

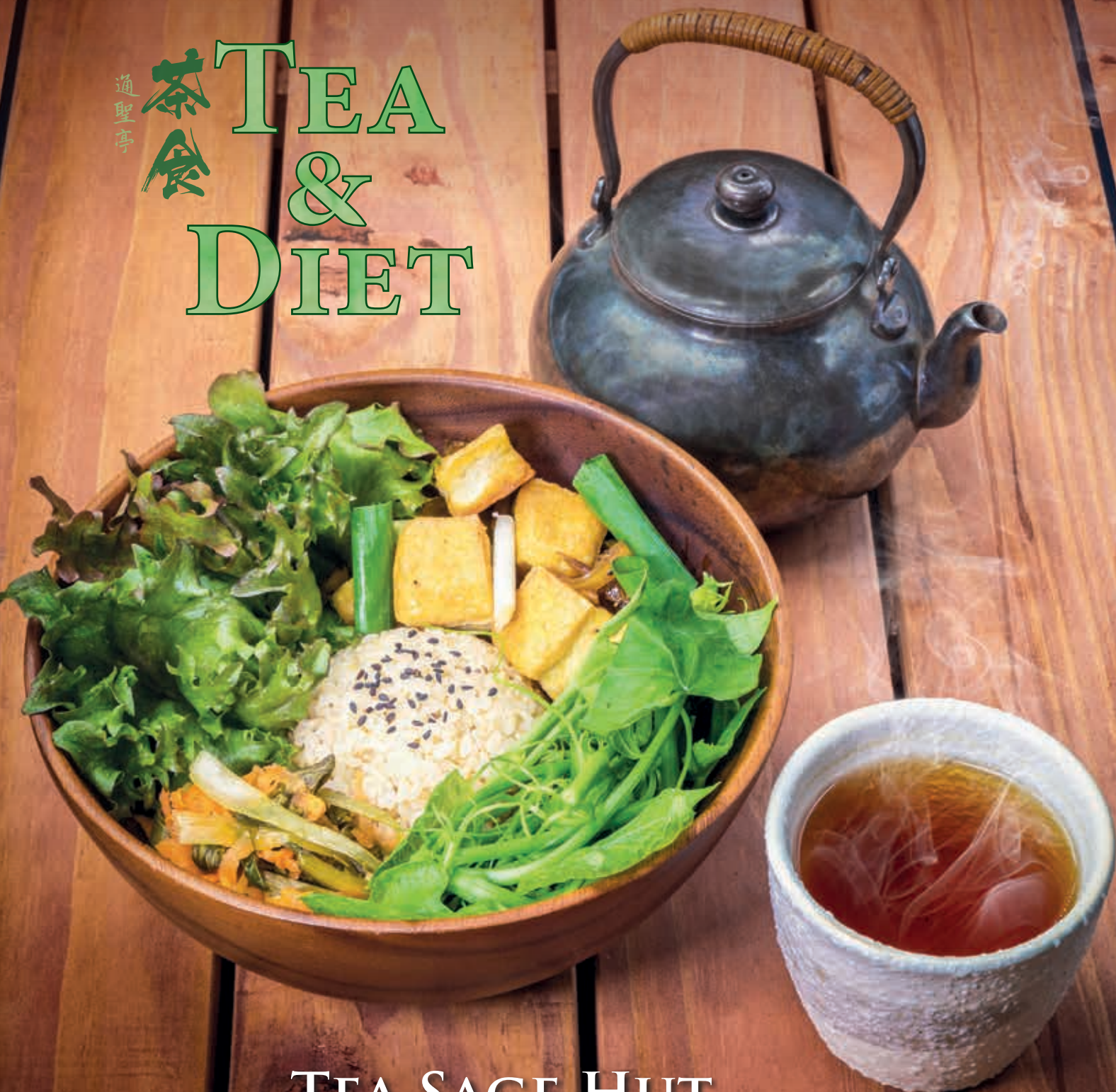
GLOBAL TEA HUT

國際茶亭

TEA & TAO MAGAZINE

January 2018

通聖亭
茶食
TEA
&
DIET



TEA SAGE HUT
DIETARY PHILOSOPHY & RECIPES



TIEGUANYIN

Many of our guests ask us over and over again about the wonderful food here at the Tea Sage Hut. We are very excited to continue sharing tea and food with you in January for the second year. And we needed a very delicious tea to accompany an issue on food, so we chose a delectable tieguanyin to share.

*Love is
changing the world
bowl by bowl*

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By the whole Tea Sage Hut team

*Hopefully, you can adapt our bowls to your diet at home, learning from our philosophy and cooking. Even otherwise, it is nice to know what we'll be serving at the Hut when you come for a course!



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"Tieguanyin," 2017 Traditional Oolong
Mingjian, Nantou, Taiwan

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Bo Wong, Australia



鐵觀音

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From the Editor

In January, it gets cold in Taiwan and we begin our weekly trip to the hot springs to soak our bones. As the weather gets colder and colder, we always reach for the aged sheng puerh, shou puerh and aged tieguan-yin. Something that we often do—especially in a thermos when we are at the hot springs—is mix a bit of dian hong red and shou puerh. It is nice to use about sixty or seventy percent shou puerh and then the rest is dian hong. Try a shou that is dark, rich and creamy when blending like this. The dian hong obviously means that it is not an evening tea anymore. You will find that this makes a stellar brew on a cold morning.

Hard to believe we have come to another year of Global Tea Hut! So much has changed around here. It is amazing to see all the growth, watching the magazine improve and the community grow. I still remember when Global Tea Hut filled the entire first floor of the Center at 150 members and took more time than any of us had. We therefore couldn't possibly imagine growing beyond 250 members, which seemed so huge at the time (we literally had no room for it). And now, we've crossed a thousand members and are planning to reach 10,000 by 2020, which will help us to build our bigger, better tea center, Light Meets Life. As I have said in previous issues, I know that this only means more work, but I am nevertheless motivated to build the new Center by the fact that our courses here at the Tea Sage Hut are constantly full and we are always turning people away. There is obviously a need for a new Center. Also, having a space architected from the ground up to be the world's only and best, absolutely free Tea Center and school is an important and historical step—one which will hopefully inspire other such Centers around the world!

This is going to be an amazing year of Global Tea Hut. We will travel together to some new tea regions, learning about new and amazing kinds of tea. We have already broken ground, publishing the largest-ever works on puerh, Taiwanese oolong and Liu Bao in the English language. We will continue that this year, exploring some new and rarer kinds of tea we have never discussed before. We will also continue our Classics of Tea series, moving up in time to the Qing Dynasty this time. There is also a plan to devote an issue to some important Chajin here in Asia, as well as a few famous tea houses that have been around long enough to merit an article or even a whole issue. Of course, we have the most stellar Annual Global Tea Hut trip planned for this spring, traveling to some of the most exciting tea regions in China. This time, we will be learning a lot about oolong tea, soaring with the black dragon. We are also working on a second tea tour around home here in Taiwan in the winter. This will be a smaller group, but should be exciting. Aside from that, there will be retreats and workshops around the world, continuing our efforts to spread Tea spirit and change the world bowl by bowl...

One of the most important experiments that a Chajin can conduct is to switch brewers mid-session—same tea, teaware, water and heat and the tea becomes profoundly different when you switch the brewer. This is like handing the same instrument and sheet music to two different musicians: you get two very different songs. In fact, the same musician plays the same song different every time. Such an experiment is profound, as is a bridge to tea as a practice, a way of life... a Dao. Through this insight, I realize that I am the tea. I recognize that my lifestyle affects my ability to make nice tea. The more peaceful I am, for example, the better my tea. The same goes for our physical health, which creates better body mechanics, more grace movements and posture—all of which certainly affects our tea. And, of course, diet is very relevant to this.

Along with sharing some of the simple dietary philosophy we have here at the Center, one of the things guests ask for the most often when they visit the Center is recipes to make our delicious and nutritious food at home. This issue is devoted to many of the simple recipes we use at the Center to cultivate ourselves, body, mind and spirit. We hope that no matter what your dietary needs are, you will find some dish that inspires you and brings joy into your home and family. Like tea, food is a great way to make new friends and celebrate the old. May this whole month be a feast that brings us all closer together!




Before starting any diet, you should speak to your doctor. You must not rely on the information in this magazine as an alternative to medical advice from your doctor or other professional healthcare provider. If you have any specific questions about any medical matter, you should consult your doctor or other professional healthcare provider.

—Further Readings—

This month, as a very special bonus, Connor has written a commentary on the “Five Reflections” of Zen, which we say over every meal here at the Center. His commentary offers some great insight to food and self-cultivation. We will be posting his wonderful article on the blog, which is accessible via the website.

TEA OF THE MONTH

 ver the course of this issue, we are going to explore diet, food and some of the Center's food philosophy as well as recipes. To accompany such a culinary exploration, we need a delicious tea—one that excites us in fragrance and aroma, bringing delicious cups to the table along with all the food we're going to be cooking. For that, we decided on one of our favorite types of tea, Tieguanyin.

Tieguanyin originally comes from Anxi, in southern Fujian. Like all oolong, it began in the Qing Dynasty (1644–1911). Oolong tea processing evolved in Wuyi, in northern Fujian, and slowly spread south to other tea-growing regions, like Anxi. Though oolong tea began in the Qing Dynasty, tea farming in Anxi is ancient. There are many wild trees there, and one that is over a thousand years old, with a six-meter crown shining beneath the sky as testament to the history and heritage of Anxi tea.

The most renowned Qing emperor Qianlong (1711–1799) was a great tea lover. He loved Tieguanyin and is said to have been responsible for spreading its acclaim throughout the empire, and also for naming it. According to legend, Tieguanyin was discovered by a contemporary farmer named Wei Yin (魏飲, ca. 1700–1775), and was originally called “Wei Yin Tea” until the emperor renamed it. In the coming pages, we will share the legend of how Tieguanyin got its name, but the obvi-

ous reasons are the thick, juicy leaves of this varietal, as well as its strong and powerful flavor and aroma, and the patience of this tea—one of the longest-lasting teas there are. The vibrancy of the tree, the processed leaves and the liquor suit the name, in other words.

The first waves of immigration from the Mainland to Taiwan were from Fujian, and the colonists quickly recognized that Taiwan had the perfect terroir for tea production. They began bringing seeds over to start tea production, encouraged by the Western market, which was looking to expand. Anxi Tieguanyin varietals and processing were brought to Muzha in northern Taiwan, where they continue today. Ball-shaped Tieguanyin oolong-style processing then moved from Muzha to central Taiwan, where it slowly adapted to suit the varietals, leaves and terroir of Taiwan. As oolong production in Taiwan grew into its own maturity, the processing became more and more unique, which brings us to an important point worth reviewing.

Many authors, especially in English, write that “all tea is *Camellia sinensis* and that the differences in teas are all in the processing.” This is very misleading. First of all, as we have discussed often, many species of *Camellia* are used to make tea, though *Camellia sinensis* is certainly the most popular. It is also important to remember that processing methods developed over time in response to certain varietals of tea, which in turn evolved in response

to a particular terroir. Farmers were learning, honing their skills through some trial and error, as well as a deep connection to a life of tea, trying to process their local varietals in a way that would highlight their greatest qualities and fulfill the tea's potential. It would not be correct to say that oolong, for example, is just a method of processing tea, because that processing was advanced to suit certain varietals of tea. And as varietals have changed, moving from place to place (whether naturally or carried by people), so too have processing skills adapted and changed, creating a whole array of different teas.

Nowadays, there is a lot of experimentation. Farmers process teas from one region in the way that they are made elsewhere. This trend is due to faster communication, more access to information and a greater connection to the rest of the tea world. And some of this innovation is great. Some new teas sparkle with spirit and feel like they were made with the insight that has always pushed any art forward. Others are created out of marketing—to make cheap and inferior copies of the much better original. In other words, the new experiments do occasionally result in amazing teas, but the majority of such teas don't turn out well. A Taiwanese tea processed like a Wuyi cliff tea might be a nice tea in its own right, but it will never compare to a real cliff tea, at least not by cliff tea standards, and a connoisseur of cliff tea will always be able to tell them apart.



Tieguanyin



Mingjian, Nantou, Taiwan



2017 Traditional Oolong

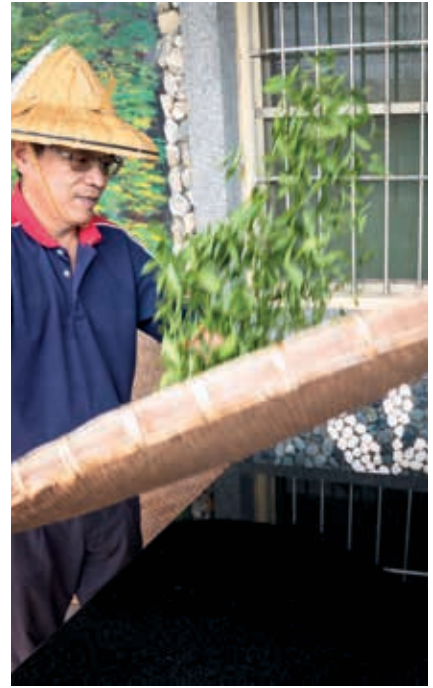


Taiwanese



~500 Meters





Tieguanyin Processing

Unlike most other kinds of tea, Tieguanyin is best picked at noon, rather than early in the morning. The strong leaves of this hearty varietal thrive in the sun. The leaves are thick and strong. Like all oolong teas, the best method is to pick one bud and two leaves in sets, though most farmers nowadays pick larger sets to increase yield.

