it or not, there was a time we didn't even have an office, packing everything in the Center itself!



福

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四望



設計和安排 Design & Layout

作者: Jaanus Leplaan

AL TEA HUT
TEA & TAO MAGAZINE
March 2018

Global Tea Hut
國際茶亭

TEA & TAO MAGAZINE
September 2016

AL TEA HUT
TEA & TAO MAGAZINE
December 2018

ED EDITION

LONG TEA
ING & LORE



ERA TEA

(聖素)



武夷茶
手工製作

Wuyi
Cliff
TRADITIONAL

I would venture a guess that most readers can recall the first issue of Global Tea Hut they received. I vividly remember the walk home from the post office with my first envelope, the excitement and joy I felt when opening the package that had traveled halfway around the world to reach me and the willpower it took to let the Tea of the Month sit on the shelf for a week before drinking it to allow Her to settle in the new climate and get over Her jet lag. Of course, back in 2012, it wasn't actually a magazine yet, but a monthly newsletter printed in black and white. There was a certain charm to those early issues that felt like self-published underground zines made in someone's living room (which actually isn't far from the truth at all) and in the knowing that I was one of only about two hundred members of this little monthly tea club at the time.

The little gifts, and especially the teas that arrived with each envelope, seemed like invaluable treasures, and it boggled my mind how it was possible that so few tea people seemed to know about this. Soon this circle of truly hardcore tea lovers grew, thanks to Wu De's travels and by word of mouth, and now includes thousands of readers from every corner of the world.

An Invitation to Explore

Every reader has their own favorite part of Global Tea Hut—whether it be learning about the Tea of the Month, exploring the main topic of the issue, connecting with the community through Voices of The Hut and Teawayfarer articles or something else. For me personally it is the photography. Flipping through the magazine

to look at all the photos after excitedly tearing open the envelope is the first thing I do every month.

I have always looked forward to the Annual Trip issues and enjoyed articles about tea genres and regions with images (both written and photographic) that have transported me to faraway lands and introduced me to ancient forests and tea farmers. Now, after a few years of having a firsthand experience of how much work and dedication goes into each issue, my gratitude and respect for everyone involved and those who came before me and helped to bring these treasured envelopes to my mailbox month after month has deepened even more. In honor and celebration of the joy and wisdom these hundred issues have brought to so many people, I would like to invite you to join me in exploring the interesting history of how Global Tea Hut



has changed over the years, striving to express the spirit of Tea in the words and images it contains that give people around the world the opportunity to explore the wonderfully deep and rich world of tea.

The Transformation of Global Tea Hut

Over time, Global Tea Hut has grown greatly from its roots as a black and white newsletter into a gorgeous monthly magazine that many people cherish. Perhaps the most significant visual shift was the transition to a full-color magazine. This change happened in stages. It is amazing to look back at the changes: from a hand-stapled fully black and white newsletter printed down the road in Miaoli that

was first given a color cover, to then including an inside spread in color; and from a poorly-printed full color magazine brokered through the same local print shop via a big printer in Taichung; to finally a now familiar-looking, full-color magazine printed with soy-based ink on recycled paper from a large-scale, international printing press. This hasn't just added superficial beauty, but beauty that is in harmony with the earth. If you were one of the subscribers back in those days, you will surely remember what a joy it was to read Global Tea Hut in full color—those vibrant photos of tea trees were all the more spectacular in color, conveying even more deeply the magic of tea.

Experimentation with structure and design has long been a part of the magazine and its gradual improvement each month. Just about every element, from the logo and cover designs to

recurring articles and page count, has gone through changes in the course of these 100 issues. The underlying focus has always been to move towards a simpler and more easily readable magazine that offers everyone something, whether they are reading cover to cover, or just enjoying the gorgeous photography.

Attentive long-time readers may have noticed that some of the previous design elements have not been completely discarded, but instead found a new purpose. For example, the tea tree graphic that used to adorn the first page of every article has found a new home in the background of the Table of Contents page and is also featured on the back cover. There are several other subtle details like that to be found in the magazine that are steeped in nostalgia and honor the ever-changing creative process behind the magazine.

For example, you may have noticed that the short magazine description on the back-cover humorously changes every month, depending on the main topic of the issue. These Easter eggs provide an extra meta-layer of fun discoveries for observant readers.

In addition to changes in design, the written content has also diversified, featuring more topics and articles from a larger variety of sources. Whereas previously the newsletter was composed of tea stories and personal accounts of a few volunteers and subscribers, the magazine now contains translations of classical texts, as well as articles from contemporary Chinese and Taiwanese authors, stories from Western tea historians and readers alike. With a few bigger leaps forward, the overall quality of the magazine has gradually and subtly improved with every issue. Each one, like a cup of tea in a gongfu session, seems indistinguishable from the one it follows, but the first and the most recent issues are worlds apart.

In the process of going through the entire back catalogue of the magazine to prepare for this article, I revisited some of my favorite articles which led me to discover many nuggets of wisdom that I had missed the first time around. Comparing the writing style and contents of different periods, I spotted some forgotten pearls, like the music suggestions for a tea session by Global Tea Hut members in the *Music and Tea* issue (August 2016). I also re-discovered the short-lived humor section called “Enlighten Up” in the early days of the newsletter. And even found some downright hilarious bits, like “15 Reasons You Will Hate Going On a Global Tea Hut Trip” by Ryan Russell in the May 2016 issue.

