

# Global Tea Hut



NEWSLETTER #2, MARCH 2012

Pushing aside the burlap flap, we all enter one by one to sit around this old hut once more. The circle has grown since last time. Someone has just stirred the coals to flame again, and here comes the kettle. As it hangs above the fire, let us get to know each other a bit more...

Understanding the purpose and meaning behind these gatherings is paramount. Last time we got together, we talked about how it is important for us all to remember that this is charity, rather than purchasing tea. We should all view this as a give-away, and the gifts we've brought for each other should bring us closer together. Maybe we can all bow now, out of mutual love and respect, before we begin...

Sometimes the greatest gift you can give someone is the opportunity to give. Giving opens up your energy and encourages loving-kindness. It helps you to honor abundance in this world, as well as the power of sharing. Giving helps you to participate in your world, and thereby learn and grow; it brings us closer together.

It has been so amazing to wake up each morning and find your tea on the altar downstairs, and to see the way people here stop and give it some love now and again. It has taught us that this Global Tea Hut is so much more than just a way for us to fund our center. Isn't it amazing that such different people all around the world are drinking the same tea, in the same spirit of giving and community? Do you feel them when you lift your bowl? Can you see them here and now in this hut with you? We

all have the same aims, promoting an awakening of consciousness through Cha Dao, but each of us sees this kettle in the middle from a different perspective. I can't help but wonder what you see from the other side of the fire as me. My vision has been that this "hut" isn't just a metaphorical one, but a real, physical connection that for at least one tea session a month brings us all to the same place.

Another insight has also arisen from this deep feeling of connection: When you drink your tea there by the beach, listening to the waves crash, know that the very same ocean crashes on another beach far away, and on a hill near that other beach is another person drinking the same tea. Further inland, over some mountains, yet another brother sips this same tea, admiring the endless white of winter. Further on, as the eagle flies, a tea sister of yours now sits enjoying this same tea while she listens to some lovely classical music in the background, and sighs with joy. Your bowl on that table you sit before right now touches the ground, which touches the beach, which touches the ocean... and only a few touches later and you've touched another person in the Global Tea Hut. We are bridging space with this.

Look around, there are some truly amazing people gathered here. It brings tears to my eyes, I am so grateful to have met and shared this earth with you beautiful souls. Also, look deeply into this bowl, as I promise to look deeply into mine, and we'll surely find one another inside...

*The best state of mind in which to drink tea is one of deep meditation.*

*The second best is while looking at a beautiful landscape or listening to music.*

*The third best is during stimulating conversation.*

*In all cases it is necessary to aspire towards a quiet and tranquil frame of mind.*

*-Pai Chang*

# Your Tea of the Month, March 2012

## 2004 Yiwu Mountain Sheng Puerh & Qi Lan

This month's tea is another of our favorites around here, and we all have a special relationship to it, indeed. It is actually a blend of two different plants, an old-growth Puerh and an ancient Daoist herb called "Qi Lan". Together, they dance in a magical way, filling you with old myths about the forest and the animals there.

As we mentioned last month, all Puerh comes from Yunnan, the birthplace of tea. And we also talked about how there are two kinds of Puerh, sheng and shou—remember? Sheng is the more traditional, greener kind of Puerh. It is picked, withered, fried and sun-dried. Sheng tea is then naturally fermented over time, and the older the better. It miraculously mellows from green, powerful, astringent tea to deep and dark elixirs. It also changes from "cool" to "hot", in the Chinese medical sense of the words. Shou tea means that the tea has gone through piling under thermal blankets, or more rarely in baskets, in order to artificially ferment the tea. Aborigines in Yunnan had many ways to turn their tea warm, again in the TCM sense, including baking, roasting, or even burying it in bamboo. However, the modern method of piling the tea was developed in the 1960's and then commercialized in 1972 by big Puerh factories in an attempt to reproduce the amazing effects that time, and natural fermentation, have on Puerh tea. Of course, they only succeeded in inventing a new genre of tea, rather than actually achieving what nature does over such long periods of time.

