

## Our Publications

*Books, magazines, pamphlets, videos, etc.*

In this tradition, one chooses to be a teacher or merchant. This is not to be condescending or suggest that the two are mutually exclusive. Without tea vendors, where would we all get our tea? And there are some amazing tea merchants here in this hut amongst us. Moreover, many of our greatest and most important teachers also own tea shops or tea houses, like Master Tsai, whom we met in April. This isn't a black/white issue—there are great and honest tea vendors, from which we can learn a tremendous amount; and then the opposite end of the spectrum as well. Traditionally, spiritual matters were meant to be given freely: anything involving the Dao was considered priceless, and beyond any currency. For most of tea's relationship with man, over thousands of years, it was given freely. But in the last thousand years, it has increasingly become more and more profane—a commodity to be bought and sold, traded and fought over. Perhaps there is a need for some teachers and schools to arise alongside vendors, teaching in a completely unbiased way, and reconnecting tea wisdom to its spiritual heritage. In this cooperation, we can achieve more healing through tea.

Looking around the writings on tea, we found that there was so little available in English, and all of it controlled by vendors. Some vendors were providing incredibly educational information, while others confused by only promoting their own products. Many tea lovers have grown skeptical of any and all tea information as a result. And the spiritual/medicinal aspects of tea were always neglected entirely, with the exception of older books and some few Japanese articles. In 2008, we began *The Leaf, Tea & Tao Magazine* to promote free tea information that also included the awakening of consciousness through tea, as well as aspects of following Cha Dao and living a life of tea.

The magazine has since gone on to publish a total of eight issues with contributing authors from around the world. They are all available for free at: [www.the-leaf.org](http://www.the-leaf.org) We made a decision to make the magazine available only in electronic edition to promote a more environmentally friendly publication. We do, however, produce some simple black/white hard copies for the visually impaired and to put in various tea houses around the world so that customers can read them. *The Leaf* has had thousands of readers in these four years, promoting the spiritual ideals of tea, sustainable agriculture as well as tea education. It has provided a forum for tea scholars and those who practice Cha Dao to share their tea wisdom with the world, freely and in the true spirit of tea. Tea people, including vendors who love tea, are always the most giving, free-spirited people. *The Leaf* contains no advertisements and it is a requirement that all submissions do not promote any product or company. Due to that fact, the readership can rely more on the information, as so many have expressed that they were jaded by all the misinformation and contradictions on various vendors' sites.

Due to all the work going on here, with our travels and workshops as well as the huge influx of visitors to our center, Tea Sage Hut, as well as the creation of this Global Tea Hut, we have not had time to publish a new issue of *The Leaf* in over a year. But the magazine is not dead. We knew that eventually a solution would arise, as so many people expressed how important the magazine was to them. We are happy to announce that in September or October *The Leaf* will be revived, and with a



whole new look. A new student is coming to Taiwan to live and study tea for some time. She has a ton of professional experience as a journalist, including a lot of tea writing. She also has web design skills, and connections to new authors that she hopes will also contribute to *The Leaf*. We are not sure what shape the newborn magazine will take, as we still need to discuss how to differentiate it from these newsletters so the two are not redundant. If you are a fan of *The Leaf*, you can look forward to some exciting new issues soon. If you haven't yet checked it out, you have a few months to catch up on some of the back issues before we start afresh!

Aside from *The Leaf*, we also publish quite a few pamphlets that we distribute from our center here in Taiwan, at our roadside huts and in workshops we hold around the world. These pamphlets are so far being printed in English, Chinese and Russian. Some of the contributions you send

through Global Tea Hut go to producing these. They introduce our center, the *Four Pillars* and the *Eight Bowls* of this tradition and also give a bit of information on our classes, our center and even this global hut we're building.

This year we plan to self-publish our first tea book, called *Zen & Tea, One Flavor*. We aren't sure about any of the details as of yet, but the book will include several of Wu De's paintings and some original photography as well. We hope to publish a printed and electronic version. This will be Wu De's third book on tea. It will be sold, and the proceeds will go to support our center, roadside huts and other publication projects. Also, we currently purchase Wu De's two books from Tuttle Publishing and distribute them freely to guests who come and stay at the center. We have a limited budget for this, of course, but as Global Tea Hut grows we can give away more copies to more visitors. By self-pub-



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13 lishing the new book, we will have access to cheaper copies and can therefore give them away more easily.

Finally, we are beginning to produce a video series this month. We are incredibly excited about this project. One of the members of this hut—sitting right next to you over there drinking away at his bowl—is a professional cinematographer/cameraman and expert on all things film. We are so grateful to him, because he spent his only vacation this year to come here to Taiwan and help train us in the production of our small videos, so that they can look at least semi-professional. They will be up on our website within the month, and we have a Youtube channel for them as well. We are going to post them freely, after much discussion, and use a separate donate button on that page. Any donations to that project will go towards purchasing the remaining film equipment we still need (we have most things).

The videos will introduce Global Tea Hut, our center and roadside huts of course. Beyond that we hope to put up a ton of short instructional videos about all things tea. We may have some interviews, videos on tea production, Wu De lecturing on aspects of Cha Dao or brewing methodology, recording the experiences of guests at the center,

perhaps a video detailing the production/source of each Tea of the Month for this global hut, etc. After we have launched a few videos, let us know if you have any ideas for future shots. They are really going to be amazing, and will connect so much of the tea wisdom of this tradition to more and more people, as sharing tea and tea wisdom is our only purpose.

In this tradition, we always say that as the man/woman seeks the Leaf, the Leaf seeks the man/woman. And as the world has opened up so many new ways of sharing tea and tea wisdom has jumped right through these new doorways and into the lives of those it otherwise could not have connected to. The internet, videos and this Global Tea Hut are new and inspiring ways that tea is bringing people together, even across great distances. And the spirit of tea is about these connections. It facilitates a connection to each other, through the calm joy that allows us to be together without our ego-masks or social statuses and to communicate from our truth; and even through sharing articles, newsletters, books and movies that help connect us and solidify this community of tea lovers around the world.





*Wu De & Master Lu*

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