Evolution of Visual Style

No tea magazine would be complete without some beautiful tea imagery. Photography has been an important part of Global Tea Hut from the start and has evolved drastically over the years. It has taken some time to find our own visual style and develop photographic confidence. From early newsletter images—often no more than quick snapshots by guests during a tea session—to the meticu-

lously crafted cover shots of recent issues, photography has taken on a more prominent role starting in January 2014, when the shift towards a more decidedly creative approach becomes clear: a definite step forward in design and layout compared to the January issue of the year before, containing not just more full-page images and two-page spreads, but higher quality photos in general.

Although the images in the earlier issues may not have always been technically perfect, they nevertheless often convey the spirit of Tea beautifully. There is a certain charm and innocence to these pictures, and some are among my favorite tea photos. Naturally, the quality of the images has improved over time with the acquisition of new technical skills, equipment and experience, but the objective of visually conveying the spirit of tea has remained the same throughout the years.

The Joys & Challenges of Creative Photography

Tea is nonverbal and needs no explanation; on the other hand it is also visually beautiful and lends itself well to photographic expression. One of the aims of Global Tea Hut is to share the spirit of Tea through images so that geographical barriers begin to dissolve, and you can experience the rich intimacy of Cha Dao anywhere in the world. Photography helps to express what it is like to go on a Global Tea Hut trip, to visit wild tea trees and sit among them while drinking simple bowl tea. Bringing along a camera to capture selected moments on these trips has allowed us to viscerally bring the readers along for the experience.

The medium of photography is not without its challenges, and it is quite an art to convey the experience of Tea in a single still image. Looking at Global Tea Hut issues through time, it is easy to notice the movement from enthusiastically-taken snapshots in the early days to a much more curated and creative approach in the recent years.

The photography in Global Tea Hut has always been primarily made not by professional photographers but by a Chajin with a camera—doing his or her best to capture a feeling,





Over the years it has been the responsibility of different Tea Sage Hut volunteers and Wu De himself. None of us came from professional photography backgrounds and had to learn the necessary skills in the process—taking on the task armed only with determination, a beginner's mind and a genuine love for both Tea and the craft of image-making. This goes to show that with the right mindset and persistence, the necessary technical skills can be learned along the way and eventually perfected. What matters most is making a start, even if the road is not always clear.

Better understanding of photographic techniques and a lot of practice has allowed us to not just communicate information with images, but to tell better visual stories, inspire and move the viewer. A great tea photograph, like a well-made *chaxi*, will awake in you the desire to immediately put the kettle on and sit down to drink tea...

Images Steeped in Tea

One of the things that makes Global Tea Hut unique is that there is no advertising in the magazine. This allows much more creative free-

dom in both design and photography, which in turn allows more images to come out of the spirit of Tea as opposed to pure necessity. Often the best ideas for creative photos arise during a tea session or immediately after. Tea's ability to catalyze movement in the body often also results in opening the floodgates of inspiration by relaxing the mind's grip and creating space. If the mind is filled with thoughts, there is no room for new ideas to enter. Creativity needs space. It is the interplay and balance between that space and the form we create that makes for an impactful image, story or any creative work for that matter. This balance between content and space, written word and photography, linear information and spirituality is what Global Tea Hut continues to perfect as we move forward.

A Mission Worth Supporting

What has always made Global Tea Hut different from any other publication for me is the mission behind the magazine. Bringing hard to find tea information (some of which would otherwise only be accessible in Chinese) to Western readers and promoting organ-

ic farming by sharing rare, clean and sustainably-produced teas is an amazing service to the tea community in itself, but that is only half of it. The other more important half of the mission is to create lasting change in the world by community building and through the creation of a free Tea Center.

As it says on the envelope: "Through you love is changing the world bowl by bowl!" The bowl of tea that you serve to yourself, a friend or a stranger alike carries in it the potential to change the life of the one drinking it. Your support helps keep the tea flowing and through this magazine touches the lives of countless other souls. May we meet in this Global Tea Hut and share countless bowls of tea for hundreds more issues to come!



✿ *Included in this article are my all-time favorite photographs from Global Tea Hut. This one is a particular favorite!*

Fifth Annual Tea Photography Contest

Our annual tradition of celebrating tea photography returns after a year of hiatus. This is one of our favorite ways to promote Tea spirit and bring the worldwide community together! With everything going on in the world this year and most of us stuck indoors with more free time on our hands, we decided to have the contest earlier this time.

Starting this month (May 2020), the contest is open to enter. It will last until the end of August. You don't have to be a member of Global Tea Hut to enter. Simply send us your best tea-inspired photograph with your full name and country to:

teaphotocontest2020@gmail.com

One entry per person. However, changing your entry once is permitted. So, if you take an even better photograph, you can change your submission once before August 31st.

Winners will be announced in the October issue, and best images will be featured on Global Tea Hut social media throughout the contest. We have some truly spectacular prizes this year!



光壽無量

茶精神的聚會



Light Meets Life

茶人: Connor Goss





Over the years, I have touched and experienced the different branches of this tea tree that is the beautiful organization endeavoring to awaken the world through a bowl of tea. And this world that we live in surely needs tea, especially when you see tea as a Dao, as we do. But of course, we are Chajin, so we point the Way with tea, and perhaps you too will feel that tea illuminates the Way for you, awakening you to your living truth in this world and giving you the space needed to live from your heart. However, if tea is not your way, and it is yoga, painting, woodworking or whatever medium it is that awakens you to living your life with purpose, then we can still share a bowl of tea at the very least. That is the beautiful truth that

drew me to tea—in its essence, it is just a cup of tea! And yet, within that the entire universe dances...