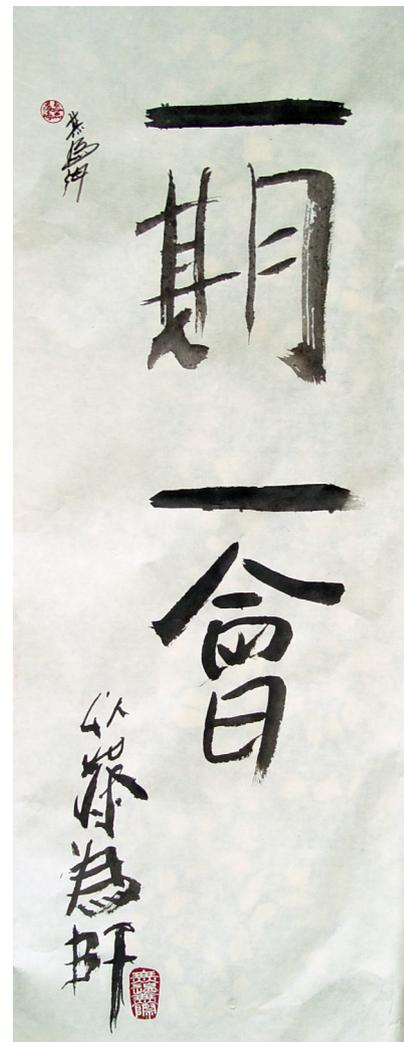
Our tea of the month is once again a sheng tea, just like last month. Last month's tea was a unique example of sheng, though, because it did undergo some pre-production piling, which is very unusual for Puerh tea. This is not the same as the post-production, wet piling of shou tea. It is more akin to red tea, where the withering leaves are piled for 12-24 hours to increase oxidation. (Our February tea was only piled briefly, 2-4 hours, if you remember.)

This month's tea, on the other hand, is a normal sheng tea: picked, withered, fried and sun dried. It dates to the year 2004 and is from the Yiwu Mountain region.

We often drink this Puerh on its own as well. It is strong and rich, with the hints of honey and orchids that are characteristic of so many of the

trees growing near Yiwu. It is also from old-growth trees, but we don't know the precise age. With the Puerh boom, much of the region has become over-commercialized and the quality of tea has decreased as a result. Generally speaking, 2004 was the last year before this major shift. Of course, there are exceptions on both sides: places/farms that had shifted towards less environmentally ethical principals pre-2004 and great, sustainable teas after 2004, like the wonderful Ai Lao we enjoyed last month. Still, there was a change in the industry around this time, as more big factories built plantations and began using pesticides, weed-killers and chemical fertilizers to meet the growing demand for Puerh tea.

Every 5-7 years Puerh tea turns a corner in its aging process. This tea has been stored rather dryly and has therefore not turned the first corner into adolescence. It has changed, however, taking on a richer, oilier depth as the years have passed. It is syrupy and full-bodied with a powerful yang Qi.



To our tea we have added a very rare herb, and the two go together like meditation and tea. “Qi Lan” is the leaf of a rare, old-growth tree that grows in Yunnan, Szechuan and to a lesser extent Guang Zhou. Our Qi Lan comes from Szechuan and Yunnan and has been aged about 10 years to mellow it out. Not much is known about this elusive plant. It has yet to be domesticated, and we do not know its scientific classification at all. It has been treasured by Daoist recluses and Tibetan sages for thousands of years, as it uplifts and amplifies the Qi. We revel in the mystery of this magical plant. It tastes of sandalwood, and carries frequencies of Qi not to be found in any other plant we have ever interacted with. It is a Qi tonic, uplifting the spirit tremendously.

The harmony between these two plants is amazing. The Qi Lan actually turns the cool nature of the young Puerh hot. It amplifies the Qi of the Yiwu tea and also adds more of its own, altogether enough to soar through the clouds dragon-backed.

We suggest drinking this wonderful blend mid-morning, and after a nice, filling breakfast. Be sure to leave enough time/space to really enjoy it; its magic lasts a day and more. You will find yourself transported to where the poetry and myth of tea has meaning again: Spirits sway the leaves of these old plants, and tell stories of blind old shamans pushed into the river by naughty raccoons, only to find that they could see again...

*\* As we mentioned last month, we recommend letting the tea get over its jet lag. Let it sit a week or two and become acclimatized.*

*\*\* It is good for a **chajin** (a person of tea) to know the difference between the terms “oxidation” and “fermentation”. There is an insightful article about this for free on **The Leaf Magazine** ([www.the-leaf.org](http://www.the-leaf.org)).*



## THE MOUNTAINS OF YUNNAN

Originally, there were six famous mountains in Yunnan—where all Puerh tea comes from. They were all in the region of Xishuangbanna, though there is some debate as to whether this area, Simao (now called “Puerh”) or Lincang is the birthplace of tea.