Traditional oolong production is semi-oxidized, usually between 40% and 70%, with some outliers like Eastern Beauty, which has heavier oxidation. All of the processing steps in Tieguanyin take into account the thicker, tougher leaves of this varietal, which furthers the argument we just discussed that processing techniques evolve to suit certain varietals. This starts with the withering, which is usually piled more deeply than other types of oolong. The outdoor withering is

usually short, and depends on the sun. The indoor withering also lasts longer than other kinds of oolong and can take as long as fifteen to even twenty-four hours.

The most defining step in all oolong production happens during the indoor withering, as the leaves are shaken every hour or so to bruise the edges of the leaves. This breaks the cells down, oxidizes the edges more and makes the tea more flavorful. The best oolong leaves will have a red rim around the edges after brewing, but this can only really be achieved when the processing is done by hand. Most oolong nowadays is shaken in large tumblers, which do not bruise the leaves so perfectly or uniformly, and rarely just on the edges. The withering and shaking will continue until the farmer is satisfied with the aroma of the tea leaves, which are checked regularly.

The oxidation process is then arrested by firing. (This is technically not true as oxidation will continue in the tea indefinitely, which is what happens when you age an oolong tea, but it does slow to such a molasses drip that we can, for all practical purposes, say that it is halted.) The firing of oolong is done in large metal woks, traditionally heated from underneath using a wood-fire stove. The duration of the firing depends on the moisture content in the leaves.

Immediately after the firing, the tea is rolled. Tieguanyin is a ball-shaped oolong, which means it is rolled in a twisted-up cloth bag. Traditionally, this was done with the feet, though nowadays the ball-shaped bag is rolled over metal ridges by a machine that presses the bag down and spins it in a circle. This vigorous rolling is yet another example of the ways in which

鐵觀音從葉子到杯子

THE PROCESSING OF TIEGUANYIN FROM TREE TO CUP

Plucking

Withering
(indoors and outdoors)

Shaking
(lan qing, 浪青)

Firing
(sha qing, 殺青)

Rolling/Shaping
(ro nian, 揉捻)

Roasting Dry
(zhou shui bei, 走水焙)

Roasting
(hong pei, 烘培)

Re-Roasting

Sorting
(fan ji, 分級)

Packaging

Preparation

Cloud-Soaring
(yun teng, 雲騰)



processing techniques have evolved to suit certain kinds of tea. The rolling of tea is to break down the cells and bring the juices to the surface for brewing. It also shapes the tea. Tieguanyin is, of course, the first ball-shaped oolong. The thickness of the leaves means that the striped-oolong-rolling, across ridged bamboo trays, like the first-ever oolong, which is Wuyi cliff tea, would not be strong enough to break the cells of Tieguanyin leaves down. Also, the shape wouldn't hold, since the leaves are so tough. A more rigorous rolling was required. Rolling cliff tea in a bag like that would damage the more delicate leaves used to make *yancha*.

After the rolling, the tea is roasted at a low temperature to dry it out. Eventually, it will get a finishing roast. Traditionally, Tieguanyin is the most roasted of all oolongs, often for up to seventy-two hours! You can think of

the traditional processing of oolong as a glass in which the oxidation and roast work together to fill it up, starting with the fact that such oolongs were oxidized 40–70%. In other words, an oolong oxidized to 40% has more room for roast, whereas one oxidized to 70% has less roast. (This doesn't apply to modern, lightly-oxidized oolongs, which are fragrant, light and floral, and a heavy roast would therefore just burn them.) Back in the day, farmers would often send *maocha* (unfinished, rough tea) to shops who would roast it to their customers' tastes. Roasting skills are often very secret, passed down from father to son and held as dear as great recipes at famous restaurants. With the popularity of Taiwanese oolong, Anxi Tieguanyin has also started to trend towards more lightly-oxidized and roasted teas, making many green varietals these days, which brings us to the

issue of what traditional processing is and the changes in oolong production in Taiwan.

Traditional Oolong Processing in Taiwan

In the 1970s, everything was "Made in Taiwan" the way it is in China today. This industry brought prosperity to Taiwan. As Emperor Huizong said in the *Treatise on Tea* we published in April 2017, it is only when the land is prosperous and peaceful that people can pursue art and culture like tea. And as Taiwanese people started developing, and food, shelter and life were all abundant, they started refining and exploring their rich Chinese heritage and culture, including, of course, tea, teaware, brewing methodology, etc.

There was a boom in tea, which drove demand through the roof. Small, aboriginal tea farms slowly started changing into large plantations, owned by the families themselves or sold to larger corporations. This demand, and the need for greater quantities of tea, drove tea production into territory that was previously uncharted for oolong tea, facing new obstacles and challenges along the way.

Traditional oolong processing is the most complicated and skilled of all tea production. This is not to say that it takes little skill to make a fine green tea, for example. It does. But traditional oolong is more complicated and delicate and there's a narrow margin of error—misprocessed leaves are rigorously down-sorted (even more so in less profitable yesteryears). It takes decades to master. In fact, it will be decades before a son is allowed to supervise an entire production with confidence. And one thing we all love about tea is that it comes to us an unfinished leaf. So much of the quality is changed with brewing skills, in other words. Those of you with experience brewing traditionally processed oolong will know just how finicky, sensitive and ultimately unforgiving it can be. It requires the most skill (gongfu) to prepare well, and sometimes preparing it well makes all the difference between a glorious and sour cup! Taking decades to master processing that requires great skill, a tight margin of error and the necessity of brewing skills to make a fine cup are all not conducive to increasing quantity and accessibility to the mainstream demand for tea that occurred at the time. Farmers needed tea production that was mechanized and easy to master, allowing employees to be trained in a matter of weeks; they needed a wide margin of error, so that even slightly misprocessed leaves would go unnoticed; and they needed the tea to be easy to prepare, so that consumers could put it in a thermos, a tea bag, a mug or a pot and it would turn out fine. They needed lightly-oxidized oolong.

Light oxidation and little to no roasting produces a greener kind of oolong that is easier to make, has less margin of error and can be brewed any way you like, maintaining a bright, flowery fragrance that appeals to the mainstream. This shift in tea produc-

tion later moved to the Mainland, as well. It changed a lot in the tea world, including teaware, tea brewing and even puerh scholarship. As a result of these changes, many Taiwanese tea lovers began switching to puerh because they didn't like these domestic changes. Their interest reinvigorated a deteriorating puerh culture.

While lightly-oxidized oolong can be wonderful, it is often very fragrant without much of a body. It is also rarely produced in a healthy, sustainable way that is good for the Earth. Most of the time, it is more like a tasty appetizer than a good meal. You may have prepared a lightly-oxidized oolong for guests and then looked around wondering what tea to drink next afterwards. Tea lovers are rarely satisfied by such a tea, in other words. (That also suits the producers, of course, since they then drink more tea.) There are exceptions to this, but usually traditionally-processed oolong tea is more rich, full-bodied and satisfying to drink. There's a reason that farmers adapted their processing the way they did, to bring out the best in oolong varieties; and there's also a reason why it went relatively unchanged for centuries. Creating lightly-oxidized oolong did breathe some fresh air into the oolong world, resulting in many new innovations and some wonderful new teas, but for a while, the new swallowed the traditional whole.

When the market started, somewhat mistakenly regarding altitude as equivalent to quality, lower-altitude farms lost a lot of patronage. Some switched to organic and/or traditional processing to make themselves stand out from greener, high-mountain oolong tea. As a result, traditional processing has once again become popular in Taiwan, which is a great thing for those of us who appreciate it more. No matter how you feel about lightly-oxidized oolong, it is nice to have both. We just hope that more of the greener oolong producers will start making the switch to organic, Earth-friendly agriculture, as it is definitely not a genre known for clean tea (which is, of course, another reason we don't drink much of it at the Center).

It is very difficult these days to get organic Tieguanyin from either Anxi or Muzha. We know a few organic farmers in Muzha, like the producer

of our Light Meets Life aged Tieguanyin, but their tea is far too expensive for Global Tea Hut. In order to create a Tieguanyin that was delicious, very clean and affordable, we turned to our dear Master Xie. Wu De and Master Xie once again exchanged samples back and forth for three months, discussing and tweaking what they wanted to create, which resulted in this wonderful Tieguanyin. Before we turn to our Tea of the Month, however, we should introduce Master Xie once again.





茶 Si Ji Chun (四季春), or “Four Seasons of Spring” is a direct descendant of Tieguanyin trees in Muzha and one of the “Three Daughters” of Taiwanese tea. Though you could perhaps call Si Ji Chun a hybrid, it is a natural, wild varietal. And since it is a more natural varietal, it is heartier than the other daughters (Jing Shuan, 金萱); and Tsui Yu, 翠玉). “Si Ji Chun” could also be translated as “Four Seasons Like Spring,” as testament to the fact that these trees can produce as much in other seasons as they do in spring. It is also thought to be the youngest of the Three Daughters, coming into commercial production in the 1980s. Si Ji Chun does not have a Taiwan classification number, since it evolved naturally. The leaves of Si Ji Chun are round in shape, with veins that shoot off at 30- to 60-degree angles. The leaves have a light green hue. The buds of Si Ji Chun are often a gorgeous reddish hue when they emerge, which is due to a pigment called anthocyanins (we discussed that in great depth in the August issue of this past year). The reddish buds are sweet, but also have a very strong breadth and strength, as does Si Ji Chun’s ancestor, Tieguanyin. This makes it an ideal choice for making our Tea of the Month, since there are not any Tieguanyin trees in Mingjian.





Iron Goddess of Mercy

慈悲女神聞聲救苦

Like most Tea stories, this one starts with a farmer... Wei Yin was simple, and like Tea, his best qualities were hiding in plain sight. He went about his chores, tending his tea trees with the same reverence his father and father's father had, as his people had done beyond memory to the legends that Wei Yin would one day join. Every day, he would spend hours in the fields or quietly walking to and from them. There were holidays, weddings and funerals, but most days Wei spent pruning, harvesting, processing and carrying tea to market. Wei Yin didn't talk much, not even to his own wife, but not in a pensive or unfriendly way. He was just simple, shy and uncomplicated, which is to say pure of heart.

When Wei was in his fifty-fourth spring, there was a great drought and many people lost their tea farms, let alone their vegetables and grain—for everyone knows tea is a tree heartier than most. When the following year threatened to be the same, some of his neighbors packed up, abandoned their homes and left to start new lives in the South. But Wei couldn't leave. He had a secret.

When Wei Yin was young, at the time before he was married and when his father was still alive, he once came upon an old hermit on one of the paths that meandered through the forested hills to the tea gardens. Immediately, the young man knew that the old man was special—maybe even an immortal. He followed the old hermit back to his home, which was a small temple in the forest near Wei's neighbor's tea garden. The old man lived in a tiny shrine devoted to the Goddess of Mercy, Guanyin. He told Wei that the temple had been there for centuries. The old cast iron statue certainly looked worn enough to have been there that long. It was the oldest thing Wei had ever seen.

Over the years, Wei visited the old monk regularly, bringing him the choicest tea from their harvest and sometimes rice. The old man would sometimes teach Wei life lessons by telling him old stories, though most of the time they just sat together enjoying the peace of the forest shrine.

Years later, when the old man grew very ill, he told Wei that his young apprentice had gone traveling years earlier and never returned. He told him that he needed Wei to tend the shrine after he was gone. "For not a single day," the master began in a frail voice, "not since even my master's master was young, has there been a day without candle and incense on this altar for Guanyin. These prayers must continue." Wei was honored to tend the temple. He would leave early every day and stop on the way to the fields to pray, sitting beneath the altar for one hour a day. Over time, this practice began to change Wei. He grew more and more soft. He wasn't distant or withdrawn, nor would his neighbors have ever suggested he was unfriendly. "He's a quiet man," they would have said. "And for some reason, I like him."

When the third year without rains came, Wei's wife became very afraid, especially since Wei continued spending a large portion of their savings on candles and incense to tend the shrine. When she would confront him, however, Wei would say that now was the time for more prayers, not less. "No drought lasts forever. And if we cannot accept the times when the Heavens give us less, how will we rightfully celebrate the times when we are given more?" And since there was a lot less farm work to do, Wei did just that: spending more and more time at the little shrine in prayer and meditation. He continued to offer Guanyin the finest teas, candles and incense he could buy, despite his dwindling savings. Once a month, he would carry firewood to town to sell for pittance, which was enough to buy some rice for him and his wife.

One night, Wei was at the small shrine praying. He had walked all the way to market that day after chopping wood all morning and was therefore extremely weary. His eyes flickered like the candles and he strayed into a dream... He was walking with his old master, just a step or two behind out of respect, as he had always done. The old man's white topknot was shining, and he had a translucence that was different from how Wei Yin would have remembered him when he was awake. They were walking along a path by the riverbank, where they had often wandered, slowly, as people stroll through Nature when they are free. But in the dream, Wei could sense a purpose to the old man's steps, as if he was taking him somewhere. Soon, they left the path and began walking up through the underbrush. The way was steep, and the walk soon became hard work. After some time, they came upon three boulders. The old man stroked the first fondly, patting it the way you would an old friend's back. When they walked around the stone, Wei Yin couldn't believe his eyes, for there in a small clearing sat Guanyin herself!