These different branches of our organization serve different roles with the same underlying goal—sharing tea and awakening the world through presence. For a long while, I only knew about the magazine, stumbling upon it while researching tea on Google about six years ago. At that time, I was seeking something to provide meaning to my life. Tea seemed so ordinary to me that I was incredibly curious as to how there was a whole magazine on it. Tea still has an “ordinariness” about it, but in a way that too is profoundly moving. Later, I would realize countless humans have dedicated their entire lives to tea, whether tea farmers, merchants

or Chajin who want to share this plant and medicine with others. I knew on an intellectual level that humans were dedicating their lives to tea, but it is another thing entirely to understand this on an experiential level—to feel it in your bones. The first time I received the magazine, it was a pivotal moment in my young life. At that moment, holding the carefully-packed magazine that was filled with so much energy and love by humans who were working tirelessly to share tea with people, was the catalyst pushing me towards something that would take years for me to grasp the depth of. There is a saying in our tradition that clearly expresses what led me to Global Tea Hut and this life of tea: “*As we seek the Leaf, the Leaf seeks us.*”



永遠銘刻在我們心中

回憶

It was not long after receiving the first issue of Global Tea Hut that I realized that there was a tea Center, Tea Sage Hut, in Taiwan that I could visit and stay at for some time. The decision to email and organize a trip to Taiwan was one of the rare, spontaneous moments in my life where I did not spend days and weeks contemplating and expending immense amounts of mental energy to decide whether I should do it. Instead, I booked a flight and surrendered to my destiny. The more I practice Cha Dao, the more I come to recognize how important it is to live with more spontaneity. Looking back, I am grateful that I did not let my mind get in the way of visiting the Tea Sage Hut. If finding Global Tea Hut was my first curious dip into the still water that

lay before me, then visiting the Center was a deep dive that awoke within me the desire to live a life steeped in tea. As I came to experientially understand this second branch of our organization, my respect and love for Global Tea Hut grew with each day spent in Taiwan.

It was an incredible experience seeing how much time and energy was poured joyfully into the creation of the magazine, the packing and shipping of the envelopes around the world. Growing up in a culture that was, and still is, blindly consumed with gathering more and more stuff, I did not understand the transformative power in giving—giving away for the good of others—until I participated in sending out the November 2014 issue of Glob-

al Tea Hut. Being on the receiving end of Global Tea Hut, I knew (or at least partially understood) how much went into getting this magazine to people around the world, but seeing it firsthand was a completely humbling experience. During those days, almost everything for the envelopes was done by hand! It was a genuinely profound experience to receive a monthly magazine with inserts for the tea tins cut by hand and then handwritten, in stark contrast to a world that speeds towards automation and increased efficiency. Watching Wu De, Shen and the other volunteers work tirelessly to send out Global Tea Hut to Chajin around the world, and to participate in this process myself, has forever shaped who I am as an individual and a Chajin.

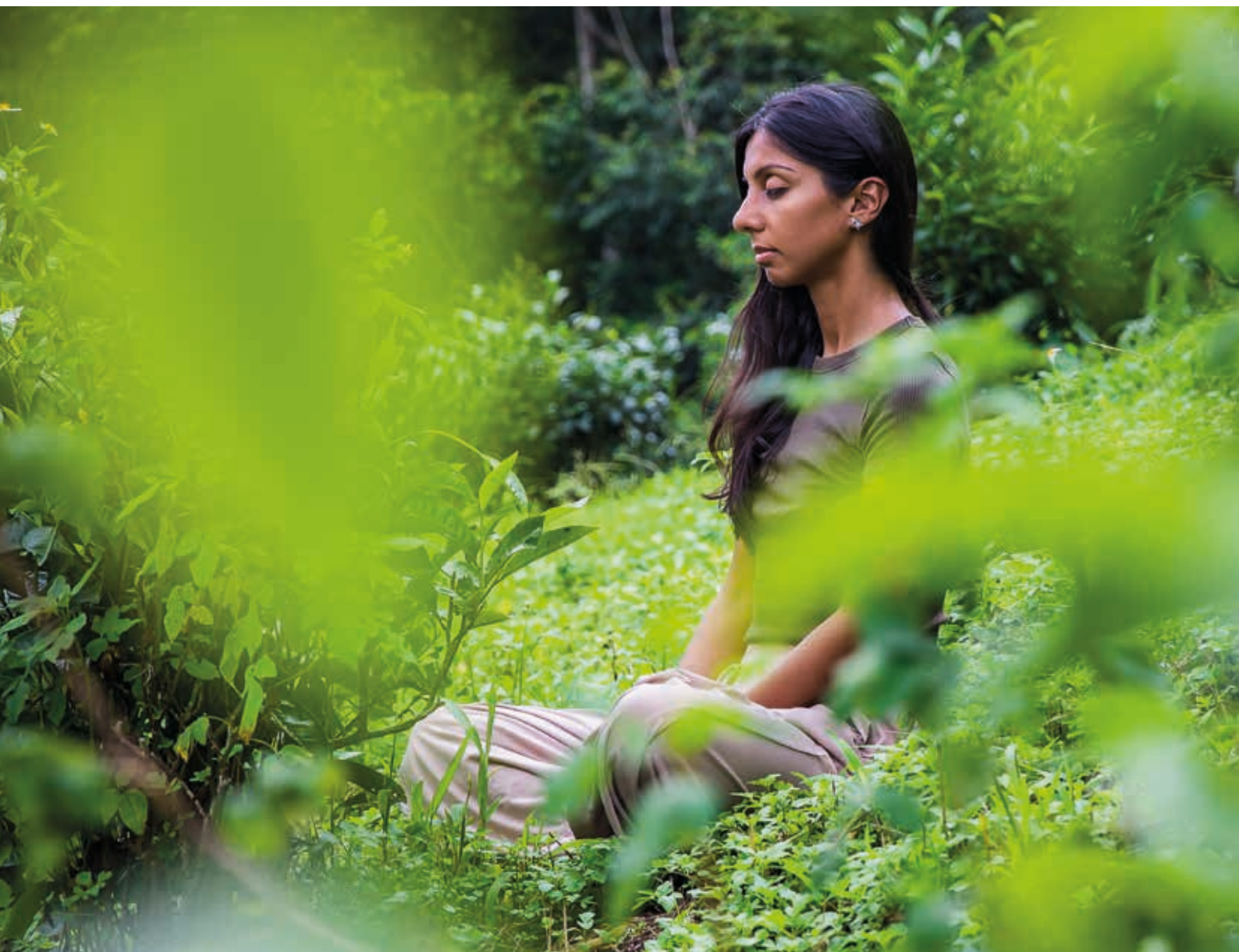
As the years have gone by, we have made the process more efficient, such as getting the envelopes and tea tin inserts printed, but these changes have allowed us to share tea with more people. I do look back with nostalgia sometimes on those early days, as they can help to remind one of what the underlying purpose of all of this is when stripped down to its essence—awakening the world through Tea. It can be easy to forget that when one becomes too caught up in the small details, in numbers and spreadsheets, organizational systems and creating efficient workflow. Taking a step back, sitting down and putting a kettle on reminds me of what this is all for: Tea Herself, and our service of you. And that brings me to the third, and most important branch of this tea tree: *Light Meets Life*.