The tea is called “Puerh” because that was the name of the market town all the tea from the nearby regions was shipped to, and then sold to the rest of China and beyond. As the tea that reached the world all came from that town, the tea itself was soon called “Puerh” (pronounced *poo urh*). These six mountains are all located near the Lancang River in relatively close proximity to one another. The mountains’ names are:

1. *Gedeng* (革登山)
2. *Manzhuan* (蠻磚山)
3. *Mansa* (慢撒山)
4. *Mangzhi* (莽枝山)
5. *Youle* (攸樂山)
6. *Yibang* (倚邦山)

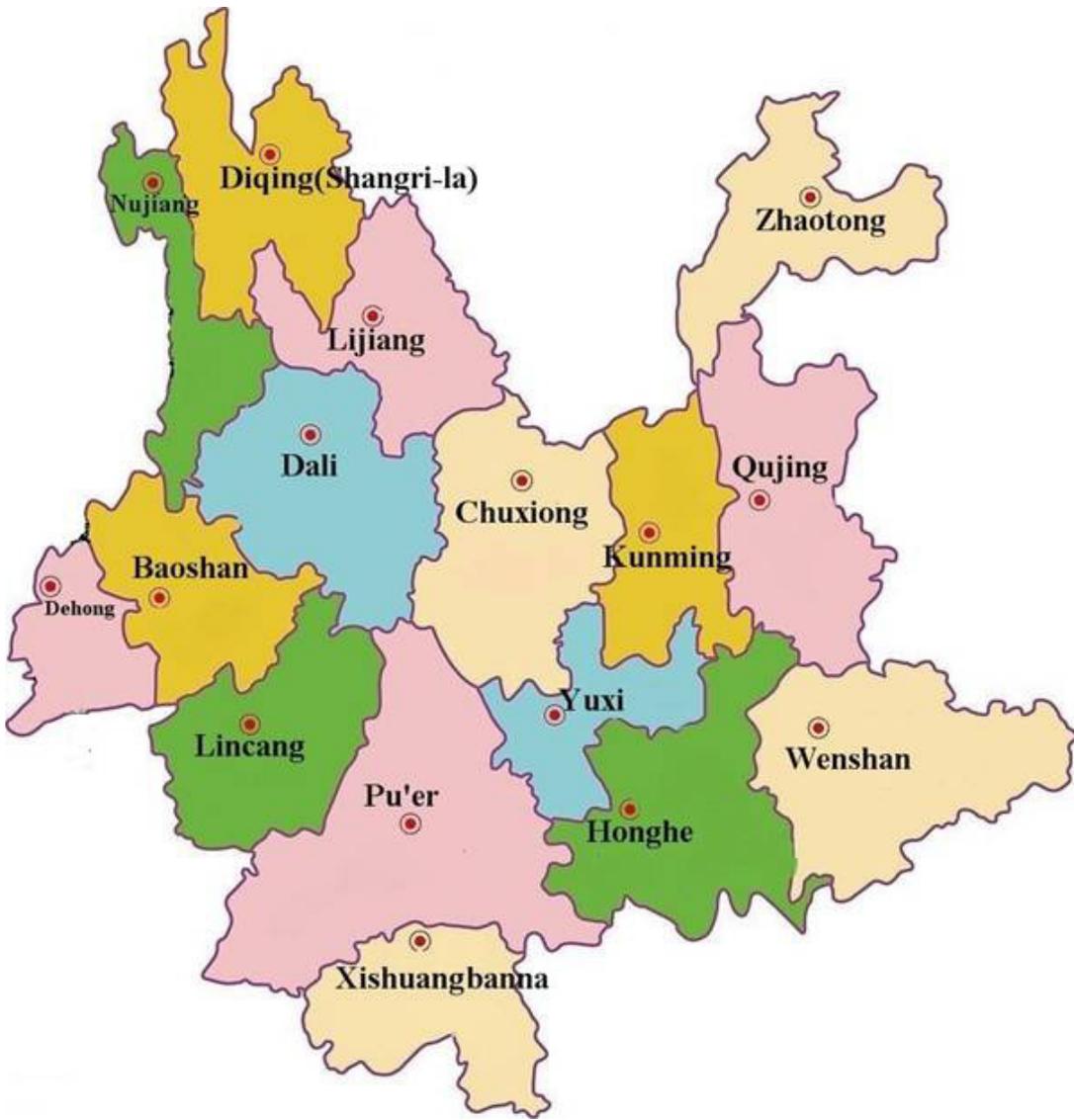
There are also other famous tea mountains that were rather unknown in the past because they were isolated. In recent time, however, some of them have become even more famous than the original Six Famous Mountains. They are:

- *Mengsong* (勐宋山)
  - *Bada* (巴達山)
  - *Nannuo* (南糯山)
  - *Jingmai* (景迈山)
  - *Bangwei* (邦崴山)
  - *Banzhang* (班章)