She was more gorgeous than anything he had ever seen. The white of her dress shone like the purest moonlight embroidered with dew. Her skin was porcelain and Her eyes shone like diamonds—clear and sharp, but full of the strongest love and kindness he had ever experienced. It was as if every loving glance of his mother, every smiling eyes of a friend and all the caring gazes of his mother were all in Her eyes. Wei Yin fell to his knees and cried. He cried for the joy of Her. She gently raised his tear-streaked face to Hers, and through the warp and woof of the tears, She glowed. With the softest and sweetest touch, she bent down and kissed his forehead. She smelled like cinnamon and osmanthus. "Wake up," she said in a voice more beautiful than the flute he had heard once in town. "Wake up... wake up..." echoed in his mind like temple chants, uplifting and calming him at once—like Tea... Wei Yin's eyes fluttered open and he was in the small shrine. The candle had burned low. He reached up and felt the wetness of his face, covered in tears.

The next morning Wei Yin left home before dawn. With a purposeful stride, he made his way to the river, now a rock bed due to the drought. After some time, he found the exact spot where he and the old man had left the path and cut into the underbrush. He struggled up the steep slope without a doubt in his heart, excited and smiling beneath the canopy of trees. After an hour or so of arduous hiking, he found what he sought: the three boulders. He pat the first one with a smile, just as his master had in the dream. With a reverent cautiousness, he made his way around. Sure enough, there was a small clearing just as he had dreamed. And there in the center of the clearing was the healthiest, greenest and brightest tea tree he had ever seen...

Years later, all the farmers for miles around had gardens full of trees descended from Wei Yin's strong tree and the tea from that region was known as "Wei Yin" tea. He never charged his neighbors for the seeds, wishing them health and prosperity when they came for them. He happily gave them away without even a thought of recompense, or even his reputation. He cared more about the old shrine. The hearty trees could survive even the harshest drought, produced much more tea than any tea tree the villagers had heard of, and, most importantly, the leaves were sweeter, more fragrant and delicious, tasting of cinnamon and osmanthus. Though the fame of this magical tea spread far and wide, and even to the Dragon Throne, Wei Yin was far too humble to feel responsible, and opposed to the tea bearing his name. He'd be happy to know we speak of her by her true name nowadays, though we haven't forgotten the power of faith...

MASTER XIE YUAN ZAI (謝元在)

Aside from providing this month's tea, which you are sure to love, Mr. Xie is a very important part of the scenery at our Center, and will be very important for many of you as well, because so many of our visitors come here with a curiosity about how tea is processed. It is very important to experience with your own hands just how difficult it is to make tea, so that in your own soreness you will develop a tremendous respect for the Leaf. This respect isn't just in the billions of years of evolution or in the Nature we always wax poetic about: the wind and rain, sun and moonshine, minerals, mountain and water that flow from roots to crown. It is also in the blood, sweat and tears of generation after generation of farmers. And there is a deep reverence in seeing just how much mastery, skill and, dare we say, art in the crafting of the Leaf. And so, with great joy we take as many of our guests as possible to a few different farms to try their hands at tea processing. It is amazing to make your own tea and take it home with you. If you didn't have enough reasons to come stay with us, here's another: Mr. Xie has formally invited each and every one of you to come to his farm and make tea, eat a nice lunch and take the tea you picked and crafted home with you!

Mr. Xie is a third-generation farmer in Mingjian, Nantou, central Taiwan. Mingjian is lower altitude, in the foothills of the central mountain range. In the last few decades, such lower-altitude tea has been adumbrated by the popularity of the teas grown higher up. Though areas like Hsinchu and Miaoli counties, where Eastern Beauty is grown, have struggled since high-mountain oolongs have come to dominate the market, Mingjian has prospered by providing lower-priced teas for export or large-scale production for the bottled tea market (often called "Ready to Drink," or "RTD"). Mr. Xie's family has grown small-scale productions of oolong tea through three lifetimes, since before the higher teas even existed, and certainly before pesticides existed in the world, let alone Taiwan.

When we discuss organic farming and the need to make changes in tea farming—as well as other kinds of agriculture—it's important to remember that the farmers are always the first victims. It is they who handle the agrochemicals in large amounts, and most directly. Furthermore, it is only by humanizing and befriending them that we can bring about change. We must include rather than exclude—educate rather than ostracize.

Like so many other farmers, Mr. Xie started to get the nagging (coughing, wheezing) feeling that these chemicals were harmful to his family, his community and his land. When his wife almost miscarried their second child in 1997, he had enough. Despite opposition from friends and family, Mr. Xie made a commitment to become an organic tea farmer, no matter the cost. He first attended some organic farming classes held by the MOA Organization.

From 1997 to 2000, Mr. Xie and his family struggled to maintain their principles. His tea was subpar and he lost most of his customers. His father, who had been worried when he suggested upsetting the status quo in the first place, was very critical of his decisions. Organic farming is difficult, and it requires a radical change in farming and processing methodology—changes that would take time to learn. Rather than give up, as many would have done, Mr. Xie got a part-time job as a painter and carpenter, working day and night—either painting or farming—to keep his family afloat. Finally, in the early 2000s, his acumen for organic farming improved to the point that he was able to take his teas to market again. Since then, he has gone on to win awards, been featured on TV and has even heard his father, now a sprightly eighty years old, bragging to others about how his tea is organic and good for the environment.

Mr. Xie's work hasn't stopped with his own farm. He knew that he would have to keep improving his skills, creating new and better teas, and help show his neighbors the value of organic farming, especially since their land and

his are close enough to influence each other. He formed a co-op with other farmers and began teaching locals to shift to organic methods, offering them equal shares in their combined enterprise. As more people have joined this local group, the incentive to do so has also increased. To date, more than twenty farmers in the Mingjian region are organic, including Mr. Xie's immediate neighbors.

Mr. Xie's kind heart shows in his teas. He cares deeply about tea and the Earth. He produces green tea, large- and small-leaf red tea, as well as several kinds of oolong, and all with great skill. He's generous with his tea, supporting our efforts selflessly. To us, he is an inspiration and a kind of hero—the kind not talked about enough these days. It's easy to follow the crowd, maintain the status quo; or to say, "I am just one person. What can I do?" It is difficult to face criticism from family and friends and stand up for what you believe to be right. The problem is that it is too easy for farmers to make more money with agrochemicals, and to do it with less work. And that's also why so many of them are overusing the fertilizers and pesticides, reducing the average life of a tea bush to fifteen years, all in the name of personal gain. Many of them get cancer from improper exposure to such chemicals, themselves victims as we mentioned above. Mr. Xie is a man who has seen a different way, and, more inspiringly, *lived* that way and taught others to do so. And that is the spirit of Tea!

✿ Visiting Mr. Xie's farm is a highlight of our ten-day courses, and one all the guests here relish. He is a simple, bright soul, and showers us with all the hospitality of a true Chajin. His efforts to shift Taiwan to organic are commendable, influencing so many of his neighbors to start one of the largest organic co-ops here!



茶 Tieguanyin 鐵觀音

There are no Tieguanyin trees in Taiwan outside of Muzha, so we had to turn to “Four Seasons of Spring (四季春, *Si Ji Chun*),” which is a direct descendant, and one of the “Three Daughters” of Taiwan. Though you could perhaps call *Si Ji Chun* a hybrid, it is a natural, wild varietal that arose in Muzha. Since it is a more natural varietal, it is heartier than the other daughters (*Jing Shuan*, 金萱; and *Tsui Yu*, 翠玉). This is a testament to one of the principles we always promote in these pages when discussing what we call “living tea,” which is that the leaves produced by man will never compare to Nature’s. It’s possible to further distinguish manmade teas by calling them “cultivars.” These trees yield buds at least four times a year, which is where its name comes from. “*Si Ji Chun*” might also be translated as “Four Seasons *Like* Spring,” referring to the fact that this bush can produce as much in other seasons as in spring. It is also thought to be the youngest of the Three Daughters, coming into commercial production in the 1980s. *Si Ji Chun* does not have a Taiwan classification number, since it evolved naturally. The leaves of *Si Ji Chun* are round in shape, with veins that shoot off at 30- to 60-degree angles. The leaves have a light green hue. The buds of *Si Ji Chun* are often a gorgeous reddish hue when they emerge, which is due to a pigment called anthocyanins (covered in the August 2017 issue).

Si Ji Chun has an exuberant, golden liquor that blossoms in a fresh, musky floweriness. It is tangy, with a slightly sour aftertaste, like the Tieguanyin varietal it evolved from. Many Taiwanese compare the aroma to gardenias. It works well as a heavily-roasted Tieguanyin, bringing many nuances in flavor and aroma to the cup that aren’t ordinarily there, which is perfect for an issue all about food. While it is an innovation in terms of producing Tieguanyin, it is not a great stretch, as *Si Ji Chun* is a wild offspring and therefore not too different from one of the wild varietals in Anxi. The floral undertones of the varietal bring complexity to an already rich tea. Tieguanyin is amongst the most aromatic and flavorful teas in the world and this month’s is no exception. You will be delighted by just how much each and every cup offers, let alone the shifts of a journey through a session.

This is a bright and very delicious cup, with deep orange, spicy brews. We love the way that Tieguanyin is both sweet and sour at the same time, with a pungent tanginess and the lasting aftertastes that only a well-made oolong can achieve. This tea is very deep, lasting many steepings, each with a complexity that is inviting. Such sessions are like journeys, soaring on the back of the “black dragon” through the clouds to visit distant vistas. We love drinking this tea in the late afternoon or early evening.

The Qi is cleansing, pushing outward from the center. It rises up in gusts and leaves you feeling refreshed. It is uplifting and airy, bringing movement towards the distant mountains. This is a beautiful and warming tea for the winter, bringing rich spice and vast movement with each session. We enjoy drinking such a tea over the course of a very free afternoon—hopefully with some nice tea companions!



Gongfu

Leaves in a bowl

Water: spring water or best bottled
Fire: coals, infrared or gas
Heat: as hot as possible, fish-eye, 95 °C
Brewing Methods: gongfu or leaves in a bowl (they make different brews)
Steeping: longer, flash, flash, then growing (you can get three flashes as well)
Patience: thirty steepings

茶 Make the flash steepings immediate. This requires some skill to master. It helps to have the kettle in the offhand, which increases fluency and allows you to raise the pot quickly.

Brewing Tips

This month's tea is best enjoyed gongfu. Gongfu tea and oolong tea were born, raised and matured into wisdom together. Though one can prepare many teas gongfu, there is no better tea for this brewing style than oolong. And Tieguanyin is amongst the original gongfu teas. Only gongfu brewing will bring out all the subtle nuances of this rich tea, let alone preserve the incredible patience over thirtyish steepings. However, if you cannot brew gongfu, don't have the right teaware or aren't interested, you can put a few balls in a bowl and watch them open for a few glorious bowls. In fact, we recommend doing this once even if you are brewing the tea gongfu, just for the experience. (It only takes two or three balls, after all, so you have plenty of tea for both.)

When we share a tea that is more conducive to gongfu brewing, we often use the word "flash" in the suggestions on the bottom of the opposite page. Some of you have asked us about this, so we thought we would explain in more detail. A flash steeping means an immediate steeping, without any time at all. In other words, we aim to decant the liquor without a pause at all—directly after showering the pot. With high-quality, fine teas, we usually start with a slightly longer initial steeping to open the leaves. Then there is a flash steeping once they are open, which is often the most delectable of steepings (though do not get stuck in only appreciating early steepings, as we have often discussed, for there is great joy in later steepings as well). A really fine tea can be flash steeped multiple times—even up to three or four times. Our Tea of the Month can usually respond well to two flash steepings. After the flash steepings, we can then start to increase the duration.

Try to learn from experience and don't be afraid to make mistakes. We usually avoid offering brewing tips in terms of time, temperature or amount in grams as these force us to rely on scales, timers and thermometers. These devices can make things easy, but become crutches towards real skill (gongfu). Also, brewing tea in such a way can interfere with the mindfulness we cultivate through a tea practice, let alone the ceremonial ambiance, if you enjoy either of these. Learn by brewing. Gauge the amount by the tea and pot and steep by feeling. Practice with this month's tea, increasing steeping time after the flashes through the heart. Listen to the tea...



通聖亭

Tea Sage Hut





愛之食

Loving-Food

A TEA-INFUSED DIET

茶人: Wu De

There is more to the old saying that we are what we eat than just the obvious fact that what we consume determines our physical constitution. Especially in the modern age, diet is as much a philosophy, a way of life, as it is sustenance. Throughout history, our ancestors ate what was available to them, without as much selection as we have. In an age of abundance, we spend a lot of time and energy deciding on a diet, which affects our orientation to life. We can focus on the flavors, the health benefits or even a spiritual philosophy, which we use to navigate our food choices. Along with the copiousness of food choices, there is also a wealth of information on what is and is not healthy—an overwhelming barrage of often-contradictory data, such as studies endorsed by food producers and other agendas. This can be frustrating and affect our health. But there is a compass that can help steer us into our optimal physical well-being.

Because diet has become such an important aspect of our personal identities and philosophies, rather than the simplicity of eating whatever is local to us, the topic of diet itself is rather controversial. People nowadays have strong views about what to eat and when. And we all have different needs based on our lifestyle and makeup. This means that one can only share one's experience in the hopes that some of one's wisdom will be valuable to others. Perhaps some portion of my experience in developing a healthy diet for myself will also be useful to you, though probably not all of what I have to say. I will try to keep this discussing focused on very general principles in the hopes that sharing will be helpful

to more of you, my beloved tea community. Of course, all of what I am sharing here is my own experience and should therefore be taken as such. I am not a physician of any kind. We all must take responsibility for our own bodies, health and happiness.