Now that we have said our last farewells to Tea Sage Hut, forming an understanding of Light Meets Life is more important than ever before. I believe in a future where Light Meets Life has already been built. A large group tea ceremony is happening with Chajin from around the world in celebration as the final stones are placed in the construction of the world's greatest tea Center! That future moment seeps into this present moment. When you rest into the richness of that moment, into the bowl of tea that warms your hands, then the reality of Light Meets Life can be felt in your bones. The world needs a free Tea Center!

It can be easy to get caught up in the feeling that we need to build Light Meets Life right now, that not a moment more can go by without its cre-

ation—but this energy is counter to the spirit of Tea. Everyone here at the Center got caught up in that same initial surge of energy and momentum as we knew Tea Sage Hut was ending and becoming a shared living memory carried in our hearts. But it is important to journey slowly and steadily towards the final goal, as there is a lot of work to be done.

On that note, we have come to realize that the building of Light Meets Life will most likely happen in several phases. Of course, if some windfall comes and we can build Light Meets Life in one stroke of the oar, we will celebrate that as well. Let us put a kettle on and journey through the rising steam to envision what these phases will look like as the reality of Light Meets Life grows closer each day.



道法自然

看著鏡子

Phase One

The first phase will be finding suitable land that serves our changing vision of Light Meets Life. It will have plenty of empty fertile land for beginning to grow tea and lay the foundations for what will be a central part of Light Meets Life—a forest of tea trees surrounding the Center. It will be an amazing opportunity to have a Tea Center with tea trees. This will offer guests the chance to connect more deeply with tea and find their practice strengthened by being close to tea trees, to walk among them and listen to what they have to say. Imagine waking early to quietly walk among the tea trees as the morning sun shines on the dewy grass. After walking a while, you see the perfect spot to sit beneath the trees and drink a few bowls of tea from those same trees! I cannot even begin to express how profoundly moving it has been for me over the years being among tea trees on the Annual Global Tea Hut trips. I remember fondly during the 2018 Annual Trip we had the opportunity in Phoenix mountain to sit for a long while in one of the old tea gardens. Sitting together quietly with thirty other Chajin from around the world filled me with deep joy. Leaving that garden, I hoped that everyone who welcomes Tea into their lives has a similar opportunity to experience being close to tea trees. And I can already see the many large group tea ceremonies that will be shared over time in the tea gardens at Light Meets Life. What a wondrous experience that will be!





Phase Two

While it would be wonderful to find suitable land that already has a large central building, we will likely need to build this ourselves, and this will allow us greater freedom to architect from the ground up, from the very first stone of the perfect Center. This way, what we build to serve our needs during this phase can then be easily renovated once the external buildings are built. It will contain a kitchen, dining hall, tea spaces, meditation hall and dormitories. It will be a lot like our old Center, Tea Sage Hut, in that everything will be contained in a single building. This way we can begin to host smaller courses again while we continue to raise the funds to finish the final phase of Light Meets Life. Offering courses again, even for small numbers of people, will help to convey the message to those sitting the courses how important it is for the world to have a free Tea Center. It is one thing to read about and support a fundraiser online, compared to experiencing the direct impact that the Center has on the world. Perhaps the spirit of Tea will profoundly touch someone's life during their retreat, leaving them deeply inspired to support this Center generously, not only for what they received from an open heart, but for the future guests—from this openness and joy we should give.

光壽無量的階段

Phase Three

The final phase will be to build a meditation hall that is separate from the main buildings, along with separate dormitories for guests and long-term residents. These buildings will be decorated simply and architected from the ground up to facilitate a deeper learning and healing experience for guests. More simple accommodation is wonderful also in that it provides fewer distractions so that guests can focus on being present onto each moment. But that is not to say it will be designed quickly or without thought; every small and often unseen detail will be carefully considered (we are Chajin, after all). While someone may not see the effort that has gone into a tea ceremony, that does not diminish the importance of doing that thing with all of one's heart. I envision there being small tea spaces in each of the dormitories so that at any given moment there is a tea session happening somewhere!

During this time, we will then transform the central building. There is a part of me—the part that loves cooking and being in the kitchen all day—that secretly hopes this building will contain only tea rooms, and we will have another external building for the kitchen and dining hall. That said, I will always appreciate the days at the old Center, where whoever was in the kitchen cooking had to quietly prepare the meals to minimize external disturbances during the tea classes or meditation periods. This was an insightful exercise in being mindful and aware of everything that is going on, which in turn has a delicious impact on the food!