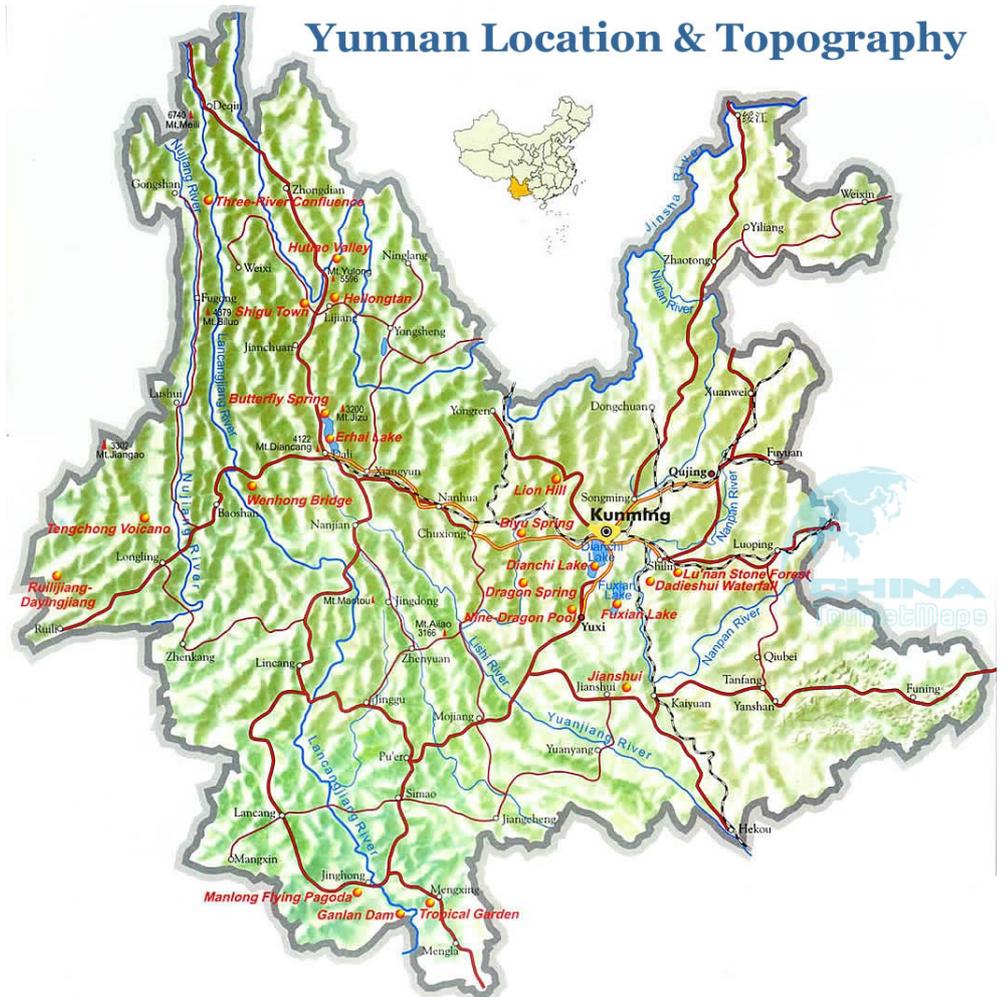
There are now many other regions in Xishuangbanna making tea as well, and even within any of these mountains, there is great variation from village to village.

Nowadays, the Puerh boom has caused a great increase in production and as a result people have begun searching out wild or abandoned gardens, and areas that may have been making tea for centuries in isolation have now had the spotlight shown on them. More varieties of tea are discovered all the time, including some recent finds that were so unique scientists have classified them as another species of *Camellia* altogether. Other areas outside Xishuangbanna are also making a lot of great tea these days, like Lincang, Simao and Dehong. There are also great teas from Wuliang and Ai Lao mountains, one of which we enjoyed last month.

If you love Puerh, it is great to begin to taste some single-region cakes and learn to distinguish the unique flavors of these regions. They are all distinct. Blends can be great, too, but it’s nice to know what goes into them. It can seem complicated at first, since there are many villages in each region and the tea changes each year, but gradually you will pick up on underlying characteristics in the bodies of the tea that last over time, and influence how different teas age. To the right are a couple maps of Yunnan to help start your journey.



### Yunnan Location & Topography



*For future issues, submit questions to [globalteahut@gmail.com](mailto:globalteahut@gmail.com)*

There is so much magic in Puerh tea: Its roots twist down to the bones of the earth, reaching through rock and crag for deep waters, mountain-spring waters. And its crown slowly dances around and upward, stretching for the stars and the old dialogues it has with the forces above, out there. From the great to the small, its every cell is in harmony with millions of small microbial lives, and amazingly they cooperate to transform these leaves over decades of meditation into more and more refined energy, gathering depth and experience the wiser and older the tea. For all these reasons, Puerh tea is the perfect example of what Master Zhou Yu calls “real tea” and what we here at the Tea Sage Hut often refer to as “living tea.” Almost every kind of tea/region has living tea, grown and processed in harmony with the Spirit, don’t forget. Using Puerh as an example, let us not reject or judge, but explore the world of tea in order to find the leaves that are most conducive to our own spiritual growth.