As this is a tea magazine, I will also focus on the areas of diet that I feel have been directly impacted by my tea practice. I think the problems with the world of food are very analogous to tea: both worlds are full of misinformation and tea and food also require further research. Tea and diet are furthermore often studied with a commercial agenda, and one finds that studies are published to promote a certain agenda, like “green tea is anti-cancerous” or “dairy is good for you,” and the published research is paid for by businessmen who approach scientists with a conclusion they want proven. Perhaps green tea is anti-cancerous, but true science always starts with a hypothesis, not a conclusion. Such studies are always suspect. But Tea has taught me some things about diet, and many of the methods I cultivated in learning to evaluate tea also apply to food. For example, I find that the Ten Qualities of a Fine Tea, which we often discuss in this magazine, can be very helpful for evaluating the quality of food as well. Here are some of the things Tea has taught me about life and diet.

The Instrument

Since so much of the tea world is marketing, we need to have a method for evaluating tea independent of the story that surrounds any given tea. Stories about a tea—where it came from,

茶人飲食

茶教我們如何吃和健康生活

素



Giving dietary advice can cause controversy, as we all have unique bodies and lifestyles. Our modern abundance has allowed us to create philosophies surrounding food, rather than just eating what is available. In this article, we will explore some general principles that a tea lifestyle teaches us about diet, without mentioning any specifics. Hopefully, this will mean that all of you will find something useful in this article. Of course, we aren't doctors and our dietary experience should be understood as our own life wisdom, shared in the hopes of helping you with your health.

how old the trees were or who processed it—these stories are wonderful when shared amongst friends, but not so great when they are used to market a tea. I guarantee that your favorite tea has a story. Maybe you found it in a special shop or got it from a friendly source. And sharing such a story with friends over tea enhances the experience. Telling tea stories, old and new, over a cup of fine tea is something every Chajin enjoys. However, we can all grow jaded by vendors using such stories to sell tea. For that reason, we have to learn to use our own experience to evaluate a tea for purchase. “The truth is in the cup,” as my teacher always says. And a sensitivity to one’s own body through a tea and meditation practice has also helped me more than anything else to cultivate a healthy diet.

Our bodies are marvelous instruments of experience and wisdom. One of the most important aspects of a tea practice is that it opens the dialogue of nonverbal communication again. And opening that book is an opportunity to read the greatest and deepest book ever written, for no matter how wise the teachings of humankind (even the Buddha), they do not compare to the teachings of the mountains—millions of years in the making. No matter how powerful the chant (even the almighty Heart Sutra), it pales in comparison to the chants of the stars, whose light-songs have rung uninterrupted for billions of years. All that we know about this universe, from science to spirituality, we learned from Nature. Observing and exploring Nature is the only truth there is. And this applies as much to what is inside, and the workings of our bodies, as it does to our exploration of the world around us.

As you read these words, your body is performing millions of functions from the subatomic to the chemical level: your heart and liver function on their own, as your brain releases hormones, and so on, and so forth. Depending on how we mark our beginnings, these bodies were either formed billions or millions of years ago, for these very atoms that make up my body were born in a star many billions of years ago; or, if we want to look through the lens of organic evolution, then millions of years of growth and change, adaptation and change

have gone into the creation of this very body that is my only life. And it is wise, indeed. One of my favorite Zen proverbs is, “The life force that breathes this body a certain amount of times when I am in deep sleep is the same life force that turns the autumn leaves red,” which speaks to this philosophy—that the evolutionary adaption and, in a manner of speaking, the wisdom that created this body is the same wisdom that created all life on Earth. My body is very wise, in other words.

Our bodies are the doorway to nonverbal communication, and nothing inspires the connection between these bodies, our instruments for exploring the world, more than when something of Nature (like tea) meets our senses in such perfect harmony, bringing sensual joy. When a creation of Nature is so perfectly fitted to our bodies, these ideas become quite profound—experientially so. Learning to listen to our bodies is paramount in cultivating our ability to truly understand tea, and to find a healthy diet as well. This doesn’t mean that one shouldn’t explore dietary research, or learn about tea for that matter. The mind is a part of the body, after all, and listening to one’s reason is as important as any other part of the body. But in this age of information, conceptual information has taken over a disproportionate amount of our life, controlling everything. We study and create diets based on data, breaking the world down into amino acids, proteins and calories without enough connection to the actual, physical sensations of our bodies, which is to say the nonverbal communication. My teacher always said that it’s not that eating junk food makes one insensitive, but rather that one must be insensitive to eat junk food. In other words, eating such food means we are not listening to our bodies, which will send messages that such food is not in our interest.

In order to find a healthy diet, one must develop a sensitivity to the body itself, listening to its wisdom. Then, we can combine this with information, data and research. This means using our reason and our intuition in harmony, which is a deep life lesson and can be applied to all areas of life. In order to access these subtle messages of the body, we will need to cultivate an ability to quiet the mind, for these noisy thoughts are often so loud that



the softer, quieter messages of Nature and our bodies cannot be heard above the din. For this, we should practice tea ceremony, meditation or other quiet, Yin techniques that still the mind. When the mind softens to a whisper, or becomes silent altogether, the teachings of our bodies and of Nature become clear.

When I was young, I would visit natural places of beauty and have fun, recognizing their glory, but still feeling apart from them. Now, such places communicate to me, sometimes in an overwhelming way. I have since learned to listen to the nonverbal messages and quiet my mind enough to hear the world around me and inside me. I haven’t yet mastered this. There is still plenty of work to be done, and I know that the wisdom of the world is forever beyond me, which means I can always learn from this life, even on my last day. (The Japanese call this philosophy of perpetual growth “*kaizen*,” and it is worth reading up on.)



簡單樸素的

SIMPLICITY

Many of you know that I have gone through a great physical transformation this year, losing a lot of weight and getting fit. A large part of this was in applying these messages to the research I had done. Sometimes it can be hard to distinguish the body's messages from our cravings. There are times where my cravings are signals of my body's needs, but other times a craving is just a craving. I try to find a way around the craving for rich foods that aren't healthy for me by eating healthy foods first and telling myself that if I still want some peanut butter, I can have some after lunch. Even if I do then decide to eat some, it is always just a little and part of a balanced diet.

The most important factor in finding my own healthy diet was learning to balance research and dietary education with an intuitive ability to listen to my body. I developed this ability through my tea practice, which really does require the same skills. As I learned to listen to Tea speaking to

my body through my senses—of taste, smell and touch mostly—my sensitivity to food and its relationship to my body's needs has also developed. As I meditate, focusing on my breathe and body sensations, I also hone and sharpen the clarity of my body's voice. And then, I try to cultivate the strength and heart to heed my body's wisdom and make appropriate choices. Sometimes that's even harder than becoming sensitive to the body's wisdom in the first place! But the more I experience, the easier it becomes, since I more fully feel the effects of making unskillful decisions and choosing food with my mouth instead of my body.

Simplicity

One of the tea lessons I value above all the many, many ways that Tea has impacted my life is my growing esteem for the ordinary. The more tea I drink, the simpler life becomes. When

I don't have an issue, I drink tea, and when there is a challenge, I drink tea. If we spend our lives waiting for the special times when things go our way and all is fine, we miss out on all the average, ordinary moments that are the real pith of our time on Earth. We will spend much more of our time walking, brushing teeth and making lunch than we will on special trips to exotic locales or other exciting and fortuitous times. Tea has taught me that the ordinary is never, ever really ordinary. Every moment is special. There is always magic afoot. We are right now whizzing through space at thousands of kilometers per hour on a giant blue ball filled with fire! And, as we already discussed, these gorgeous bodies have been billions (or at least millions) of years in the making, with precious eyes and breaths, heart and hands to live. The more tea I drink, the more I understand how precious each moment is, including this very one—these very words shared between us.



均衡協調的 BALANCE

With an appreciation for the simple things in life, I can cultivate a joyful approach to all of life. Most of the time, we mistakenly wait for the world to make us happy, finding joy in the times when our desires are fulfilled and things go our way. But joy can also be cultivated. We can develop our joy, learning to find gratitude and richness in each and every moment.

As Tea has helped me simplify my life, teaching me that less is indeed more, She has also helped me to simplify my diet. As I said at the outset of this article, most of the confusion in our diet stems from too much complexity—too many choices. We now have access to food from all over the world and are constantly barraged with data from all fronts that is far too often contradictory. For me, the best approach to a healthy diet has been to radically simplify all this. I eat whole foods. Since we are discussing simplicity, I'll put it simply: If the ingredients look like the kinds of things in my great-grandma's kitchen, that is healthy food and if it reads like a science textbook, I avoid it. Diet really can be that easy!

The complexity, confusion and complication that we face when researching dietary advice also applies to the modern methods of food production. For thousands of years, people produced food on farms and brought it to market, where city-dwellers would buy the produce and take it home to cook. When my father was young, he had relatives in Florida that would bring oranges to them in Ohio for Christmas. Some of his friends had never had an orange, and my father would be king for a day, bringing one to show-and-tell. Nowadays, everything is so confused. The food is still made at farms, but then, instead of going to a market where it is sold, it is taken to a factory and mixed with artificial ingredients. We then build other factories to produce the machinery used in those factories, more factories to make the packaging materials and even more factories to build trucks to carry all this stuff around between factories... This senseless complication of what should be simple also deteriorates the nutritional value of our food.

If we saw what goes on in factories, we wouldn't want such processed food.

They don't take simple, whole ingredients and cook with them as you do in your kitchen. They actually don't cook much at all. Food factories aren't filled with chefs, though they may have some on their staff; they are filled with scientists and laboratories. And our health and happiness plays no part in their research, development and production of food products. They are profit-driven to use artificial flavors/ingredients that are cheaper than natural ones, to preserve food longer and to add sugar, fat and oil to make the food more desirable to us. They care about their profits, not our health. And all too often, this whole process damages the environment as well, which further deteriorates our health and quality of life.

Diet doesn't have to be complicated. Eat whole foods. Cook with ingredients straight from a farm, and one that didn't harm the environment and pollute our ability to create more food and pass on a green, healthy Earth to our descendants. Just like tea, the best food is sustainable, organic and grown in balance with Nature. Also like tea, we could speak of "living food," grown in



biodiversity rather than monoculture, grown without agrochemicals and with a healthy relationship between humans and the environment. Simple foods are always the best choice for me. In fact, sometimes the best food is no food.

Fasting

Sometimes I feel like the best question for me is not what to eat, but whether to eat at all. Our ancestors didn't live in such abundance, with food around at all times. Much of our obesity issues stem from our evolutionary makeup: we developed a psychological preference for the rarest foods in Nature, which are fats and sugars, as well as an inherent ability to store these substances for longer since they are so rare—or at least were. When sugar and fat become abundant, and life grew more sedentary, so many of us (myself included) have come to face problems with being overweight, which affects our health, longevity and, worse yet, our quality of life. Without as much food available, there were always periods of fasting during the millions of

years that our bodies were evolved. All indigenous people fast.

Eating three times a day at particular times is an invention. It is convenient for social reasons, as you can meet others and eat together, but it has very little health benefits. Also, I have found that eating at a particular time, rather than when my body tells me to eat, further deafens the voice of my body. The messages and wisdom of what I should eat get lost in the schedule of feeling obligated to eat at certain times. When I dropped the idea that I had to eat a certain amount of times a day, or at particular times, my sensitivity to my body and its needs increased.

Most of my problems when it came to being overweight stemmed from not getting enough exercise and overeating. My diet has always been rather simple and based on whole foods, but I had a bad habit of eating too much for my body's needs in any given day. Eating just to eat was a way of ignoring my body and of growing more insensitive to its wisdom. As I began to listen more, I learned to eat less, at the appropriate times and in an amount suited to my lifestyle.

For me, fasting is of incredible value to my health and well-being. I find it important for my physical health and for my spiritual cultivation. Every spiritual tradition on Earth includes fasting as a useful technique for dealing with our attachments to food, for growing lighter and more energetic, and for expanding consciousness. If the body is constantly digesting food, it is more difficult for it to rest and heal itself. For me, I try to never eat in the evening or night, so that my digestive system can rest during the night while I sleep, healing my body and relaxing my mind. On the rare occasions that I do eat dinner, I always notice that my sleep is less deep and my dreams more fitful. This is one of the nonverbal teachings of my body.

I practice fasting the way I do meditation: regular small fasts and annual deep fasts. Similarly, I meditate for shorter periods of an hour or two every day and then sit for longer, deeper retreats once or twice a year. I try to fast every evening, and then for a longer period once a week. Then, I try to schedule a week-long fast at least once a year, sometimes twice.

I always feel the effect of this practice as a cleansing of my system. Amazingly, I find that after a couple days, the desire to eat completely leaves me and the fast is no longer a struggle at all. I usually spend a couple days coming off of food and then a couple days at the end of the week of just water to slowly return to eating with smoothies and soups.

There is a lot of research about the benefits of fasting, and even some marvelous results coming from centers that are using fasting to treat incurable diseases. If you are interested in practicing intermittent fasting or fasting for longer periods, you should do some more research and find a way to go about fasting that is conducive to your health and happiness. There may be people with constitutions that make fasting dangerous. I can only speak for myself when I say that fasting is an essential aspect of a healthy diet for me.

Balance in All Things

The Buddha taught the “Middle Way,” which advises us to avoid extremes. The path of Tea has also taught me this, helping me to actualize these teachings in my life. This is something I aim for in my relationship to my diet as well. Since my transformation has come about this year, and is therefore still so fresh, I must admit that I haven’t yet found my balance. I still feel the need for enforced discipline surrounding my exercise and eating habits. I still feel the need for an inner drill sergeant that can bully the rest of me into exercising even when I don’t want to and to shout above the cravings for unhealthy food. But I don’t want to live with this bully forever. I aim to harmonize with my nature.