This central building will house all of the tea rooms and spaces for classes. Each room will be decorated simply to minimize distractions and create a more conducive environment for learning. The main hall at Tea Sage Hut was quite literally overflowing with tea and teaware! Imagine being someone entirely new to tea who has come for a ten-day course and sitting there for the first class filled with excitement and curiosity. This overabundance of tea and teaware in one room was borne from the fact that Tea Sage Hut was not designed and built as a tea Center, but out of Wu De and Joyce's house. When we are architecting Light Meets Life, every detail in the tea rooms will be designed towards the goal of creating a feeling of simplicity in the space. The most beautiful spaces that I have seen have always been carefully decorated to achieve the perfect balance between the objects in the space and the surrounding emptiness. And this will be very beneficial during the *chaxi* lessons! It will be much easier to learn to make *chaxi* on a simple table with a clean surrounding environment. I can already see those lessons unfolding now.

As the completion of Light Meets Life nears, there is a growing excitement felt by everyone as the final touches are made and the future course schedules drafted up. What an incredible variety of courses there will be! Not just ten-day courses for those new to tea, but more advanced courses on gongfu tea or perhaps a shorter course on the seven genres of tea. After learning a lot from the days of Tea Sage Hut, we now have a much better idea of how to organize the courses and how to create an experience that empowers those who come with the understanding and tools to cultivate a life of tea and to share it with their loved ones. It is for these Chajin that we work tirelessly, so that they and future generations will benefit from a free tea Center. We say this often, and we honestly do mean it with all our heart—that Light Meets Life is not *our* tea Center, it is *yours*! We hope that it will be stewarded for generations to come so that countless beings may inherit our shared legacy. I hope these crudely written words point somewhat towards the truth, that you can feel more deeply what Light Meets Life will look like and know in your bones and marrow that together we can build the greatest tea Center the world has ever known!

SPECIAL OFFER

Inner Resolve 青山





There is a lesson that most tea lovers have to learn the hard way. We sure did! Master Lin always says, “If you want to be abundant, store your own tea.” And the abundance he is talking about isn’t measured financially; it is measured in having great tea to drink that you can afford, and more importantly, having great tea to share. In fact, this may be the most important lesson when it comes to purchasing tea that a Chajin can learn.

What this means is that you have to age tea yourself. Eventually, your tea journey will lead you into aged teas, and you will start to realize that, like humans, teas get wiser as they age. And as your taste goes there, you will want to drink more and more aged teas, sharing their magical properties with your loved ones. Of course, aged teas are not all we drink. There are a lot of great fresh teas to enjoy and love as well, but having aged teas around makes a tea life all that much brighter.

The problem is that if you do not age tea yourself, you will have to pay someone else to do it. And that is expensive. Amazingly, aged teas can be outrageously expensive, reaching astronomical sums only the wealthiest tea lovers can afford. Even when you find aged teas that are not beyond what you can afford, they are still expensive, which means you will only drink them on rare, special occasions. This means that the medicine and magic of aged puerh, or other teas, won’t be a part of your daily life. And that is a shame. We should hope that every Chajin could have some aged tea any time she wanted to, and share some any time friends come over for tea. The only way that abundance will happen, though, is if we age our own tea on our own terms and for cheaper.

Puerh storage is a complicated issue, and one we aren’t going to cover here, but you can find a lot of information about it in past issues. And if the place where you live is not ideal for puerh storage, chances are you can age some other teas and then maybe trade your tea friends later.

The lesson that we have learned the hard way is that when the perfect storms come, you take shelter in them. Wu De often talks about how in his twenty-five years of tea drinking, again and again he kept having the same experience. He often puts his palm to his forehead in shame when he talks about it. He says that you buy an awesome cake, which you love so much that you drink it up within a year or two. Then, when you go back to the store to get a second one, it has doubled in price. “Double!” you exclaim, “I’m not paying that!” And you then leave with some other tea. A few years later, you are at a friend’s house enjoying tea, and he pulls out your old friend, that special cake. “Wow!” you say, “I had a cake of that when it was new. I loved it!” Now, of course, the tea is even better, having aged some time. So, you resolve yourself to pay double and go back to the shop... only now... it is *quadruple!* And you smack your forehead and say, “Why didn’t I buy three cakes when it was only double?!” This has happened to countless tea lovers enough times that we know to jump on the treasures when we can. This is why puerh lovers in Asia almost always buy a cake and a *tong*—a cake as a “tester” and a *tong* to age.

Since this has been a hard year, and you have all been so supportive, we wanted to share a deal that we are pouncing on with all our might. This month’s amazing Bulang tea from the early 2000s was donated to us at early-2000s’ prices. Not only is it a great tea, but the price

is incredibly cheap for what it is. This is a chance to get a cake, a *tong* or even a *jian* (twelve *tongs*) of an epic tea to age, drink and share. This tea is affordable, so you can drink and share it whenever you want. In honor of the struggles we are passing through this year, and your love for Light Meets Life, we are not going to mark this tea up very much, keeping cost as low as we possibly can, and passing the opportunity on to all of you.