Last time, we talked about some of the amazing things that make Puerh so unique. First of all, the forest of Yunnan, Viet Nam, Myanmar, Laos and East India is the birthplace of all tea, the cradle of Cha Dao. And the grandfather and grandmother trees there are often ancient, hundreds or even thousands of years old. They have old myths handed down these many generations, and they’ll freely share these hoary tales with any who would listen and walk the Dao. Furthermore, the water of this region flows down from the great Himalayan sentinels that guard Yunnan, bringing rich glacial minerals with them. And the leaves themselves are covered in millions of microorganisms even before they are picked—a relationship we’ll never understand. And speaking of not understanding, don’t ever leave out the Mystery, for it is the deepest and richest aspect of any tea: dive into the depths of what is incommunicable, rather than wading in the much more shallow waters of what is describable in a tea.

Learn to communicate with your teas. They will speak to you, especially living teas like these. Old-growth Puerh tea comes from a forest teeming with life—25% of China’s species are in it. This vibrancy is in the tea, as the trees themselves interact with insects, plants, snakes and frogs in infinite ways. They absorb sun, moon and starlight and convert the immaterial into a physical substance we

can interact with. There is great medicine in this dialogue—“medicine” in the Native American sense of the word, not as a substance to heal a particular ailment as we think of it in the West, but rather as direction, illumination and an opened state of mind.

By exploring and contrasting some of the less alive kinds of tea production in the world, we can get a better sense of what real, medicinal tea is and then learn to let it find its way into our lives and souls. The purpose isn’t to disparage or exclude people or ways, but to move forward towards greater sensitivity and purity. There will always be less-awakened teas, and many will suit certain people and situations, which we can discuss in a bit.

Plantation tea was developed for industry, and as such compromises much of the medicine in tea. The plants used in tea plantations aren’t seed-propagated. They are grafted cuttings taken and planted. This method is used to create a uniformity of product that these farmers and factories think the consumer wants, and some indeed do. Others of us



revel in the differences from season to season, year to year and love to ask the tea of its year: How was the weather? Where were the stars? Which animals did you meet and learn from this year, old friend?

Some of the soul is lost when you clone tea in this way. There is a disrespect and/or indifference for the individuality of the plant. Traditionally, tea trees, like animals, were countable nouns. Good farmers, both now and then, talk to their teas and know them. They were often even named. Sometimes a family would give a tea tree its own surname, knowing that the being which had provided for the family these hundreds of years was, in fact, the oldest and most respected member of the clan. Similarly, villagers know their own pigs in small places like Yunnan. They may not name them, but they know which pig is theirs—the one with the black ear, etc. And they talk to them as well, raising them beneath their houses for years. Nowadays, tea and animals have become uncountable nouns. There is no individuality. Now we say “pork”. And if you look into an industrial farm, you won’t find any recognition of where one pig begins and another ends, just as when you look at a tea plantation you see rows and rows of cloned tea trees crammed together so close that there is no longer any distinction. They aren’t ‘trees’, countable and individual souls, but ‘tea’, uncountable and conceptualized.

It took millennia for trees like tea to develop sexual cross-fertilization. It is also tremendously difficult for such trees to fertilize one another, since the mates cannot move towards embrace the way that animals and people can. As a result, plants have developed magnificent ways of fertilizing each other, enticing insects to pollinate them, using the wind, etc. There is a reason for all this. Carl Sagan said that the evolution from asexual to sexual reproduction on this planet was as significant as the beginning of life itself, as it allows for all the creative power in Nature to assert itself in such myriad forms. There is something deep and powerful missing when a plant is not allowed to cross-fertilize. The varieties that result produce potential magic, just as in humans. Every tree is then different. Sure, they share some similarities due to common genetic heritage and similar *terroir*, but like people they each have their own medicine, their own perspective, experience and wisdom.

Plantation teas are also pruned down to a short height. This is to facilitate easier picking. However, every plant has an unknown ratio between its roots and crown, and if the crown is hewn, the roots will shrink. Some pruning is actually good

for most plants, helping them to grow up stronger, like getting a trim to grow out your hair. But prune too much and the roots shrink up, preventing the plant from getting to the deep minerals it needs. Large-leaf tea can develop roots that extend dozens of meters into the earth. If dried and completely flattened, all the branch roots of a simple rye plant would encompass more than 350 miles. A large tea tree’s roots laid out in a line would cover astronomical distances. The deeper the roots, the more stable the tree and the more intimate its dialogue with Mother Earth.

