

STARTING A JOURNEY BY MATTIAS TERPSTRA

Sun Lake Moon is a very special tea for me, as it was the first tea I ever received from Global Tea Hut. The month of August, 2015, would become a very inspiring one, filled with tea wisdom from Wu De himself. I never dared to imagine how great this tea community could be, and I look back on the past year as a very transformative one.

I have been walking the Way of Tea for just a few years now, and have been mostly by myself. Preparing tea was something I did for myself to calm down and taste some great teas. I was always excited when new teas came in the mail and got straight to tasting them. However, at some point I felt that doing this tea thing on my own was not the whole experience to be had. This is when I started searching for more people in my area with whom I could share the love of tea. They were hard to find at first. My friends were not so interested in making tea with all these different tools and gadgets, or enjoying it in silence, for that matter. At some point over the course my search (which mostly consisted of searching the web), I was led to the Global Tea Hut website. And when I saw that there was someone in my area in this Hut serving tea, I was exhilarated! Almost immediately I became a member, after reading some of the magazines online. What was to follow changed my view of tea profoundly.

I emailed my newfound tea brother about joining his tea session. He then got back to me saying that he just returned from the Tea Sage Hut and that Wu De would fly into the country in about a week to serve tea and give lectures. Naturally, I told him I would be joining. I was excited and nervous at the same time, heading over to the Zen center where Wu De would be serving tea. Luckily, we meditated first before starting the tea session, so there was time to calm my nerves and to flow into

a more observing and open state of mind. The meditation session itself was the most intense, but also the most difficult session I've ever been through. Although I sit to drink tea every morning, I don't meditate very often and never for more than twenty minutes. This one-hour meditation challenged me both mentally and physically. The tea session afterwards was the most wonderful experience I've ever been through. Everything about it settled me into a state of calm bliss and heightened awareness. It also showed me aspects of tea that I didn't know about. Without talking, Wu De showed me what tea really was.

After returning from the session and having a perfect night of sleep, I returned to my tea table as if it was my first time sitting at it. I felt different about Tea. She was more alive now. I went on to make Elevation and meditate on the experiences of the day before, but also fully enjoyed the wonderful flavors and aromas coming from this amazing tea. It tasted unlike anything I'd had before: Sweet and delicate, but powerful nonetheless. I'd had limited experience with sensing Tea's energy, but the session with Wu De opened my mind and heart fully to the effect that Tea has on one's being. That morning, drinking Elevation, I felt it. I felt the tea entering my body and flowing through it. But most importantly, sitting there at my table, it was settling into me. I knew the tea path I was walking on had taken a turn, and for the best.

In the months after this experience, I started practicing my tea skills to make them ready for serving tea for the first time in a way that I had not done before. The magazines were paramount in helping me have the courage to serve tea. That first session was with some dear friends and we drank in silence. I have never felt so close to them. We didn't talk, yet we communicated in a far deeper way. Now I really knew that this would be a path

I would want to walk. Tea allows me to connect far more deeply with myself, others and Nature, and the Global Tea Hut made all of this possible. I am grateful beyond words for the opportunity to share tea in this way. The tea session with Wu De and my morning tea with Elevation afterwards, were the definitive start of this new journey I would be going on—a journey of leaves and water. *(Just as I started typing this article on Elevation, the doorbell rang and the September Extended Edition of the magazine arrived! What a wonderful coincidence!)*

一段旅程的开始

