

From the Editor

In June, our teas have all started rolling in and we are drinking lots of young sheng puerh samples, green teas (including new, first flush, organic sencha from Japan called “*shincha*”) and also the occasional gongfu red tea in the morning. The weather is hot in Taiwan at this time and these cooling teas are wonderful. We serve sun tea this month and next when we go out to serve roadside tea, propping up fake blue flames under the iced kettle we use to boil and ladle out tea the rest of the year. We steep the tea in a large glass jar from 10 to 11:30 a.m. on a sunny day, letting the sun extract the essence from the tea. This can be done with red, green, white tea or young sheng puerh. We then fill the clay *kama* from the large glass jar with a pitcher, adding ice from a cooler every half hour or so.

June is the zenith of the year, halfway round the Global Tea Hut calendar. It is a great time to evaluate the year, learn and grow and make plans to improve throughout the second half. We have already achieved a lot this year: expanding membership, touring and offering courses, our fourth annual trip, another issue in our Classics of Tea series, a new printer that has improved the quality of our magazine, and the realization of our long-standing goal to include more authorship in these issues by translating Chinese tea experts and thereby providing more scope and depth to each issue of Global Tea Hut. A goal we hope to realize in the coming year is to include more journalism, traveling to rare tea mountains to find amazing organic farmers and exciting teas for you to try.

The biggest news is, of course, the launch of our Global Tea Hut app. More than a year of effort, time and money has gone into this. Like all the work around here, it was done with tons of love. Lots of people helped out, but none more than our very own Jared Krause. We should all raise a bowl to our brother this month. He has served this community in countless ways since its formation. Please help us by investing time in the app: adding to your profile, connecting with other members, creating local gatherings and more. The more everyone invests in the app, the more rewarding it will be to use. We hope that it brings this community together and creates more tea ceremonies and gatherings around the world. We hope travelers find a place to stay at Global Tea Hut houses and that your tea sessions have more guests from further afield!

The second important announcement this year is that we are starting our third annual photography contest. So far, the two years have been filled with so many inspiring entries from all over the world. Like before, we will be offering prizes to the most tea-inspired photography—measuring success by how strongly we feel inclined to go put the kettle on. The same rule applies as with previous years: there is a limit of one submission per person. The winners will also be published in these pages. The contest will close in August.

As you are reading this month’s issue, I am continuing my world tour to the Big Apple. This will be the first time we have ever conducted tea ceremonies in NY. This whirlwind year of travel has afforded me the chance to have tea with more of you, which helps inspire me to work hard on the magazine and at the Center. I love making new friends through tea, as well as celebrating the old. It has been a very busy, but very exciting year so far. The first half has taught me so much. I look forward to sharing more tea.

This month we are going to dive deeply into the topic of gongfu red tea, exploring the highest potential of what red tea can be. Red tea is often best when simple, like dian hong or Elevation from Sun Moon Lake. But red tea can also be very fine and delicate, produced with as much mastery as any genre of tea. Gongfu red tea is red tea produced exclusively from buds, and with great attention to detail and focus on quality. The best raw material is used, so the tea must be made with skill to warrant the premium price that using only hand-plucked buds demands.

This month’s tea comes from Qimen—from the farm we visited on our 2017 Global Tea Hut Trip, which we will cover in great detail in the July issue. Seeing how much care and love goes into this amazing red tea has left us all stunned. As we always say, we make a concerted effort to bring you all with us on our annual trips, and since we are sharing this tea from Qimen this month and another beautiful tea we made ourselves next month, it feels like we really will be sharing this amazing place and wonderful experiences with all of you. This issue will be educational, and a great chance to taste the best red tea has to offer.



—Further Readings—

This month, we recommend taking the time to read through the March 2016 issue of Global Tea Hut. It is all about red tea in general. The whole issue is full of red tea wisdom that forms a great background for this issue. You can read it on the “Past Issues” section of the website.