Usually when we encounter these deals that we jump on to be abundant later in life, it is almost always new teas. The problem with new teas is, of course, they will take a long time to be well-aged—sometimes longer than some of us have left. In other words, many such teas will be for future generations of tea lovers. But this tea already has a twenty-year head start. It is sure to reach maturation in our lifetimes. This makes it a double winner, winner veggie curry dinner! Jackpot. And as for the storage and quality of the tea... well, you have a sample with this magazine to try and see if you love this tea as much as we do. If you do, we will be offering special deals on cakes and *tongs* (and *jians* if you are serious). Of course, the quantity will be limited. We hope you see this for what it is: a friend offering another friend an opportunity to get some great tea, not a sales pitch. In the end, the tea sample you now have should speak for itself. If you don’t get any, just come over to Light Meets Life later on, and we’ll be happy to share some of ours later on...

**Each cake of Inner Resolve
is \$99 USD + shipping
*Buy a tong for only \$600**

www.globalteahut.org/tea



Voices from the Hut

For this month, we thought the best possible Voices from the Hut would be to reach out to some of our members who have been here since the very beginning. Antonio and Steve were there to receive the very first ever Global Tea Hut “newsletter” in 2012, and have received every one since. Their accounts of the years that this experience has unfolded lend a lot to this celebratory issue, offering us the reader’s perspective on all the changes, developments, stories, trips and more that have made these years special.

If you would like to contribute some writing to Voices from the Hut or have an idea for an interesting topic, you can reach Matthew on the Global Tea Hut app (in the “Voices from the Hut” section), on Instagram (IG: foldedleaves), or at the email: voicesfromthehut@gmail.com We cannot wait to read all the exciting articles to come!

GLOBAL TEA HUT OVER THE YEARS

茶人: Antonio Moreno

It’s with great pride and gratitude that I stop and sit down to reflect on the magnificent accomplishment that is 100 issues of Global Tea Hut magazine!

I first contacted Wu De years before he embarked on Global Tea Hut, when I read his articles for The Art of Tea Magazine. His beautiful writing and wisdom resonated deep within me. I wish I could have met him there and then and shared tea with him. I also loved his artwork and wished we could exhibit them at Čaj Chai Teahouse in Barcelona. I wrote him and inquired, and he replied affirmatively with tremendous enthusiasm, generosity and appreciation! Once his scrolls graced our walls for sixty days, it became clear to me they had transformed the teahouse, infusing it with deeper tea spirit. I didn’t want to take them down and thus began a permanent installation that changes over time, as they are always available for inspired customers to purchase and change their homes in the same way they have changed the tea house!

This may sound familiar to you for a number of reasons: After all, I told you this story back in Issue #10 November 2012, when I was TeaWayfarer. But as I recount this personal history, I smile with satisfaction as I see the poetic parallels between this point of departure and my own evolving relationship with Global Tea Hut, Tea and Zen, Wu De and this wonderful tea community! And I’m sure more than a few of you are nodding in agreement as you acknowledge some sort of personal parallelism in how tea and this tea community has transformed your own lives.

As I reflect on the evolution of Global Tea Hut, instinctively I turn inwards and observe my own personal evolution and relationship to tea and this community; after all, *we* are all Global Tea Hut. My first realization is that just like Wu De’s scrolls transformed my tea space, Global Tea Hut transformed my relationship to tea. When I first went to Tea Sage Hut in 2012, it was with an empty cup. I parked my previous ideas on tea and

tea brewing and learned as much as I could. Now, over seven years later, my tea brewing is infinitely improved; my understanding of tea is much more profound; my stand against non-organic tea commerce is firm; my body rejects unclean tea; and thus I don’t serve teas that I myself would not drink... and, if all this wasn’t enough, in serving tea I gradually grew as a person and deepened my relationship to others.

In the present, it’s this last point that moves me the most, which is ironic, because while years ago those first two concerns over tea brewing and tea knowledge were the primary motivation to learn about tea, the unsuspected rewards of this tea journey have overflowed and affected all areas of my life. In fact, outside of my family and a few long-time buddies, the most important people in my life today are fellow Global Tea Hut members. Who would have thought that 100 issues ago? Nobody, of course. That’s huge! So, it’s a tremendous understatement to say I really appreciate what Global



Tea Hut has brought into my life because it has totally changed my life and how I relate to others. After years of serving tea, I have learned that one of my favorite things about tea is that it brings out authenticity in people. After sharing tea in silence or in ceremony, we show our true face; we share our true selves; we let our guards down. Years of tea ceremonies, Global Tea Hut gatherings' tea sessions with community friends from around the world find me appreciating this long after the aroma and flavor have vanished from my senses. This is irreplaceable now in my treasure chest of memories, past and future.

How superficial my understanding of tea had been prior to Global Tea Hut when I was satisfied with just aroma and flavor! How much depth translates and spills into every realm once you realize there is always hidden potential if you are present onto the present... and this I learned through serving tea. And so what begins as being present onto an aroma, a flavor, a body sensation, becomes an appreciation for

a shared moment, a group experience, an awareness of connection to a shared experience, and an invitation to a deep connection with people you might have just met thanks to tea.

And, of course, this directly parallels the Global Tea Hut community experience... as we discover upon meeting a fellow member from around the globe, how quickly we can connect; how easily we can drop in and share presence, heart space and naturally engage in meaningful conversation arising out of authenticity; and how suddenly you feel you know somebody you perhaps have only just met. In fact, in all likelihood you may already know that person more deeply than many others who you might have spent much more time with!

Over these first 100 issues, Global Tea Hut, superficially, has evolved from a black and white newsletter to the current version we all enjoy. It evolved from a small number of tea lovers where the original idea was to have the group capacity capped at some ridiculously small number (I say

ridiculous in retrospect because no one could have predicted what it has now evolved into), to a much larger group connected through social media, an app, a YouTube channel, books, yearly trips, retreats, ten-day courses, Light Meets Life Fundraisers and the curation of such blissful organic teas that we all delight in!

