

MARRIED TO SUN MOON LAKE RED BY IRA & DIMA

Sun Moon Lake is not just tea for us! We tried Elevation for the first time a few years ago, before we were familiar with red tea from Taiwan. Our friend shared this wonderful tea in an extraordinary and meditative tea session, but he did not emphasize its qualities when we spoke after the session had finished. He did give us some to take home, though, so we tried it at home later. We weren't nearly as impressed as when we'd had the tea at our friend's home, however, which taught us the importance of intention, setting and brewing skills have to the final quality of a tea. It would be

another year before we got our hands on more Elevation to practice.

We were reunited with Elevation by our friend Ming (Denis Mikhailov) from Global Tea Hut. Through him, we once again dove into the energies of Sun Moon Lake tea. We have since shared intimate sessions with this tea that no words could capture. We are now confident that with the proper approach to tea, the right living teas and some space in one's life, one can not only cultivate one's spirit, but also achieve a cheerful outlook with a balanced heart. In that way, a tea practice truly changes lives!

We have made countless friends over Elevation sessions, so when it came time for us to get married, we used this tea for our marriage tea ceremony. You could say that we're as married to this tea as we are to each other!

AN ELEVATION FRIEND BY MAX ULASEVICH

Elevation is a significant tea for me. If Tea were a world, and it often seems like it is, Elevation would be home. Ming Hui first served this tea to me when I came to the Moscow Tea Hut. The session was unforgettable. I distinctly recall how I felt that day, and the first inkling that this tea was helping me find my Dao. Elevation has changed the way I see tea and the world, teaching me to let go of my ideas of quality and accept tea as it is—to realize that the true spirit of tea is indeed leaves and water shared between friends.

Elevation has accompanied me along my tea journey. I started every morning with three bowls of it for a long time. It was the foundation of my tea practice. Here's an interesting Elevation anecdote:

I am a teacher, so I have a long summer vacation. Since Russia is cold in the winter, I am lucky to have the warm weather off work. I try to spend as much of my vacation in Nature as possible. This year, I went out to drink tea in the woods every morning. I took Elevation with me most days—just a bowl, kettle, tea and a mouth harp to play if I felt inspired. One morning, after three quiet bowls, I began to play my harp. A woodpecker came and sat on a nearby tree, seeming to enjoy the concert, albeit cautiously. Other birds soon joined him, and I had a small audience in no time. I thought this was too amazing a photographic opportunity to pass up, so I got up to get my camera. As I was standing up, I spilled my Elevation onto the leaves I was using as a *chaxi*.

When I returned with the camera, a small lizard was drinking the Elevation that I had spilled! Though we all know that Wu De and his students have been using Elevation to spread a tea practice around the world, that was the first time, I suspect, that Elevation was used to turn a lizard on to a life of tea!



茶 Ira & Dima's tea wedding.