As I have started exercising every day, I have indeed found myself getting closer to a balanced state where I can enjoy exercising some days, loving the act for its own sake, and then be compassionate and let myself take it easy on other days, finding my limitations and respecting them. Similarly, I want to be able to feast with friends and enjoy food for its own sake when the occasion calls for it. Human beings celebrate with food, after all. There is more to eating than just our physical health. Sometimes we need “soul

food,” as well. Besides a lack of exercise, one of the biggest causes for my being overweight was the fact that I travel so much—often six or seven months a year. And we all know that when we are away, in a new or exciting city, we give ourselves permission to “cheat.” Also, everyone wants to take you out to eat and share local, often rich and delicious, dishes with you. Though I was feasting far too often, I don’t think it is healthy to be so hyper-focused on health all the time.

Devoting too much energy to our physical well-being is a bit like having a gorgeous antique violin and spending all your time polishing and tuning it without ever playing. We must live. The purpose of having a healthy body is to increase our quality of life and our longevity so we can live more and cultivate ourselves further (in service of others). We must live fully and happily, and being healthy in body is a means to that. In the end, all our bodies will break down and we will die. Finding a balance between eating skillfully, in a way that is conducive to our physical well-being, and also celebrating life and the people we love through delicious meals is my personal ideal. I hope to achieve this by learning to cook special meals with simpler, healthy ingredients, while maintaining a certain extra something that makes such dishes stand apart from our ordinary, daily fare. I also hope to find balance in my food discipline, not letting myself become too loose as to gain weight again, but also not being too tight to enjoy life. As I said, I haven’t yet found this balance, though I know it is possible.

Beyond balancing our eating for health and eating for the joy of eating, I think that finding a harmony with Nature is the key to a healthy diet for us as individuals and as a species. The more we develop agriculture based on a philosophy of balance and sustainability, the healthier our world will be. And it is only in a healthy world that we can truly be healthy. You cannot find a healthy organism in an unhealthy environment. If a single cell in our body stops caring about cooperation with the other cells and starts reproducing itself ad hoc, we have the beginnings of cancer. It is no wonder that this is the disease of our age, and one that so many of us will face, since we behave

in the same way on the macro level, ignoring the health of the Earth and Nature for our own personal well-being, which, like the crazy cell, is not possible. How can a being whose body is composed of fifty to seventy percent water ever be healthy in an environment where the drinking water is polluted? How can an organism that requires the inhalation of oxygen several times a minute ever be healthy in an environment in which the air is toxic?

To truly be healthy and happy, we have to create a healthy, happy environment, where we can design our cities around sustainable agriculture, green energy and zero pollution. Doing so is a personal matter directly related to my own health, happiness and longevity—perhaps even more so than my dietary choices! Nature is wiser than us, and like our bodies, we must learn to listen to Her, working in cooperation rather than in opposition to Her. If we learn to eat seasonally and harmonize our efforts with the forces of Nature, we can create environments that are conducive to human health and happiness. To achieve this, we will also have to learn to cooperate with one another, understanding that our health and quality of life is dependent upon others. We cannot all be farmers. We need our fellows to make our clothes and food, tea and computers. Together, we can create such a healthy world. It is our selfishness, on the other hand, which has polluted the air and water, Earth and Sky. When we love and serve one another, and our future descendants, realizing that our health is bound to one another, we may indeed have a chance at a clean and healthy Earth.

These are all lessons that I have seen in the bowl. What can I say, other than that tea is the most important part of my diet, as it has not only helped me to be healthier, but has taught me the life wisdom I need to cultivate a healthy relationship with my food, my Mother, the Earth and with you, whom I love.



茶 “Deer & Tortoises in a Landscape” by Shibata Zeshin

長壽比南山

LONGEVITY



FERMENTATION

AT THE

HUT

發酵的魔力

把生命變成仙丹

大自然豐富了我們的健康



Here at the Tea Sage Hut, we serve fermented foods with every lunch, and one of the service periods in almost every course is what we call a “fermentation party.” By number, the vast majority of cells in our bodies are microbes in our digestive track, and though research in the field has only just begun, microbial balance is certainly an important part of our health. And this is something our guests notice when they come for a course.



✿ A: **Connor Goss**

Humans have nurtured a relationship with the microbial world for thousands of years, working closely with something that we still do not entirely understand, as there remain many areas of mystery within fermentation. Wherever humans have settled and made a home, fermentation can be found closely by. It has enjoyed a long and glorious life. We must remember to continue to bring fermented foods and beverages into our daily diet, as they offer us many benefits for a greater feeling of well-being.

Here at the Hut, we aim to have fermented or pickled food within all of our meals; not so much in breakfast, but as we move into the colder months in Taiwan, there is more flexibility with adding fermented foods to our cooked breakfasts—there is something delightful about a warm bowl of simple congee, topped with sautéed greens and some spicy kimchi. Fermented foods are an incredible way of strengthening the microbes that inhabit our body and play a large role in influencing our physical and emotional well-being.

There are a growing number of studies exploring the relationship between our gut health and overall state of mind. It appears that there is growing evidence to suggest that the health of the microbes living in our body, and particularly in our gut, influence how we feel. This brings a whole new meaning to food as medicine, transforming our emotional well-being through regularly consuming fermented foods. Simply put, fermented foods are medicinal!

Not all fermented foods are created equal though! Some are better than others at bringing nourishment to our bodies. And most importantly, we seek to maintain a balanced approach to eating fermented foods; moderation is paramount to a healthy life.

There is also research into how fermentation helps to enhance the nutrients available in our food, increasing the bioavailability of minerals, and in some cases through the fermentation of soybeans, there is a significant increase in the bioavailability of zinc and iron. This research could open an endless world of possibilities in the way we approach fermented foods and food in general, understanding in more depth how we can create harmony in the body through food. Fermented foods offer us the doorway into a strange and wonderful world.

Fermentation or Pickling

Before we journey too far into the world of fermentation and how we weave it into our diets here at the Hut, it is important that we clarify a common misconception within the world that fermentation and pickling are the same, offering the same benefits to our health and overall well-being. In truth, these are two incredibly different approaches to preserving food and transforming food. Pickling essentially aims to preserve the desired food, and depending on the type of pickling, will maintain the nutritional content of the food when it was still fresh—some forms of pickling reduce the nutritional benefits greatly through being ex-

posed to high temperatures, becoming a nice element to incorporate into your meal. Pickling does not give us the microbial benefits found within fermentation—I am afraid to say that there is likely to be no beneficial bacteria to be found living in the forgotten jar of pickled beetroots in the back of your fridge.

Fermentation, on the other hand, occurs as starches and sugars in the food are transformed into lactic acid by *Lactobacillus* and many other strains of microbes that remain shrouded in mystery, the realm of science still journeying through the outer layers of this magical microbial world. There are many types of fermentation that offer varying health benefits.

A Life of Fermenting

The most noticeable way that we bring fermented foods into our diets here at the Hut is through adding sauerkraut, kimchi or other lacto-fermented foods. Lactic fermented foods are fermented through the presence of *Lactobacillus*—magical bacteria that has been giving us delicious, preserved foods for thousands of years. Lactic fermentation is one of the easiest ways to begin incorporating fermented foods into your diet, requiring little more than some vegetables, salt and filtered water.

Often, we have fermentation periods during a ten-day course. The guests get to participate in making different fermented and pickled foods, such as sauerkraut, kimchi and pickled vegetables.

Sauerkraut

There is no wrong approach when beginning to make sauerkraut. While there are many traditional recipes around the world, it is important to explore what works best for you, especially in regards to what you can source locally. If you can use a mineral rich salt such as Himalayan salt, this will improve the overall flavor of your fermented veggies. The only measurements I usually consider when preparing sauerkraut is the percentage of salinity in the raw ingredients—I have found somewhere between 1.75–2.5% salinity works well for most sauerkrauts. In the end though, there are no true rules for fermenting. You will learn through direct experience what works best for you, and what tastes best too.

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Pickled Vegetables

We will usually make pickled beetroot or ginger to accompany many of our lunches. You can essentially pickle any sort of root vegetable, fruit or even some green vegetables. We begin by coarsely grating the beetroot, while separately boiling a liquid for preserving the beets, which is made up of white rice vinegar, filtered water and a small amount of sugar—I usually use a ratio of one cup of vinegar to one cup of filtered water and two tablespoons of organic cane sugar. Afterwards, add the grated beets and liquid to a glass jar, and leave until it cools down to room temperature. You can store the pickles in the fridge for two or three months. The method for pickling ginger is the same, though you want to slice the ginger as finely as possible.



Kimchi

There are many recipes for kimchi around the world. Our interpretation of kimchi has come through wanting to have a kimchi-inspired fermented food that is not too strong in flavor for our diet and has also been adapted for the weather here. During the hotter months of the year, kimchi ferments very quickly, and the humidity can easily give rise to more dangerous mold finding its way into the ferment.

We usually make a simple kimchi with bok choy, spring onions, carrot, chili and mango (or apple, depending on the season). We cut the ends off the bok choy, coarsely grate the carrot, finely slice the spring onions, and then prepare a salt brine to soak the vegetables for a period of twelve hours. Once they have begun to break down a little and the fermentation has begun, we blend the mango with one or two chilies. We strain the water from the vegetables, put them in a glass jar and add the mango-chili liquid. Depending on the time of year, we will then leave out for one to three days before refrigerating it. This is just one of many variations of kimchi; try using what you have available locally.



泡菜是欣賞的樂趣

越來越濃郁的寶瓶



Now, journey into the world of fermentation with passion and joy. You will not be disappointed to begin the journey or be unrewarded in your endeavors. If ever you have any questions about fermentation, send them my way and I can offer advice from my own journey within the microbial world. And if you ever find yourself here at the Hut, there will be a bowl of fermented veggies and a glass of kombucha waiting for you—though that is a story to be shared another day!



FUEL

ON THE

PATH

DIETARY PHILOSOPHY OF THE HUT

🍵👤: Shen Su

In went the sliced onion, sizzling in the quickly heated oil, fragrantly filling the kitchen air. There were clean cutting knives, weathered cutting boards, seasoned woks and all sorts of kitchen accouterments splayed about. Steam whistled out of the space where the lid clanged against the pot, pans sizzled loudly beneath the billowing fume hood and colorful commotion stained the cooking space like a watercolor painting. The compact area was alive with energy. In place of robes, malas and meditation cushions were aprons, oven mitts and rolled-up sleeves. Where one bowl of ingredients ended, another began. At a moment's glance, things appeared chaotic with cooks dancing about, but from a wider perspective, the food was seasonal and timed just so. The small space afforded no room for randomness and demanded intuitive coordination. The meal was carefully planned, ingredients pre-purchased and the lunch was suited to balance out the morning's breakfast and tailored to the tea and guests. Everything was taken into consideration and in harmony. The clashing of a gong signaled what everyone's bellies were waiting for: It was lunchtime at Tea Sage Hut.

The food has changed a lot over the years at Tea Sage Hut. For the most part, meals have always been healthy,

delicious, abundant and surrounded by reverence and gratitude. Many of you likely remember those times of complete satisfaction at the kitchen table after a transformative tea session. There was a lot of love that went into those meals. Not only did the food taste great, but it also nourished the body in a balanced, seasonal and healthy way. Over time, our food philosophy has refined, changed and expanded in many ways to better serve our guests, our environment and ourselves. Though many changes have set in since the early days, one thing has remained the same, and that has been the approach towards the food served at Tea Sage Hut. The food eaten here has always been acknowledged as amongst the most important medicines we will take on any given day. A large portion of the day has always been reserved for preparing and receiving meals, and they are viewed as necessary medicine, fueling us along the path to Truth. For without food, water and shelter, when and where are we to take a cup of tea?

Our Philosophy

A day at Tea Sage Hut will include meditation, tea, service and two healthy vegetarian meals. Our food philosophy, like the food itself, is simple but

very important. Much of our food philosophy stems from a macrobiotic diet, Five Element theory, and Dogen's *Tenzo Kyokun*, or *Instructions for the Cook*. It is a combination of traditional wisdom and modern knowledge, applied in a way that skillfully suits our intentional community. We choose an organic, plant-based diet that is colorful and abundant with plenty of variety at each meal, comprising of foods that are local, seasonal, balanced, nutritious and delicious. Our philosophy accounts for the provenance of the food, the preparing and receiving of food, and the greater impact our diet has on the environment. We cook with devotion, receive everything with gratitude and make the best use of our food, not wasting anything. Our food is an offering and we see it as an honor to prepare and receive food in this way. You can very easily approach food as an offering to your body, filling you with life and connecting you to the world around you. Like Tea, food is a doorway to Nature, reminding us how connected we are. When we prepare food, we are reminded that the world provides for us, and does so abundantly.

道路燃料

Here at the Tea Sage Hut, we have developed a simple, balanced vegan diet for our guests. Keeping the meals vegan means that everyone can accept them. Creating a balanced diet for our Center took a lot of research and development over time through experience. On the one hand, there is a lot of meditation and tea ceremony during a course, and staying light of body is helpful for this, especially as the metabolism slows down. However, on the other hand, we also have service periods and the course schedule is quite dense, so we need to make sure the guests have adequate energy for the day. Also, as many of you know, there is no dinner here (just a small snack), so most of the daily nutritional intake comes from lunch. For these reasons, we had to create a menu that is rich, balanced, both nutrient-dense and light. Here is how we have gone about it!