Now, 100 issues later we're gathering strength before embarking together on the next great chapter which will surely surprise us in all and more of the inconceivable ways these first 100 issues did!

May we all look back at these first 100 issues as the "Very Early Days" and the "Early Days" and continue growing along with Global Tea Hut as it sheds and grows into its new skin. May we all drink and share bounties of organic tea. May we all find peace and connection serving tea. I am as proud and thankful as ever to be part of this beautiful tea community! I hope to meet you all someday! Definitely get in touch if you come to Barcelona; there's always a steaming cup awaiting you!





A WINK & A NUDGE

茶人: Steve Kokker (Ci Ting, 慈聽)

Global Tea Hut the magazine began like a *samizdat* publication—a self-published, ghetto-production, super-localized, cliquey, even a tad dorky. (Shall we bring back the “Enlighten Up” corner, anyone?) It needed to be so. It needed to start somehow.

If Wu De’s legacy to his students need be just one thing, then despite the glittering wealth of shared knowledge, let it be just this: “Just take a damn step forward! Do it! Do something, blimey!” (My words, not his—he might be tempted to quote some rude rapper.) Wu is living testament to the fact that great things begin with wobbly, awkward but valiant first steps. Trip all you like, and let the clowns laugh at you from their entrenched positions on the sidelines, but keep dancing!

This magazine is a perfect example of that life attitude, and it has been among my life’s abundances to have been a part of it from the very beginning. I wrote quite a few articles in the first years and partook in the excitement of watching it go from a fanzine-like, home-published, black

and white, very unassuming looking paper—still even then with excellent information—through many stages of self-improvement. Each step brought it closer to the slick, glossy, international look it has now... a publication Cinderella story! It currently would not look out of place on an upscale magazine rack next to photography and design titles!

Its content, however, would make it an odd companion on any of those racks—if, that is, the bookshop owners could even decide where to place it—in the religion section, subsection Buddhist? In the kitchen and food section, next to *Caffeine Magazine*? Or floating in a mist, cloud-hidden, somewhere in between? Yes, likely there...

Just Do It

For me personally, the magazine has been living proof that Wu’s maxim of “Quit f***ing around” is a productive and effective one. For me, it has been an opening to step up, on several levels—not only to take the many needed hours to write articles, but also to take

up the gauntlet cast by this project itself: the “Just take a step, blimey!” approach of Global Tea Hut.

Within the embrace of such enthusiasm, such creative energy, such a will to do something well, how can one just sit back and let the world go by? Especially when one has been given perfect tools to work with (the case for all of us, just different tools). Especially when so little can make such a big difference to others and our environment.

Thus, being a part of Global Tea Hut—the project, the magazine, the idea—was a catalyzing force in getting things going here in Estonia. There was already a great tea shop and importing business serving as foundation stones by the time Wu De first crash-landed at my apartment (yes, the apartment of “that table” fame which has been the butt of so many semi-apocryphal stories on Annual Tea Trips over the years). From there, interest in tea spread alongside a deeper flourishing of our tea shop, Chado. Wu’s encouragement (i.e. pushing) to perform local tea ceremonies led to regular services by various people throughout Estonia. Thousands of bowls later,



it's clear where small, bumbling first steps can lead. And all journeys, no matter how long, start with small steps.

We are all greater than we think we are, more potent than we lead ourselves to believe or that we have been told to believe. We can express ourselves more than we feel we can. We can act in ways which shall benefit others and spark blessed growth in ourselves at the same time. Win-win. If only we gently place fear and mind blatherings to the side and... *take a step!* This to me has been the greatest legacy of Global Tea Hut. I very much believe in an active partnership with Life—a lazy partner won't lead to much. To show up for it, we have an active, dedicated, beautiful tea community and a busy monthly schedule for our tea house to prove it.

The Role of a Smile

I earlier made a dig at the awkward “Enlighten Up” section of the earliest magazines. Yet this was also a deeply well-meaning and important reminder of what Wu De (and any Buddhist teacher worth his salted gruel over the

centuries) has repeated many times to all who will listen, and yet what seems to have flown over the furrowed brows of many students: that this tea tradition/approach to life need not be taken too heavily—seriously and lightly at the same time. When the wing of sanctity is raised too high, it reaches the realms of the sanctimonious without the counterweight of levity, perspective and a child's grace of play and humor.

Buddhism and humor go hand in hand; it is seen by many as an *upaya*, a skillful means, which helps us along the road to enlightenment. Indeed, without it, there is little true joy to accompany any glimpse of enlightenment. No wonder all the sayings about how the older and wiser a true sage gets, the younger and more childlike he seems!

In theory, I very much liked the idea of the “Enlighten Up” corner in the original magazines, but in practice, sure, it flopped. There is little place for overt humor in the Global Tea Hut magazine as it stands now, and that is entirely appropriate.

Yet, this important wing of humor in our tradition has never been absent:

If not always in Wu De's speeches, then absolutely always in Wu De's personal interactions and organized extracurricular activities, as well as in articles published in this game-changing magazine. It is as if he is a living example of what does not always need to be repeated: Do not cling onto our serving styles or to the often little-understood philosophy behind it as overly serious. It will get in the way of higher service. Reverence has many shapes and expressions, and all are appropriate at different times. Fatuousness alienates; humor unites.

This is another legacy of the Global Tea Hut tradition, one I embrace wholeheartedly, and with varying degrees of success: to fly through life with wings equally balanced between humor and solemn, reverential focus.

A deep bow (and a wink) to the only magazine on the planet truly and wholly devoted with deep respect to the unquantifiable role that the tea tree has had in human history! It has changed my life irrevocably.



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 Alisa Ratner.

