

From the Editor

In November, the weather is perfect in Taiwan. This is one of our favorite months, as it means more outdoor tea, a return to roasted and aged oolong, Wuyi Cliff Tea, Liu Bao as well as shou and aged sheng puerh—all our favorite teas. We have three or four usual spots for drinking outdoor tea. The Taiwanese often build small gazebos around the mountains for tea drinkers, which we feel very much capture the spirit and essence of Cha Dao: sharing space with strangers you will never meet, without thanks or a desire for anything in return other than the opportunity to give. That is a love for tea! We hope each and every one of you will have the opportunity to visit us and drink tea in the mountains, enjoying the natural beauty of Taiwan together.

This month we will finish up this year's course schedule, marking our first year of ten-day courses. It feels like this has been a huge step towards Light Meets Life. Having two ten-day courses each month has left more time for us to focus on the magazine, clean and maintain the Center and rest our weary souls. Rested, we serve better and provide more care for the attendees of the courses. The course schedule was designed with a lot of forethought, all of which was oriented towards providing a space in which tea lovers from around the world can steep in an immersive environment and leave with a confident liquor—ready to start a tea practice when they get back home. The courses cover water (gathering, evaluation, storage and drawing), fire (heat sources and temperature for brewing), tea production (visiting a farm to make your own tea) and exposure to three or four of the brewing methods of our tradition with practical exploration of two that you can take home. Participants in the dozen courses we have done so far this year have all expressed a deep appreciation and positive reaction to this shift. The courses have all been successful, and attendees really feel like they have learned a lot during their stay.

Soon, we will be posting the 2018 course schedule. We want to include two or three special courses for the next year as we move closer to Light Meets Life, our permanent Center, which will have a huge array of topical courses. So far, a few of the candidates for 2018 are: a twenty-day deeper course for older students to deepen their practice, including more meditation and intermediate to advanced brewing lessons; a ten-day tour of Taiwan, like our annual trip, only in our home field; and, finally, we have discussed another Tea & Qigong retreat, like the beautiful one we did in the mountains of Miaoli this past September. If you are interested in these courses, or have any suggestions for improving them or creating other special, topical courses, please let us know. We would love to have your participation in this next chapter of the Tradition of the Hut!

This month marks the end of this year's travel for me as well. I have been on the road more than six months altogether this year. I have been moving at this pace for going on six years now. I plan to spend much more time in Asia throughout 2018. This year has been a tremendous opportunity to share so

much tea, hugs and love around the world, and I am extremely grateful to have the honor of exploring tea with so many of you, growing our appreciation for tea and each other. Those of you who know me will know that I won't be idle in 2018. I plan to focus more on this magazine, taking more journalistic trips throughout Asia to gather new and exciting information for articles, nurture some new relationships with organic farmers who may provide amazing teas for us all to share and continue to promote the translation of other authors to provide scope to these pages. And I will do a couple of teaching tours as well...

This issue is wonderful. We have always wanted to dive deeper into shou puerh, which is a favorite tea in the West especially. For some reason, Western people love puerh tea. We do as well. Shou has an interesting history and production methods—there is tons to learn about together! Shou puerh is a really good topic for a tea lover to take the plunge, steeping a darker liquor, so to speak, because it contains a huge spectrum of all that tea is in the world: it has an interesting history and lore; there is a lot of science involved in the artificial fermentation due to the microbial activity; you can brew shou in many ways, like boiling or steeping; and it often has a deep and resonant energy, making it ideal for self-cultivation and more meditative tea.

We have translated some amazing and informative articles to explore shou together. We also have one of the best Global Tea Hut teas ever, "Spirit (神)," which is also one of our Light Meets Life fundraiser teas this year (in cake form). It is one of the best shou puerh teas we have ever tried—delicious and full of vibrant Qi. Boil the water hot and let the tea steam while we explore the dark and creamy depths of shou puerh together!



茶道 FURTHER READINGS

This month, we recommend taking the time to read through the January 2017 issue, especially the Tea of the Month article. Some of the information in this issue is a bit of a review of that one, but the focus is different so they compliment each other, allowing for a comprehensive exploration of shou puerh.