Since there are so many trees competing for the limited resources of the soil, a plantation cannot afford to have other plants. The tea trees are competing against each other, in other words. The problem with this is that we cannot ever understand the relationship a tree has with all the insects, undergrowth, flowers, snakes and animals in its environment. No one could say what effect a snake living in the ground near a tea tree would have. We have some amazing wild oolong here in Taiwan that has beehives all in the trees, and they have definitely affected the tea. Forcing tea to grow in the environment most conducive for larger output is bending Nature to our will, rather than following her ways in harmony. And this is, to a great degree, humanity’s most pressing illness.

In Chinese, the word for tea has the radical ‘man’ in it, suggesting that tea as we drink it is a dialogue between man and the plant kingdom, represented by the radicals for ‘grass’ or ‘plant’ above and ‘wood’ below. The nature of that conversation is therefore incredibly important to the quality and life of a tea. Is it about money and greed? Is it about love and healing? Does the farmer even talk to the trees at all? Is there respect in their conversations? These are the vital questions when creating a so-called “living” or “dead” tea. If you asked a real lover of tea when he picked his tea, he would say: “When it is ready to be picked.” The amount is also up to Nature. The man waits with grateful and open arms beneath the tea trees, like depicted in the 3000-year-old cave paintings in Yunnan, bowing and with reverence taking what nature gives willingly. Nowadays, however, we busy ourselves telling Nature what we want. The plantation owner demands that the land give him 500kg a year, and he won’t settle for less. If the trees don’t produce, he simply tears them out and replaces them with other clones. And of course, Mother Earth gives and gives to her selfish sons and daughters, giving in love her last drops of life—even if it means her own death.

There is a problem with real, living tea, however, which is that it can only be produced in amounts large enough for a very small amount of tea drinkers to enjoy. If all tea were old-growth, seed propagated and otherwise grown and processed in the true way, there would be an extreme drought in the tea world. For that reason, we must have some plantation tea as well. This, like most things in modern life, requires compromise. And compromise is a part of life in any time. Still, we must draw the line somewhere. For us it is what the plantation owner uses to fertilize the soil. Since there are so many trees in such a small place, they must be fertilized. We promote teas that use organic fertilizers and refrain from using chemical weed-killers and/or pesticides. Such organic teas are much more sustainable and don't cause nearly as much environmental destruction. Pesticides and weed-killers on tea plantations at the tops of mountains get into the ground water and flow down, causing endless destruction as they do.

It is important for us to remember that complaining isn't a solution. The farmers are the first victims of these chemicals. One of Taiwan's

greatest proponents of organic tea does what he does because his father died of pesticide poisoning. Similar stories can be found elsewhere, too. We move forward through inclusion, not exclusion, through education and positivity, rather than negativity. Help promote what's positive and learn from what's negative, in other words.

It is necessary for us to maintain and promote clean, sustainable plantation tea for people around the world to enjoy. We are going to be sending you some clean, organic plantation tea next month (April). But for this month, let us once again enjoy a living, "real" tea. Such tea is medicinal and should make its ways to those of us who are going to use it thus. It has so much to teach us, about our own origins and beyond.

Let the leaves uncurl, dancing in circles to the beat of the god-drum in your chest. Let their ancient stories unfold round the crackling, steaming fire of the liquor. And be transported by them, to that mountain hermitage deep within you...





# MARCH GONG FU TEA-BREWING TIPS

Last month we tested pouring tea from three identical cups. We poured our tea liquor into the first cup and then half of that into the next and again into the third. You probably noticed the changes from cup to cup. There are many factors that influence this, including the loss of Qi as the tea travels away from the brewer. But the most important is temperature.

Heat is the conveyer of tea; it opens the leaves, extracts the essence and spreads it throughout our bodies. Without heat, a tea is weak and flat. Heat carries the energy of the tea and the brewer, pushing it throughout our bodies as we drink. Try drinking the same tea at a hotter and cooler temperature and while the differences in taste might be interesting, the tea doesn't move through the body the same. In fact, try allowing a cup of tea to cool down completely as you drink hot cups of the same tea and see how weak the Qi flows in comparison. For that reason, the first principal of gong fu tea is to preserve temperature from kettle to guest. This is not an easy task to perform, not at all.

You should also remember that everything in gong fu tea has an outer, practical function and an inner, spiritual reason as well—just like in the martial arts, which it developed out of. Much of the practical wisdom in gong fu tea has been lost through the ages, and almost all the inner wisdom. We are fortunate to be a part of a tradition that has preserved both.