The Macrobiotic Diet

Like many traditional approaches to life, they are sometimes renamed to rekindle their effects and make them more relatable in our modern times. Macrobiotics is one such modern term, coined after an ancient Eastern approach to a healthy lifestyle. It is a plant-based dietary system rooted in the Yin-Yang theory of Asian culture. It addresses the different energetic qualities of food, the relationship between our attitude and the food we eat, the impact our diet has on the environment, and the recognition that food is more than just a list of calories and fuel. In a macrobiotic diet, achieving this Yin-Yang balance and holistic perspective is accomplished through eating mainly plant-based foods, including a combination of whole cereal grains, raw and cooked vegetables, beans, fermented foods, fruits, and nuts and seeds. Proportions can be divided based on a percentage of weight and/or calories, with an emphasis that all ingredients are natural, organic, locally grown, seasonal, whole foods.

Fresh herbs and vegetables, beans and legumes, nuts and seeds, unrefined oils, tea, unprocessed grains, fruits and fermented foods are all healthy food groups to enjoy in a macrobiotic diet.

Whole cereal grains account for about half of the proportions by weight and include brown rice, barley, millet, oats, corn, rye, wheat and buckwheat. Raw and cooked vegetables make up about a third, including a wide variety of seasonal leafy greens and vegetables. Some nightshades are often excluded in these proportions because they cause problems for a small percentage of people and aren't essential to the diet. Beans, such as azuki beans, lentils, edamame and chickpeas, account for a smaller percentage within a meal, whereas bean products, such as tempeh, tofu and miso, can be served in larger portions more frequently, especially when fermented, in the case of tempeh and miso.

It is common practice to avoid foods that are processed, have refined sugars, dairy or animal products, coffee, strong spices, alcohol, bottled drinks, and foods with artificial ingredients, chemicals or preservatives, most of which are low in nutritional value anyway.

Macrobiotics is not only concerned with food groups and proportions. It is common in a macrobiotic diet to also consider other aspects of our lives, like personal hygiene, exercise, organization of the kitchen and home, and other wholesome activities, such as meditation, time spent outdoors, good posture at work, having plants indoors, allowing good airflow into your home, regular sleep cycles, daily gratitude, eating slowly, thorough chewing, achieving satiety, etc. This promotes not only a healthy diet but also a healthy way of living, and it very much suits our way of life at Tea Sage Hut. Of course, any healthy approach to life will stem directly from a healthy, balanced diet.

Five Elements

The Five Elements, or five phases, are a central philosophy within Chinese culture. They relate to the five internal organs, five seasons, five emotions, five colors, etc., and much of Chinese culture is aimed at living in harmony with these Five Elements in all their respective forms.

Learning to balance the Five Elements of food helps ensure that you receive enough nutrients from what you eat. All foods have their own energy, cooling (Yin) and heating (Yang) or they are neutral. In addition to Yin and Yang, each food has its own taste which accords with Five Elements cuisine. The elements are fire, earth, metal, water and wood, and their respective tastes are bitter, sweet, pungent, salty and sour, which correspond to specific foods, organs, seasons, colors and energies. A thorough understanding of this can be applied to help develop a harmonious diet and lifestyle. The macrobiotic diet already takes into account the balance of the Yin-Yang energies as described above and already ensures we are eating foods that are in season. One simple way of achieving a Five Elements balance is to choose foods that correspond to all five flavors and colors. Though it is a rudimentary application of Five Elements theory, it is a good place to start when preparing meals because it is easy for us to ascertain when certain flavors are out

of balance or when certain colors are out of proportion or missing. It's easy to see and taste when all five colors and flavors have been paired in the correct proportions. We will take a closer look at proportions, flavors and the look of our food in our bowl system described below.

Instructions for the Cook

In Dogen's *Instructions for the Cook*, he stresses the importance of applying your awakened mind in the kitchen and viewing your work as your practice. It's one thing to talk about a food philosophy and another thing to put it into practice! All meaningful practice must account for how we prepare and receive food, and the mind of those preparing and receiving this food is paramount. Part of putting our food philosophy into action is being likened to the food we serve, which is to say, clean of heart, pure of mind, balanced



in body, attuned to the season, abundant in joy and colorful with laughter! As we cultivate ourselves, we are preparing our food, and as we prepare our food, so we cultivate ourselves.

A Way, a Dao, is a *Way of Life*, which includes an awakened orientation towards *everything* you do in your life. Easier said than done! A Way of Life is not limited to special periods of meditation and certainly not separate from so-called mundane activities. Everything you do and how you do it matters, even the way you hold and read this magazine. Everything becomes your practice if you make the choice. This is the attitude with which we approach our work in the kitchen. To cook when others are meditating is not to miss meditation. Not only is it an honor and a sign of a mature student to be assigned as the cook in a monastic environment, but also it *is* your meditation in that moment. This is part of what Dogen meant in the *Instructions for the Cook* when he said

to “put your awakened mind to work.” This means taking that which you have cultivated in your more formal practice, like meditation, for example, and then applying that into your daily activities. If what you experience *cannot* be translated into everyday activities (which comprise the majority of your life) then what use is that experience? Therefore, our practice must extend beyond the conventional boundaries of the meditation hall and infuse into our day-to-day routine, which includes working in the kitchen.

To further understand the philosophy towards food at Tea Sage Hut, we can also consider the way we think about the kitchen. Before the times of central heating and modern kitchens, homes were situated around the central hearth, a gathering place for warmth, cooking and family meals. Of some of the gods revered in Chinese culture, the kitchen god, *Zao Jun* (灶君), perplexed me the most because the kitchen seemed so insignificant in

comparison to gods of other places like the earth and oceans. For me, the kitchen was that tiled place where parents occasionally made decent things to eat, save the broccoli and dirty dishes always awaited. Obviously, I was culturally and temporally distanced from the times and places when gods were assigned to kitchens, because in those times and in those places the kitchen wasn't the place we think about today—it was the very heart of the home, that central place where life and warmth gathered, refueled, and then dispersed outwards into the other reaches of the home and beyond. When defined like that, it becomes a place deserving of divine presence, a place to practice gratitude and prayer. That's why before each meal we light incense and pray before the kitchen god, reminding ourselves that this is a sacred place of practice and that we are privileged to prepare this food. We also ask for nourishment and healing in each meal.



THE BOWL SYSTEM

In order to work towards the ideals of our food philosophy and put things into practice, we've employed a simple and effective bowl system for our meals. This affords us the convenience of creating food in larger quantities easily and with fewer volunteers in the kitchen. We also don't want the food to be rushed, or make it feel too much like a chore. Food cooked with joy nourishes our souls, along with our bodies. Through this system, we also develop delicious and nutritious meals in a system that is easily expandable into the future when we build our bigger Center, Light Meets Life. Volunteers will be able to learn to make these dishes easily and enjoyably, and within a short period will be helping out in the kitchen service.



What's in a Bowl?

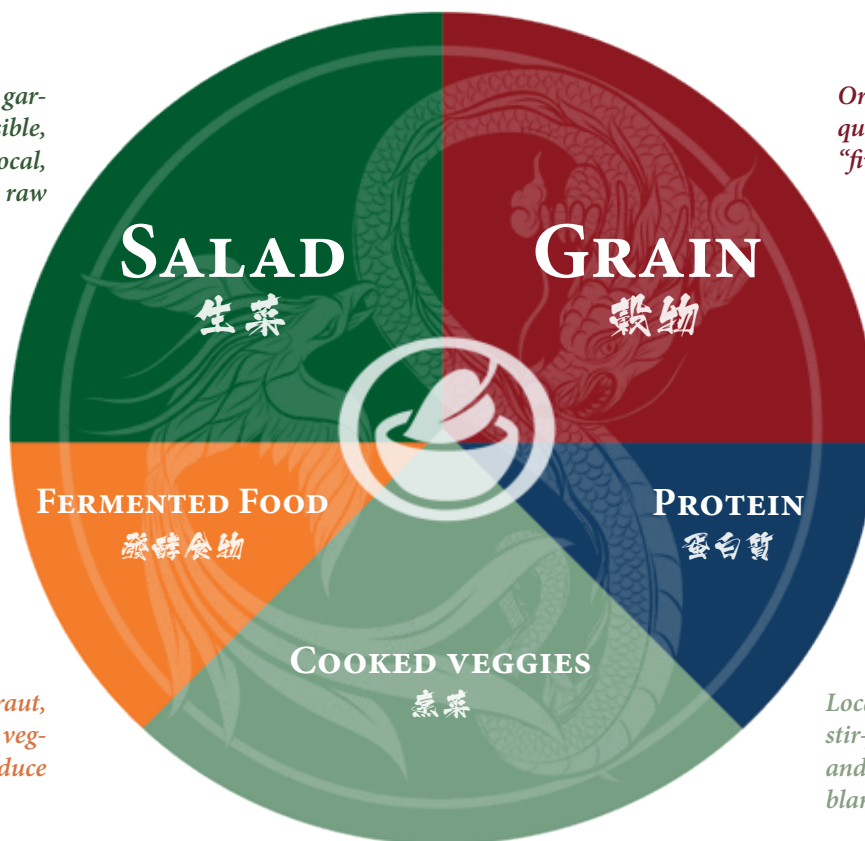
As you can see in the simple diagram, we try to account for five basic proportions, including grains, proteins, cooked and raw veggies, and fermented foods. Immediately, a limitless variety becomes available and a nice balance of food groups is easily achieved when prepared in the right proportions. There's a lot of room for wiggle, but typically, each food group makes up anywhere from ten to thirty percent of the bowl by volume.

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Theme

Like designing a *chaxi* (tea stage), it's much easier to balance the elements of your stage when you begin with a theme. The theme allows you to discern which elements to use, based on how they harmonize with the theme. So too, we like to theme our lunch bowls and pair foods that go well together. That might mean a culturally specific dish, like our Japanese Bowl, or a more generally themed dish, like our "local bowl," where we combine local, seasonal ingredients. They're fun, easy to create and remove any randomness at your meals, and provide lots of variety to make some changes over time—literally, the spice of life!

Raw greens from our garden as often as possible, mixed with other local, seasonal and organic raw veggies.



Organic rice, noodles, quinoa, millet or mixed “five-treasure rice.”

Nuts & seeds, tofu, tempeh, mushrooms and other healthy energy.

Homemade sauerkraut, kimchi and pickled veggies, often using produce from our garden.

Local, seasonal veggies stir-fried in healthy oil and water, steamed or blanched with spices.

Heaviness Scale & Overall Balance

碗裡的重量和整體平衡

This is a key feature of our meals. Everything changed after we started implementing a relative heaviness scale. The first half of our day is spent meditating, drinking tea and eating. In order to strike just the right balance between our meals and tea, we assign a heaviness scale to both breakfast and lunch. Although breakfasts are different from the lunch bowl system, they can be balanced out by their “heaviness,” which is a number we assign based on the ingredients. We consider each meal and then assign a number from one to ten, one being the lightest and ten being the heaviest. What we strive for is an overall score of ten between breakfast and lunch. That means, if we feel our breakfast is about a three on the heaviness scale, then we aim to serve a lunch that is about a seven. This goes a long way towards making our guests feel very comfortable at the end of both meals.

Knowing what’s being eaten for breakfast also helps us choose our tea more appropriately, and so the overall experience of breakfast, tea and lunch can be controlled and tailored to suit the needs of our guests and our tea sessions. Some days we also do more physical work, like cleaning and farming, so we can prepare meals by serving slightly heavier foods with more nutritional calories. We also don’t want to eat too much of any one ingredient, so, for example, on a morning when we have rice porridge for breakfast, we choose a different grain at lunch. This affords us a much-needed flexibility in our menu, and in our nighttime meetings for volunteers at the Center, we often make small adjustments to the following day’s diet based on what is happening at the Center, the kind of tea we are going to prepare the next day, the needs of the guests or any other unexpected changes.

Developing a healthy, balanced diet for the Tea Sage Hut has been incredibly rewarding as a volunteer and the results have shown. This magazine is actually a testament to this, as we decided to publish our dietary philosophy and some recipes because so many of our guests love the food here!

Not only can we serve healthy, balanced meals on any given day, but we can also achieve an overall balance for an entire ten-day course, knowing exactly how many people there are and what activities they will be engaged in throughout the course. Of course, as I mentioned, we need to remain flexible because we may need to adjust a meal based on some unpredictable factor, like weather, a surprise guest or just a change in plans. As a result, our meals for an entire ten-day course at Tea Sage Hut have become more organized, balanced, cost-efficient and enjoyable—both to eat and prepare!

Proportions

Proportions are particularly important because equality is an important part of life at Tea Sage Hut. Like at the tea table, when we temporarily ordain and practice equality, so too we serve the same food in the same proportions to our guests. This is a little challenging because people have different appetites and food restrictions, but we must remember that the food is purchased with donated money and cooked by volunteers. Like bowl tea, when we find ourselves in such a situation, it is good to set our discriminating mind aside and accept things just as they are with all the gratitude we can muster. You might end up eating a little more or a little less than you are used to, or you might eat some foods you're not accustomed to, but in the name of equality and gratitude for free, nourishing, healthy food, prepared by volunteers with love and care, these are excellent sacrifices to make. For most people, this is only a temporary sacrifice to make while you are briefly staying in an intentional community. At Tea Sage Hut, we often emphasize the phrase "while you're here" as it relates to surrendering to the Center's schedule. By setting aside personal preference *while you are here* and giving the schedule a fair trial, you can learn what suits you and what doesn't and choose whether or not to incorporate it into your life outside the Center. Even if you choose not to incorporate any aspect of the Center's lifestyle into your own, the very act of surrendering itself is an invaluable lesson.

The proportions of flavor are also important. In each bowl, we aim to serve foods that cover the five flavors: bitter, sweet, pungent, salty and sour. This is actually quite easy to achieve because of the variety of foods available and the five proportions found in each bowl. When designed properly within a theme, we can always account for a balance of these flavors.

