



# A RITUAL OF CEREMONY

Article by Mikki & Chris Sage

**B**lue skies, subtle breezes, and a warm sun danced through the bounty of trees that surrounds our enchanted nest. It was a beautiful Saturday morning in Venice and soon, our wonderful Los Angeles tea family would arrive, ready to shape, shift and turn our home into a bustling tea house. Add a touch of Chocolate and other local artists and designers and the result is a bit of pure magic!

Last year, we created the Chocolate Invitational, an event honoring our love of chocolate, with the mission of promoting chocolatiers who produce delicious chocolates while respecting the land and the people who care for it. More than just indulging in delicious chocolate all day, what I took away from this experience was how meaningful it was to celebrate the community, one where people truly honor their connections to each other and to the bounty of Nature that brings them together.

The idea for the day had been planted in late August after Wu De had paid us all a visit and we held our first community tea event in this space, sponsored by Living Tea. You see, this year for us has really been one of a growing and deepening connection to Tea, the practice and the community that have evolved around this ancient and wise Leaf. After Wu De came to town, it became clear that this was a special kind of magic that brought us all together, creating something that feels like family more and more each day. With each sip we took together, our roots became more firmly planted, the trees inside of us started to grow, and the leaves of the community blossomed.

With the help of our tea sister Tien Wu, Choclatea was born, an event celebrating our connection to the Leaf and each other. As you walked in, you were greeted with a warm embrace as you gazed around at colorful art work, perhaps catching the sweet smile of Warren, co-owner of Substantial Chocolate, passing out bits and bites of his divine chocolate. Skylar, an angel-eyed vision, enticed you to share in a seemingly endless cup of Boiled Tea.

As you made your way down the garden path to the ceremony space, you may have stumbled upon a man who some would say is the pied piper of tea, Colin Hudon of Living Tea. With his jovial smile and the extensive knowledge of the Leaf, he brought a deeper understanding to the cups you were about to share.

In the ceremony space, if you were new to tea or just had a question, my husband Chris was preparing a variety of different teas for people to compare and discuss. With the quiet sizzle of the water kettle providing the backdrop to open conversations; if this was your stop, you walked

away with an open mind and a full heart, ready for the next adventure.

When it came time to go a bit deeper and sink into the magic of the Leaf, Tien Wu was there to guide your journey in a quiet, meditative ceremony. The tea flowed gracefully from her pot as the room sat silently, listening for the Leaf to whisper its wisdom. There is something to be said about sipping tea in silence: in the quiet, you can hear the whisper of the Leaf and begin to sense its true wisdom.

There was a lot to experience that day besides interacting with the growing tea community. Artwork by Selene and Wu De adorned the garden, gorgeous handcrafted bags by Vaalbara were on display, and the magic of Pitango and his rings were an inspiration to everyone who stopped by.

Even days you never want to end always fade into the night, the bliss carrying you out the door, back into the world. If you shared Tea with us that day, you really were part of something special. You see, Tea is many things: it is medicine, it is a beverage and it is a tool to deepen your connection to the Universe. For us, the most profound thing that tea has become is a conduit to build connections with each other. The ritual of ceremony is the catalyst and as the tea flows, so does our love for one another, sharing these moments, drifting into a deeper understanding of our human family and realizing we are all part of the Global Tea Hut...

*As a community we have been collectively inspired to create a community Tea House here in the Westside of Los Angeles, so the motivation to create this event was ignited by that. The money we raised will go toward our future space and will continue to help our Life Meets Life center in Taiwan. We will be holding future events like these so please follow our FB page Haus of Sages or Living Tea for updates.*

—Mikki