For this month, try taking two of the same cups and preheating one before you pour tea liquor into both. The exercise is simple: preheat one cup with hot water before each steeping and don't preheat the other. Then drink them back and forth quickly, rather than trying to finish the whole of each cup consecutively. Just like last time, and with all these experiments, it is better if you use a tea that you are very familiar with (and not our monthly Global Tea Hut tea, which we hope you'll drink in the spirit of community). Otherwise, the newness of the tea will impair your ability to distinguish between the two. Also, brew the tea a bit lighter than you usually do. We hope these experiments can help you grow in tea brewing...





# CULTIVATING YOUR OWN TEA TREE

*This article was written by our very own Kai Ya, the Magnificent, of course.*

Looking back over the last couple of years from the time when I first entered the gates of our center, I find myself a little shocked at just how enormously my life has changed. Tea has become such a fundamental part of who I am that I am often oblivious to the impact it's having on me. Plants move slowly, after all; but when you do get around to noticing them every few months, you see just how far they have danced and turned, reaching up for the Spirit in the sky. If you had a time-lapse, you'd see each stem and leaf, flower and stamen dance and sway with a vibrancy all their own. To do that, though, you'd have to slow down the mind to their pace. And when I do slow down like that, I can see just how far my own inner tea tree has grown.

Where I grew up, iced tea was a regional specialty of sorts, and my father was amongst those that loved it. As a kid, I didn't really care for it, but I remember that I would often take a sip anyway, as though checking to see if my taste had changed. It wasn't until my college days, however, that the seed of Cha Dao was planted in my life.

I bought some green tea one day after reading about its health benefits, to complement my diet and exercise regimen at the time. Unconsciously, I chose to drink it at one of the best possible times: around dawn and before breakfast. What stood out to me was that it seemed intrinsically suited to the rising of a new sun. It was the only quiet time in my life then, and I soon found myself waking up more easily, earlier and looking forward to having tea. For some reason, though, I didn't explore tea any further, and remained ignorant of the unlimited potential in this so unassumingly planted seed—a seed that would finally germinate closer to its home in Taiwan.

Without effort or design, just vague inquiries here and there as I wandered Taiwan deciding where to live, I found myself walking through the door of Tea Sage Hut for the first time, only two months in the country. With all my impressions about tea being a hobby, business, or beverage, I was taken completely by surprise. Here was a place that vibrated with tea, where that quiet voice I had heard in my apartment was given volume and color and form in a hundred different ways. Here was a teacher who seemed not like someone who had 'gotten into tea' but rather like someone who had sprung up out of it, an embodied tea bush.

Less than two years later, I live just a stone's throw from the center, my home has two tea rooms and another room just to store my tea and teaware, and I spend every bit of my time and energy in serving, maintaining and making tea in the center and the tea spaces I've created. This fertilizer has sprouted the seed of tea that was planted in my heart back in America and it has now taken root, growing at a tremendous pace, even after years of dormancy. And like any good metaphorical seed, you could say that I have died to my old self, the change has been so great.

So the obvious question is, what happened? Why not just drink tea like before? Why all the fuss? Is this all necessary just to enjoy some peace and quiet? The tea I drank in college was so simple, without any ado. I sat in an armchair and read a book while the kettle (into which I simply threw the tea) boiled on the stove. Then I would put the book down and just sit and drink my mug there in the kitchen. The simplest answer is that the tea wants to be drunk in a way that respects its being. The tea space is at the request of the tea, which is our distinguished and honored guest whom we wish to please.

As a result, I have been rewarded with an ever deepening conversation with tea, and it teaches me so much more now than how to enjoy a simple cup of quiet in the morning. Rather than asking the tea to bring quiet to me, I'm learning how to quiet my own mind so that I can better hear what the tea has to say. In this deepening connection, I've learned more of the interconnectedness of all things, and my compassion and humility towards other beings has grown. My mind and my home have grown less and less cluttered, and I've even seen years-old physical ailments slowly wither away into nothingness. And as these many buds grow and blossom with new insights, I've found that a few have even been cultivated to the point that I can begin to pick them and steep them amongst the leaves in my pot, greatly improving the quality of my tea!

But without a doubt, most rewarding of all has been the opportunity to participate in giving others a chance to experience the same growth and transformation that I have, and this is why we emphasize the fact that we are learning to "serve tea" here, rather than make it for ourselves. After all, I remember what an impact the Center had on me when I first arrived. Everything in it springs up from listening to tea, and

so everything in it also promotes and assists visitors in listening to tea as well. I know that there isn't any detail that does not add to this, and so whether it be sweeping, mopping, carrying water and filling kettles or scrubbing the fishpond, I'm eager to help.

