

From the Editor

In October, the weather is perfect for outdoor tea. There is a magic in drinking in the mountains, surrounded by birdsong. At this time of year, we start breaking into aged sheng puerh and a tiny bit of shou now and again, but most of our sessions are focused on Wuyi Cliff Tea, traditionally processed Taiwanese oolong and aged oolong tea, especially one of my all-time favorite teas: aged *tieguanyin*. When the weather is cooling down and drying out, these teas really shine, helping the body, mind and soul make the shift towards winter. This year's Cliff Tea will start arriving around this time—a perfect excuse to take our new gongfu stove out for a gongfu session!

Alas, this year will be slightly different for me, as I will be traveling throughout the entire month of October. As you read this, we will be holding our second annual Zen and Tea retreat in the Spanish Pyrenees. We decided to make this an annual tradition for these reasons: The center where it is held, Casa Caudrau, is gorgeous, and the people who run it are full of heart and very much aligned with our work. The tea and meditation run through each other and expand the heart, as do the stunning and limitless Pyrenees Mountains, home to contemplative hermits for centuries. After Spain, I will be in the United States and Mexico. There will be tea gatherings in Boulder, Colorado and Los Angeles. I hope to see you at some of these to share a bowl and a big hug! I am then going to Mexico to celebrate my parents' fiftieth wedding anniversary. They have been Global Tea Hut members since the beginning and are huge supporters of this community. Raise a bowl to them in congratulations!

Our Light Meets Life fundraiser is in full swing, with some amazing tea and teaware for this year. This is our fifth such fundraiser, and we have so far raised more than seventy thousand dollars to support our future, permanent Center, Light Meets Life! We wish to bow down in gratitude for all your support over the years. We also wish to raise a bowl and ask permission of the trees, whose harvest has made this possible, and of the Earth, from whom we have taken such gorgeous ore to make our pots, kettles and stoves. We hope all this tea and teaware enriches your lives and tea practice, and helps you to make better tea for yourself, your loved ones and your guests. In that way, Tea can change the world, one cup or bowl at a time!

This month marks the anniversary of another tradition that has gone on throughout all the years of Global Tea Hut since we started: the only tea we repeat every year, Elevation! Elevation is produced by Mr. Su, who is one of our favorite farmers, as it is impossible to find a greater example of someone who values working in harmony with the land, stewardship principles and integrity, environmental sustainability and love than Mr. Su. (There are other great farmers, of course, but none better.) We continue our commitment to him, keeping the promise we made to him two years ago, which you will read about again in the Tea of the Month

article. Coming back around to this tea each year is like a homecoming for us, as we hope it is for all of you.

As we have covered this tea each of the five years that we've been sitting in this Hut, including our photographic illustration of Elevation processing in the October 2016 issue, we decided to steer you towards previous issues to learn about this tea and how it is made (all past issues are free on our website). We will have a brief introduction of the tea, its processing and brewing tips, but this year, we took a trip to Sun Moon Lake and documented some of our favorite spots, which we hope you will enjoy.

In this issue, we will also brew up a long steeping in a big sidehandle pot. Sidehandle pots are one of the most important innovations of our generation of this lineage and form the basis of our practice. They have changed the way almost all of us share and receive tea. Of course, these pots have been around for millennia, but not the way we use them. This is our unique gift to this generation of Chajin. In this issue, we are going to explore all the history and lore of sidehandle pots, meet some of our favorite sidehandle pot makers and take a glance into what goes into their craft. In addition, we are including a detailed guide to conducting a sidehandle ceremony, much like the leaves in a bowl guide we published in February of this year. Usually, we drink Elevation leaves in a bowl, but we think this month may be an exception: Let's put some in our sidehandle pots as we journey through history, craft, firing and brewing of tea with a handle on the side!



—Further Readings—

This month, we recommend taking the time to read through the past two years of Elevation issues: October 2016 and August 2015. Rereading about the leaves in a bowl ceremony, which we covered in February of this year, will also add context to this issue. All are available in the “Past Issues” section of the website.