Aesthetics of the Bowl

It's no wonder that pictures of food are some of the most popular social media uploads—they look beautiful and delicious! Appreciation of food starts well before we eat it; in the preparation, the development of aromas, the onset of hunger and, of course, the look of your meal, especially when placed in a way that demonstrates care, attention to detail and consideration of color. Color is a particularly important measure of overall balance in a meal. Not all meals that look colorful are healthy, but all healthy meals are often rich in a variety of fresh, natural colors. The exact same foods can taste very different and make you feel very different when arranged intentionally and beautifully. Those little details go a long way; a dash of sesame on your rice, a garnish of cilantro, a delicately placed fan of avocado slices. Guests here often remark excitedly at the look of the food before they even sit down.

Quality

Of course, our aim is to serve food that is healthy for our environment and us. We endeavor to source local, seasonal, organically farmed produce as much as possible, understanding the deeper meaning of "we are what we eat," which is to say we are the food, soil, biodiversity, moonlight, starlight, sunlight and every form of energy that went into the creation of the food we consume. We are part of the entire cycle in one way or another; and if we are to approach our food as medicine, then all aspects of it must be taken into consideration. It's not just the quality of the food and how it's prepared that we refer to, but also the quality of our mind as we receive the food that changes how our bodies integrate and utilize it. Gratitude is perhaps the easiest way to prepare our mind to properly receive our food. Ultimately, how it's grown, how it's prepared and how it's received will determine the quality.

美學的成分讓整體健康

食物遠不止是物質它是生命的能量

茶道

Fuel on the Path

A lot of our food philosophy, as Dogen reminds us, is about honor. The universe has unfolded in a very favorable way for some, but not for all. Countless others go without food at all. What more privileged people throw away as food scraps would be received with sheer joy by the starving. It is therefore our responsibility as the privileged few to honor our food and recognize the sacrifice that went into

its creation, not wasting anything and practicing deep and sincere gratitude at each meal. Only by orienting ourselves thus can we accept the food bestowed upon us with a joyful mind.

Without food, there is no meditation, no tea, no life. Preparing and receiving food is necessary for all aspects of life. When we approach our work in the kitchen as a practice with an awakened mind; when we reflect on how it's

grown, how it's prepared and how it's received; when we exercise daily gratitude at each meal—we become worthy to accept our food. Ultimately, spiritual work is done for the liberation of all beings. Therefore, we must accept our food as fuel on the path to truth and for the good of all. This is our responsibility and I joyfully invite you to take it on with us.



Recipes



食譜





THE LOCAL BOWL

在地

Protein (20%)

Black Pepper Tofu

Grain (20%)

Brown Rice

Fermented Food (10%)

Kimchi

Veggies (25%)

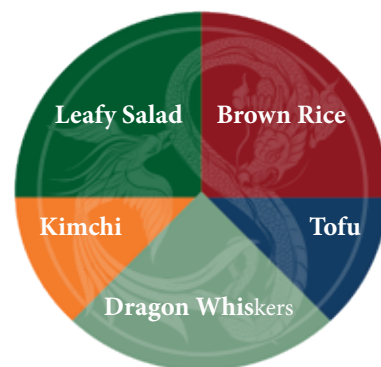
Dragon Whiskers with Ginger and Garlic

Salad (25%)

Leafy Greens with Shiso Dressing

This bowl is inspired by local, Taiwanese-grown, organic produce. It is our simplest bowl. The aim is to stay simple and local, using as many greens from our own garden as possible.

**The kimchi is premade (see the fermentation article on p. 25) and the rice is made as usual.*



Black Pepper Tofu

- 2-3 pieces firm tofu (*do gan*, 豆乾)
- vegetable oil for frying
- cornstarch to dust the tofu
- 2 small shallots, thinly sliced
- ¼ yellow onion, chopped
- 1 fresh red chili (fairly mild/no seeds)
- 1 garlic clove, crushed
- ½ tbsp. fresh ginger, chopped
- ½ tbsp. sweet soy sauce
- 1 tbsp. light soy sauce
- 1 tsp. dark soy sauce
- ½ tbsp. natural sweetener (like maple syrup)
- sprinkle of coarsely crushed black peppercorns
- 1-2 shallots, cut in 1 cm pieces

Start with the tofu. Pour enough oil into a large frying pan or wok to come 1/4 inch up the sides and heat. Cut the tofu into large cubes. Toss them in some cornstarch and shake off the excess, then add to the hot oil. (You'll need to fry the tofu pieces in a few batches so they don't stick to the pan.) Fry, turning them around as you go, until they are golden all over and have a thin crust. As they are cooked, transfer them onto paper towels.

Remove the oil and any sediment from the pan. Add the shallots, chili, garlic and ginger. Sauté on low to medium heat for about 15 minutes, stirring occasionally, until the ingredients have turned shiny and are totally soft. Next, add the soy sauces and sweetener and stir, then add the crushed black pepper. Add the tofu to warm it up in the sauce for about a minute. Finally, stir in the green onions. Serve immediately.

Dragon Whiskers

- dragon whiskers
- 1 garlic clove, diced
- olive oil
- ginger
- salt
- pepper

Clean and coarsely chop the dragon whiskers. Dry them using a salad spinner. Dice up the garlic. Cut the ginger into thin toothpick shapes.

Heat the olive oil in a pan and add the garlic and ginger. When aromatic, add the dragon whiskers and continue to stir as they cook. You may need to add a little hot water. Add salt to taste.

Leafy Salad with No-Oil Shiso Dressing

Dressing Ingredients

- shiso leaves
- 1 tbsp. vinegar
- 1 tsp. soy sauce
- maple syrup
- ¼ tbsp. lemon juice
- grated ginger
- ½ tbsp. sesame seeds

Salad Ingredients

- any combination of light salad greens
- keep this salad light
- goes well with chopped dried plums

Add all the dressing ingredients into a food processor and mix well. Toss the dressing onto the salad in a large bowl and then transfer to the bowl. We try to keep the salad very light for this bowl, as the rest of the dishes are pretty heavy. As we mentioned in the previous article, we measure everything on our own homemade heaviness scale, which helps us correlate food to tea ceremonies, amount of tea drunk in a day (which can make guests hungry), physical activity and other aspects of our days at the Hut.

龍鬚菜和黑胡椒豆腐



THE CITRUS BOWL

柑橘

Protein (20%)

Tempeh Glazed with Orange

Grain (20%)

Quinoa

Fermented Food (15%)

Pickled Beets

Veggies (20%)

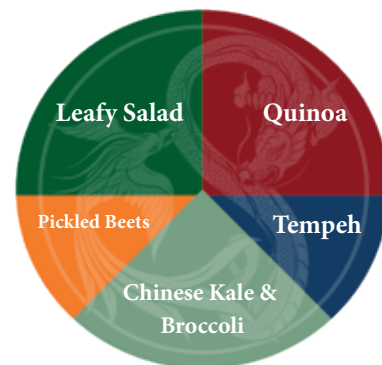
Chinese Kale & Broccoli

Salad (25%)

Leafy Green Salad

This bowl is a lighter, zesty bowl that is perfect as a refreshing meal on a hotter or lighter day, when work is minimal and the Center is turning inward towards tea and meditation.

*The pickled beets are premade (see the fermentation article on p. 25) and the quinoa is made as usual.



Orange Pan-Glazed Tempeh

- 1 freshly squeezed orange
- 1 tbsp. ginger, freshly grated
- 2 tsp. tamari (or soy sauce)
- 1½ tbsp. mirin
- 2 tsp. maple syrup
- ½ tsp. ground coriander
- 1 small garlic clove, crushed
- tempeh
- 2 tbsp. coconut oil
- ½ lime
- a handful of cilantro (coriander) leaves

Put the orange juice in a small bowl. Squeeze the grated ginger over the bowl to extract the juices, then discard the pulp. Add the tamari, mirin, maple syrup, ground coriander and garlic. Mix together and set aside. Also, cut the tempeh if needed.

Put the coconut oil in a large frying pan over medium-high heat. When the oil is hot but not smoking, add the tempeh and fry for 5 minutes or until golden underneath. Turn and cook the other side for another 5 minutes or until golden. Pour the orange juice mixture into the pan and simmer for 10 minutes or until the sauce has reduced to a lovely thick glaze. Turn the tempeh once more during this time and spoon the sauce over the tempeh from time to time. Serve the tempeh drizzled with any remaining sauce and a squeeze of lime, with the coriander scattered on top.

Chinese Kale & Broccoli

- Chinese kale
- broccoli
- virgin coconut oil
- salt & pepper

Wash the kale and broccoli. Tear the kale leaves and chop broccoli into florets. Very, very lightly stir-fry the kale and florets in the coconut oil. Stir for a very short time and remove from heat. Add salt and pepper to taste. The veggies should be crisp and slightly raw.

Leafy Salad with Citrus Dressing

Dressing Ingredients

- ½ tsp. finely grated lemon rind
- 2 tbsp. fresh lemon juice
- 1 tbsp. olive oil

Salad Ingredients

- ¼ red onion, thinly sliced
- lettuce and/or spinach
- fresh sprouts
- 1 satsuma mandarin, peeled/sectioned/sliced
- snap peas and/or snow peas
- toasted coconut flakes

Wash and cut all the veggies and put them into a large salad bowl. Toss the salad well. Mix the dressing ingredients in a bottle and shake vigorously. You can use any type of orange or citrusy fruit in the salad itself instead of, or along with, the mandarins. We sometimes put diced pineapple and orange as well. This salad can be spiced up with a bit of toasted coconut flake as well on that extra-special day.

橙汁天貝



THE TIAN WU BOWL



Protein (20%)

Scrambled Tofu

Grain (20%)

Quinoa (red & white)

Fermented Food (15%)

Sauerkraut

Veggies (20%)

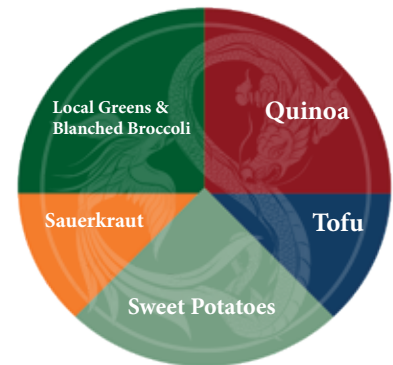
Stir-Fried Greens & Blanched Broccoli

Starchy/Heavy Winter Element (25%)

Sweet Potatoes

This bowl is designed after all the favorite foods of our dear sister Tian. In typical Zen fashion, it also includes one thing she doesn't like so much: scrambled tofu. It is a favorite around here, especially in cooler weather, since it has no raw/salad element.

*The sauerkraut is premade (see the fermentation article on p. 25) and the quinoa is made as usual.



Scrambled Tofu

- ¼ red onion, finely chopped
- ¼ red bell pepper, finely chopped
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- 1 square firm tofu
- 1 tsp. extra virgin olive oil
- ½ cup nutritional yeast flakes
- spices/herbs (to taste)
- ⅛ tsp. turmeric

Place your chopped onion, bell pepper and garlic in a frying pan with about 1 teaspoon of olive oil and sauté it on the stove over medium-high heat. Remove from heat when onions are beginning to change color. Set aside.

In a bowl, crumble your tofu and mix in your seasonings. Add some olive oil to the bottom of the frying pan and place over medium heat. Place tofu on top of the olive oil and stir. Continue stirring until the tofu begins to brown around the edges.

Gently fold your onion/pepper mixture into your tofu and serve immediately.

Stir-Fried Greens & Blanched Broccoli

- market-fresh, local greens
- minced garlic
- minced turmeric
- 1 tbsp. virgin coconut oil
- broccoli, chopped into florets

Wash the greens and chop or tear them. Heat up oil with the garlic and turmeric. Very lightly stir-fry the greens. Add a splash of water. Stir until cooked. They should still be a little raw and crunchy. In a large pan, bring a small pool of water to a boil. Lower the heat and add the broccoli, ladling water over the florets for about 2 min. Strain and serve.

Baked Sweet Potatoes

- 2 tbsp. olive oil
- 1 medium-size sweet potato per bowl
- 4 pinches dried oregano (or lots of fresh oregano)
- salt & pepper
- other herbs (rosemary, etc.)

Preheat oven to 350 °C. Wash and peel the sweet potatoes. Cut them into medium-size pieces. Place the cut sweet potatoes in a baking dish and turn them so that they are coated with the olive oil. (It helps to use a spray bottle for the olive oil.) Sprinkle moderately with oregano and salt and pepper (to taste). Bake in an oven preheated to 350 °C for 60 minutes or until soft. (It is sometimes nice to boil the sweet potatoes for a few minutes before baking, which will make them crispier.)

烤地瓜



THE BUDDHA'S DELIGHT BOWL

佛陀的喜悦

Protein (20%)

Peanuts and Sauce in Buddha's Delight

Grain (15%)

Brown Rice

Fermented Food (15%)

Kimchi

Veggies (25%)

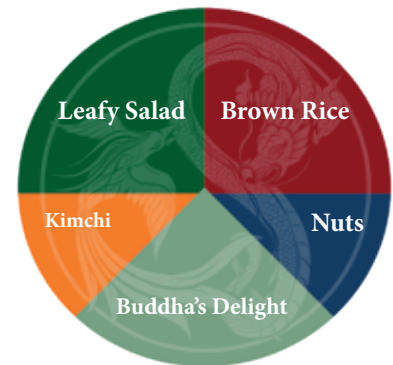
In the Buddha's Delight

Salad (25%)

Leafy Salad

Some of you will remember this dish from our issue on food last January, only it was not in a bowl. This is one of our signature dishes and one that most guests remember and ask us for the recipe!

