

From the Editor

In June we move into the hotter, summer months. It may seem strange, but we drink as much tea in the summer as we do in the winter, though we of course migrate to lighter tea: green and white tea, sheng puerh as well as lightly oxidized oolong. Halfway through the year, we hold a session outside in the cooler evening to celebrate the pinnacle of the solar calendar, and another movement towards the latter half of the year.

We now enter the fifth moon in the Chinese calendar, called the Pomegranate Moon. The fifth day of the fifth moon is a very important Chinese holiday called “*Duan Wu Jie*,” or more commonly “Dragon Boat Festival (*Long Chuan Jie*).” In the Chinese world there are Dragon Boat races on this day, and since the 1970s racing has become an official sport celebrated most around this holiday. Families make *zhong zhi* (sticky rice steamed in bamboo triangles), which represent the rice the people of Chu threw in the water to save Qu Yuan. Five-colored strings are also often worn, especially by children, for good luck. You could also try making some delicious vegetarian *zhong zhi* if you can find the ingredients. They are fantastic with some mushrooms, peanuts and lotus seeds steamed in the center of the rice!

Things are going great at the Center. Our new garden is thriving and “Farming Fridays” have turned into a huge success. We have an altar near our vegetables and are growing organic, biodynamic food for guests. We are treating this small garden as a learning experience for when we build a larger farm at Light Meets Life, our future Center. Our aim is to grow as much of our own food as possible and eventually maybe all that we eat. We are also growing tea, but only for educational purposes. Several of our large-leaf seeds sprouted this year, which is exciting since the rate of success is rather low.

A big part of what makes Global Tea Hut so great is the community behind it. We encourage you to reach out to us and let us know how we can include *you* more. We want to acknowledge and see each and every one of you as beautiful tea friends. We very much want you to feel at home here, amongst these pages, drinking these teas and then visiting our tea spaces if you get the chance. It is also helpful if you continue to write about us, blog about us and share this experience with your friends. The larger this community gets, the more realized our new Center will be. And if you don't plan on utilizing our Center, now or in the future, you can still connect to each other and share questions about the tea of the month or experiences sharing it.

This is the perfect time to step outside and share some tea in the park, even offering tea to strangers. We often serve roadside tea at the Center. It is a great way to learn about tea, share presence and loving kindness and celebrate the old adage that “through tea we make friends.” There is no agenda in serving roadside tea. You aren't trying to convert anyone or share wisdom. You don't have to be a teacher and know about all things tea. In serving tea, you really learn all there is to know about tea—from the practical details of handling water and pots, bowls and cups, to the spiritual truths that tea inspires. We have to actualize all the insights we've been discussing. Your aim in this is simple: rest in a present, clear and open mind with a heart full of loving kindness. Share tea. That's it. Give it a try and we think you will find that it is something you enjoy greatly.

One of things we are asked about most is brewing methods. What is the difference between gongfu and bowl tea? When do you use one or the other? Why do you brew tea in these ways and where do these traditions come from? We thought we would devote an entire issue to exploring bowl tea and gongfu tea, including their histories, uses and even *chaxi* for each. We hope that this issue helps you understand the differences between bowl tea and gongfu tea and provides you with some practical advice you can use to improve your brewing.



Further Reading

- 1) *The Production & Processing of Puerh Tea*, Issue 32, Sept. 2014, pp. 15-24
- 2) *The Three Eras Of Puerh Tea*, Issue 32, Sept. 2014, pp. 29-36
- 3) *The Tea Growing Regions of Yunnan*, Issue 32, Sept. 2014, pp. 11-12
- 4) *Tea of the Month*, Issue 2, March 2012, pp. 2-3
- 5) *A Clear Cup*, Issue 50, March 2016, pp. 21-24