

Tea Wayfarer

Each month, we introduce one of the Global Tea Hut members to you in these magazines 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 the 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 Chris Sage:

As you have no doubt discovered through reading each month's wayfarer article, the Way that Tea finds Her way to each of us is as unique and varied as the Leaf itself. Sometimes it's a chance encounter, and for others it is the culmination of a lifetime of searching. Regardless of the journey, however, the destinations always share a common theme of renewed connection to Nature and to each other through the alchemy of this simple Leaf. My journey is no different, a chance encounter, an unexpected shift in direction that brought me to this table with all of you.

There was a time when all there was to know about tea was "Do you like it hot or on ice?" It was a choice of beverage at lunch, nothing more. The first time I found Tea was quite by accident. Looking for a warm drink on a cold morning, I stumbled into what at first glance seemed like the wrong place. I wanted a cup of tea; what were all these people doing with these tiny pots and thimble-sized cups? It was all very odd. I took a chance, though. I sat down and slurped a few snack-sized servings and discovered something new—something unexpected, something that tasted like dirt, leaves and magic. As I sat at the table, making my way to being tea drunk for the first time, the thing I remembered most was that even in a room full of strangers, it seemed like everyone knew each other. Conversations flowed so naturally and there was a powerful sense that I could share anything with the people around me—and I did! There was laughter; there were tears; but above all else, there was compassion and understanding. We had come together from all over the world to share those tiny cups of magic together...

It wasn't until several years later that I met Wu De and learned about Global Tea Hut—again, quite by accident... My wife had run into some tea people at a local yoga festival and, it turns out, they were looking for a place to host a workshop on tea. Being the beautiful open spirit that she is, she graciously offered to host these strangers at our home. I remember it vividly. I got there late after having some last minute details to wrap up at work, I walked into the garden and there was this guy... sitting quietly, serving tea to a small group of very focused looking people. I awkwardly made my way to the last available seat, climbing over some of the other guests and, missing the introduction and generally not used to silence amongst so many people, I blurted out



"What kind of tea is this?" in the most acutely newbie manner possible. To this, the gracious man serving tea replied, "It is the tea we are having in this moment". Needless to say I was shrinking a little in my embarrassment, but in some way, what he said made sense. You see, there were some dots from my previous experiences with Tea that I hadn't connected yet. It wasn't the tea or the people that made these experiences special; they were special because we were sharing Tea and each other in that moment. We were choosing to make that moment sacred and profound, a small space in time that we had carved out for each other.

Over the years as my relationship with Tea has deepened, it has become a beautiful part of my life. It has taught me patience and how sometimes it is important to just be still and listen to the wind in the trees. It has afforded me so many opportunities to fall in love with my wife, my friends and all of you over and over again. Through this magic, this alchemy of leaves, water and spirit, I have found so much more than a hot beverage on a cold day... I have found a home.

Thank you to my wife, Wu De, Tien Wu, Qing Yu and Adam Yasmin (who served me my first cup of leafy dirt magic).

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