One of the great beauties of tea is that it covers the whole gamut of human experience, and there are teas happy to be drunk in every conceivable way. In that spirit, we offer a space here where anyone can come and converse with tea in their own way, to

whatever extent they wish. I know that many of you will find your way here and find a bit of what I have found, or even more, and I look forward to meeting you. In the meantime, however, I hope that you will drink deeply of this tea and continue to cultivate your own conversations with our mutual teacher—the Leaf...



# TEA WAYFARERS

*From now on, we plan to introduce one of the Global Tea Hut members to you each month in these newsletters. We hope that this helps us all get to know each other better. It's also to pay homage to the many manifestations that all this wonderful spirit and tea are becoming, as the tea is drunk and becomes human. The energy of the tea fuels some great work in this world, and we are so honored to show you some glimpses of such beautiful people and their tea. Of course, who better to start us off than the great Gregory Wendt? If you don't know him, you should. The following introduction was written by his good friend Jered Krause.*

Introducing “G-wendt.” I call him that because it sounds like the name of a magical man living in a magical place, and that's as accurate as anything I've got on Greg. He describes himself as a “translator”: translating the mystical, supernatural, spiritual and Divine into the parlance of our times, finance and business. Strange as it is, by day Greg is VP of Sustainable & Responsible Investing for *EP Wealth Advisors*, a billion dollar investment firm. Even stranger is that he does the same thing by night.

I don't mean he's a workaholic, but rather that he has one of the most harmonious integrations of work and life I've ever encountered. He's one of those rare magicians who seems to get paid to do what he loves and to almost seamlessly blend all the different parts of his life, until our usual mundane descriptions fall apart. Which brings me to tea...

Six months ago, tea for Greg was a nice beverage: Hot, sometimes tasty, good in the morning or evening. This afternoon as we sat drinking the first tea from Global Tea Hut, surrounded by gorgeous *Zisha* (purple-sand Yixing) teaware, talking about what Greg calls “Galactivation” and the cosmic intelligence transmitted by the tea leaves, I realized that Greg's so-called “translation skills” transcend those proposed on his business card. As a master translator, his skill really is understanding; listening; being present to meaning and content; and, moving that meaning and content from place to place as elegantly and

efficiently as possible. And that's what tea has become to Greg: a vehicle for translating the intelligence of the cosmos into the intelligence of the tea tree, and then into the intelligence of his own human form...

Greg Wendt is a financial advisor for responsible, green investment. He's also a tea lover, day and night. And he's one of our most beloved brothers, sitting right there across from you in this Global Tea Hut.

You can reach Greg at:  
**[Gwendt@epwealth.com](mailto:Gwendt@epwealth.com)**



# CENTER NEWS

The Global Tea Hut website now has a forum up, where we can all discuss this month's tea and ask or answer questions, as well as share our experiences. It is a great way to meet some of your brothers and sisters in the hut. Come and join us:

**[www.globalteahut.org/forum](http://www.globalteahut.org/forum)**



We are planning to launch a free video series of teachings this April, from our center here in Taiwan. Wu De will give some teachings on tea and share some life wisdom each week. We aren't sure where we will host the videos, but we are excited about them indeed. Any ideas?



There are currently around 40 people in Global Tea Hut, scattered around 10-12 countries—all drinking tea together each month. We are earning around 800 USD after fees, which is 200\$ short of paying the bills at our center. This isn't an issue, because we have local donations as well, but it means we are not yet earning enough to save towards our goals. We are sure that abundance is coming, though, and that a mountain retreat center is forecast in the *guas* of the Iching.



We have found that some people want to contribute but can't due to financial limitations. If you have a friend in such a situation, we have two solutions: first, the tea is not important. They can drink with us in spirit, lifting a bowl/cup of another tea. And the

newsletters are up on our website for free. Of course, they can still join the forum as well. Secondly, we plan to give two free one-year subscriptions to GTH for every 50 people that sign up.



Wu De is traveling to Siberia late March/early April to do some tea courses with our brothers and sisters there. It seems an amazing place for interest in Cha Dao, but there is actually a thriving tea community there. We are excited for our tradition to plant roots there, and to connect more deeply with our Russian brothers and sisters. Spread the news!



Let us know about what you think of Global Tea Hut so far, either by contacting us or expressing your thoughts on the new forum. We would love to hear your comments or criticism. We are here to serve and make this experience better for everyone, bringing us all closer together.

**[www.globalteahut.org](http://www.globalteahut.org)**  
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**[www.the-leaf.org](http://www.the-leaf.org)**

**Be happy!**