It is such an honor to sit here with a bowl of tea, reflecting and sharing my story with you. Greetings from Santa Monica, California! I hope to drink a bowl with you in person someday. It is hard to pick any point in my tea voyage to start with, because it feels infinitely layered, and at the same time remarkably simple. My journey thus far has been so much about a relationship with the unknown. There is no boundary line where I enter the story—no beginning—only a huge ocean of ancient wisdom and learning that has existed for generations before me.

My adventure with Global Tea Hut began when I sat in a tea ceremony served by Tian Wu, hosted by my friend Shiva in her home. At the time, I had two young children and was dealing with a life-threatening illness. Tian Wu graciously served bowl after bowl of Light Meets Life Lin Cang snow chrysanthemum shou puerh. It was a deep, dark, thick and mysterious elixir. After the third bowl, I wept. “What just happened?” I thought. Actually, we all asked that out loud after the ceremony. No words can really describe that moment. (It is a good thing you know what I am talking about!) Little did I know then, my meeting with Tea that evening would be the passage to a life of inner work, meditation and physical well-being. I will always be thankful to Shiva for inviting me to sit in that ceremony!

Thereafter, I began a personal and private daily practice of tea and meditation in the early hours of the morning, on the floor of a quiet room, amidst a bustling household. Day after day, the tears flowed, and epiphanies occurred. A glorious reuniting with Nature took place and a remembrance that I *am* Nature. I had been longing to sit quietly and build a relationship with myself: to construct a poustinia inside my heart and home. I became open to all the subtle, unspoken, difficult and loving lessons that Tea and the elements have to give. I was, and I am now, constantly humbled by Tea, for Her medicine reveals my habitual devices and helps me to see things as they really are—not as I think they are. Sitting daily in tea ceremony teaches me that all of life is a ceremony.

I have continued to sit in ceremonies held by Tian Wu and pour over my Global Tea Hut monthly magazines bursting with information. Eventually, Tea wanted to be shared... first with those close to my heart, then with a growing community. Just at that time, AY^AM, a beautiful tearoom and event space curated by Tian Wu and Jessica Kollar, opened in the spirit and lineage of Tea Sage Hut. I have had countless meaningful experiences at AY^AM.



🌿: Alisa Ratner, USA

It was there that I took my first workshops with Wu De; it is there that I have had the privilege, honor and joy of being in service to the Leaf and to the community.

For me, one of the most exciting aspects about my tea practice is tea itself. I love everything about tea! Upon drinking shou puerh, I had such an intense romance and vowed I would never drink any other kind of tea. As you can imagine, when I think about that, it makes me chuckle every time. For I am now continually enamored with many genres of tea. It is hard to comprehend the boundless nuances in every sip. I take great joy in the unending academic exploration, as well as the mysteries encompassed in the universe of Tea. It will take many lifetimes to even scratch the surface of all there is to learn—good news for a curious person!

Drop by drop, bowl by bowl, my life, and therefore the lives around me, have become innumerable richer. Transformation and self-cultivation are measurable. Words cannot express the gratitude I feel for Cha Dao, Wu De, Tian Wu, AY^AM and the sisters and brothers in the Global Tea Hut community. I am very excited about what the future holds for our tea community and the eventual opening of Light Meets Life!

Inside the Hut

COMING SOON TO GLOBAL TEA HUT MAGAZINE

茶主题: Sencha

茶主题: Gongfu Tea

茶道

茶主题: Classics of Tea

茶主题: Ginbin



We need your help to get to a place where we can build your permanent Center, Light Meets Life. (And we do hope that you feel that our Center is yours, not ours.) Help us to spread the word about Global Tea Hut and Light Meets Life. As subscription increases, and tea/teaware sales rise, our financial power grows, and we move closer and closer to phase one, which is to purchase land. Once we have land, we think that the next phases of construction will happen faster and more smoothly.



There are many new subscription options on our brand new website. This is a great time to help us spread the word about Global Tea Hut, and together raise money for our new Center.



There are many new teas on the site, including several aged oolongs that were donated by Master Tsai. Many of you live in places ideal for such tea. Enjoy the opportunity to drink them and support the Center!



Chajin all around the world have worked hard to make an audio version of Wu De's book, "Tea Medicine." We have recorded all the chapters, but need to raise the necessary funds to edit the recordings. Help support this at: bit.ly/TeaMedicine



These months have been hard on the world and all of us. We hope the pause in your schedule is a time of gathering strength, calmness and re-prioritizing practice in your life. We are all stronger than we could imagine. We pray for those who have lost and suffered during this hard time. We honor them by putting the world back together in a form that is better and brighter than it was before. Stay strong and raise a bowl for all that the world has been through. We love you all dearly!

Center News



As things start to move in the direction of rhythm, let's use tea to help establish the beat of a new world. Gatherings inspired towards making our Center a reality are very important; whether or not they raise any money, they keep the vision alive.



We hope you stay excited for Light Meets Life. We want to involve you in the planning of what we hope you feel is your Center. The more form Light Meets Life takes, the more real it becomes. Please contact us with ideas if you have any, about what you envision for the property and for the experience at ten-day courses. Perhaps you have an idea for a type of course you would like to see when we open. Please share your ideas with us. We hope to create a whole new calendar and curriculum for Light Meets Life.



We are looking at land, which is phase one of our three-phase plan to build Light Meets Life. We have already looked at some plots of land, and we promise to keep you in the loop, showing you options as we find them!

May Affirmation

I am resilient

Do I lose faith in my own strength? I am much stronger than I could possibly know. My strength has never been tested to its limits, and beyond and within my heart there is infinite, boundless light and energy.



www.globalteahut.org

The tea-huttiest 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