*The kimchi is premade (see the fermentation article on p. 25) and the rice is made as usual.



Buddha's Delight

Stir-Fry Ingredients

- fresh celery
- shredded carrots
- fresh broccoli
- cauliflower
- soaked or canned chickpeas
- roasted peanuts
- chopped coriander/cilantro

Sauce Ingredients

- 1 large piece red turmeric
- Bragg's or soy sauce
- 1 chili pepper
- 1 small piece fresh ginger
- 1-2 garlic cloves
- 2 tbsp. virgin coconut oil
- 1 tsp. roasted and ground cumin
- chopped carrots
- peanuts

Start with the sauce. Blend all the ingredients for the sauce thoroughly. You will need to add a bit of water. You will want the consistency of a smoothie, made on the thin side; thick, but definitely liquid in form. Add more of any ingredient to taste as you blend.

For the stir-fry, you can substitute any veggies you want for this, also adding tempeh if you like. Put the oil in a large wok and turn the heat on high. Stir-fry the carrots, broccoli, cauliflower and chickpeas. Add the peanuts and celery later, so that they stay crunchy. When the veggies are ready, pour the Buddha's Delight sauce over the veggies. Immediately turn off the heat so the sauce doesn't burn, and cook with the sauce for another minute. Serve the Buddha's Delight, using some extra coriander to garnish if you want.

Leafy Salad with Vinaigrette Dressing

Dressing Ingredients

- 2 tsp. virgin olive oil
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- 1 tsp. soy sauce
- dash of maple syrup
- ¼ tbsp. balsamic vinegar
- water

Salad Ingredients

- any combination of light salad greens
- some toasted sesame

Wash and cut all the veggies and put them into a large salad bowl. Toss the salad well. Mix the dressing ingredients in a bottle and shake vigorously. You will want to keep the salad lighter, as the Buddha's Delight is quite heavy. However, we sometimes add toasted sesame seeds (*gomasio*), pine nuts or sunflower seeds to the top of the salad. This salad also goes well with a bit of vegan nut cheese.

健康的身體是佛陀的喜悦



THE JAPAN BOWL

日本

Protein (15%)

Tofu Mixed into Sticky Rice

Grain (15%)

Sticky Brown Rice

Fermented Food (10%)

Pickled Ginger

Veggies (30%)

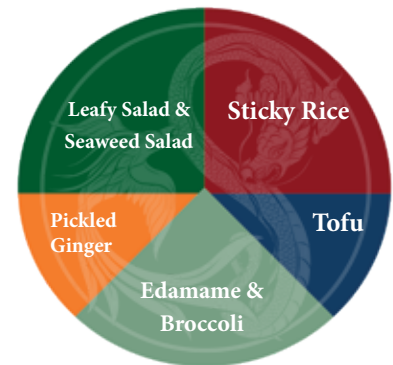
Stir-Fried Edamame & Broccoli

Salad (30%)

Leafy Green Salad & Chuke Seaweed Salad

This bowl is medium to heavy. We based it on the wonderful flavors of Japanese cooking, paying attention to balance in color and flavor, and also using some more aesthetic grace in the preparation of this bowl.

*The pickled ginger is premade (see the fermentation article on p. 25).



Sticky Brown Rice with Tofu

- brown rice (~¼ cup dry per bowl)
- soft tofu
- Bragg's or soy sauce
- wasabi
- sesame seeds
- toasted, crunchy seaweed, sliced into strips
- dash of sesame oil

Cook brown rice until light and fluffy. Mix wasabi and soy sauce in a bowl with a fork until the wasabi is completely dissolved into the soy sauce. Once the rice is very hot, add the soft tofu to the rice and mix continually, slowly adding the wasabi sauce. Add the sesame seeds and seaweed strips. Stir until well combined. Add a drizzle of sesame oil (just a few drops). Try to serve this bowl immediately (the rice cannot sit for more than a few moments before serving or it becomes mushy).

Edamame Stir-Fry

- hulled edamame (defrosted if frozen)
- broccoli, cut into small pieces
- 1 lemon, juiced
- 1 tbsp. virgin coconut oil
- salt & pepper

Prepare the broccoli, cutting it into small pieces. Juice the lemon. Defrost the edamame if necessary. Lightly stir-fry the vegetables with salt and pepper to taste. The veggies should be crisp and slightly raw. (You can boil the edamame for just a minute or two beforehand to make them softer if you like.)

Chuke Seaweed Salad

- dried *chuke* seaweed
- sesame seeds
- soy sauce

Place the dried seaweed in warm water until rehydrated. This usually takes twenty minutes. Strain the seaweed. Mix in a little soy sauce with the seaweed and toss sesame seeds into the salad. (Serve immediately; like most dishes in the bowl, this needs to be fresh.)

Leafy Salad with Miso Dressing

Dressing Ingredients

- sesame seeds
- 1 tbsp. tahini
- ½ tbsp. sesame oil
- 1 tbsp. dijon mustard
- honey (to taste; skip if you're vegan)
- miso paste (stronger miso is preferable)

Salad Ingredients

- Chinese kale
- lettuce

Add all the dressing ingredients into a food processor and mix well. Either add the dressing and toss the salad again or add it after the salad is placed in the bowl(s). We try to keep the salad very light for this bowl, as the rest of the dishes are pretty heavy. Also, the dressing itself is a bit thick, which is why we use Chinese kale, as it is a thicker, heavier leaf and takes to the dressing well. (You can use other kinds of kale as well.)

糯米和海帶芽沙拉



THE THAI BOWL



Protein (20%)

Barbecue Tofu

Grain (20%)

Pad Thai Rice Noodles

Fermented Food (15%)

Kimchi

Veggies (25%)

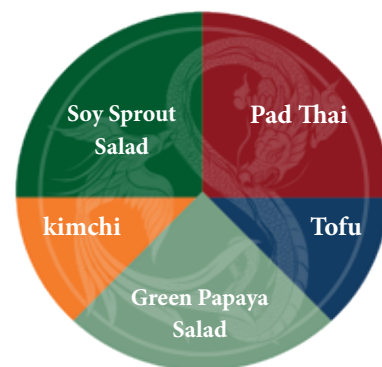
Papaya Salad (Extra raw in this bowl)

Salad (20%)

Soy Sprout Salad

A spicy Thai bowl is a must-have for such a menu as ours. This brings a bit of color and flavor to the menu. We tend to serve this at the end of the course, as the guests are heading back out into the world.

*The kimchi is premade (see the fermentation article on p. 25). The soy sprout salad is just sprouts with lemon juice squeezed on top.



Pad Thai Rice Noodles

Stir-Fry Ingredients

- Thai rice noodles
- red bell pepper
- ½ yellow onion
- carrot
- 2 tbsp. coconut oil
- ½ cup chopped peanuts
- ½ cup fresh cilantro and Thai basil
- spring onions, chopped

Sauce Ingredients

- 1 tbsp. tamarind paste
- rice vinegar (to taste)
- dab of maple syrup
- scoop of peanut butter (to taste)

Place the uncooked noodles in a bowl of cold water to soak. Chop the carrots, red pepper and onions into strips. Blend the sauce ingredients in a food processor.

Heat a couple tablespoons of oil over medium-high heat. Add the veggies and stir-fry with tongs for 2-3 minutes or until tender but still crisp. Be careful not to overcook them—they'll get soggy and heavy. Transfer to a dish and set aside.

Add another tablespoon of oil to the pan. Drain the noodles. They should be softened by now. Add the noodles to the hot pan and stir-fry for a minute, using tongs to toss. Add the sauce and stir-fry for another minute or two, until the sauce is thick and sticks to the noodles. Toss everything around with the tongs. Turn off the heat.

Add in the vegetables, toss together and remove from the stove. Stir in the peanuts and herbs (or garnish with them) and serve immediately.

Barbecue Tofu

- firm tofu cubes (*do gan*, 豆乾)
- Thai sweet chili sauce (chilies, sweetener and rice vinegar mixed)

Barbecue over charcoal or use a stove flame. Skewer 3-5 pieces of tofu per person and lather with sweet chili sauce as you cook. This is much better when done over a lively charcoal flame!

Papaya Salad

Dressing Ingredients

- ½ tbsp. tamarind paste with warm water
- ¼ cup lime juice (about 3 limes)
- 2 tbsp. coconut sugar (not palm sugar), melted with 1 tbsp. warm water

Salad Ingredients

- 2 chilies, seeded and cut in 3 segments each
- 1-2 garlic cloves, peeled and roughly chopped
- 1-2 small unripe green papaya, peeled, seeded and julienned into strips
- 1 cup long green beans, stem ends and cut in 1½-inch long segments
- carrots, julienned
- cherry tomatoes, halved
- 2 tbsp. chopped roasted peanuts (optional)
- cilantro leaves, coarsely chopped (optional)
- Thai basil leaves, coarsely chopped (optional)

Peel and julienne your papaya. Soak in ice water for 10-15 minutes until they are firm. Drain the papaya well and place in a bowl lined with towels to absorb excess water. You want to have as little water on the papaya as possible so as to not dilute the dressing.

Whisk together all the sauce ingredients in a small bowl or measuring cup. Prepare two batches if you have a standard mortar and pestle. Pound the garlic and chilies together in a mortar and pestle until they form a smooth paste. Add the beans and pound well to bruise. Follow with the green papaya and carrot. Stir well with a big spoon and pound to bruise the vegetables so that they absorb the heat and flavor of the chilies and garlic.

Add the sauce and continue to pound a bit more, tossing the mix. Add the tomatoes, stir and lightly pound to slightly bruise them. Transfer to a covered bowl and serve fresh or refrigerate for at least 2-3 hours or overnight to let the flavors combine well. After refrigeration, sprinkle the peanuts, cilantro and Thai basil leaves over the top and serve.



THE WINTER BOWL



Protein (15%)

Chickpeas

Salad (25%)

Romaine Salad

Fermented Food (10%)

Pickled Turnips

Veggies (25%)

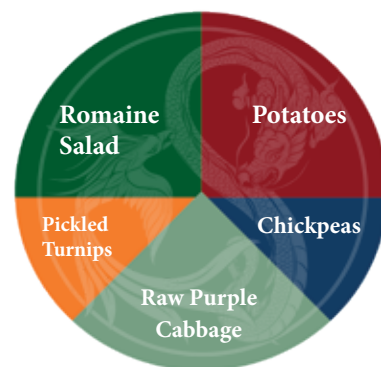
Raw Purple Cabbage

Starchy/Heavy Winter Element (25%)

Roasted Potatoes

This bowl is our heartiest, heaviest bowl, which we only serve when guests will be working very hard and need extra nourishment, or on those cool, chilly days when we all need some extra warmth in our bellies. No grain in this bowl, as it is very heavy

*The pickle turnips are premade (see the fermenting article on p. 25).



Roasted Chickpeas

- chickpeas (canned or soaked and boiled)
- herbs/spices of choice
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- olive oil
- salt & pepper

Preheat oven to 250 °C. Blot chickpeas with a paper towel to dry them. In a bowl, toss chickpeas with olive oil and season to taste with salt, garlic salt and cayenne pepper, if desired. Spread on a baking sheet and bake for 30 to 40 minutes, until browned and slightly crunchy.

Roasted Potatoes

- salt
- ½ tsp. baking soda
- russet or Yukon Gold potatoes
- 2-3 tbsp. extra virgin olive oil
- rosemary leaves, finely chopped
- 2-3 cloves garlic, minced
- freshly ground black pepper
- fresh parsley leaves, minced

Preheat the oven to 250 °C. Heat the water in a large pot until boiling. Add 2 tbsp of salt, the baking soda and potatoes and stir. Return to a boil, reduce to a simmer, and cook until soft (about 10 minutes). Combine the olive oil with the rosemary, garlic and a few grinds of black pepper in a small saucepan over medium heat. Cook, stirring and shaking the pan constantly, until the garlic just begins to turn golden (about 3 minutes). Immediately strain the oil through a fine mesh strainer into a bowl. Set the garlic/rosemary mixture aside and reserve separately.

When the potatoes are cooked, drain carefully and let them rest in the pot for about 30 seconds to allow excess moisture to evaporate. Transfer to a large bowl and infuse with oil, season to taste with a little more salt and pepper and toss to coat, shaking the bowl roughly, until a thick layer of mashed potato-like paste has built up on the potato chunks.

Transfer the potatoes to a large baking sheet and separate them, spreading them out evenly. Roast without moving for 30 minutes. Continue roasting until the potatoes are deep brown and crisp all over, turning and shaking them a few times during cooking, 30 to 40 minutes longer. Transfer the potatoes to a large bowl and add the garlic/rosemary mixture and minced parsley. Toss to coat and season with more salt and pepper.



Raw Purple Cabbage Salad

- purple cabbage
- cilantro, finely chopped
- spring onions, finely chopped
- 1-2 tbsp. extra virgin olive oil
- 1-2 tbsp. fresh lemon juice
- sea salt (to taste)
- freshly ground black pepper (to taste)

Chop the cabbage into strips like slaw and put into a bowl. Add the oil, salt and pepper, and lemon juice. Knead the cabbage until it softens and absorbs the oil and spices. Toss in the green onion and cilantro.

烤馬鈴薯和雪蓮子



THE CURRY BOWL

咖喱

Protein (15%)

Tofu or Seitan

Grain (20%)

Basmati Rice

Fermented Food (10%)

Pickled Beets

Veggies (30%)

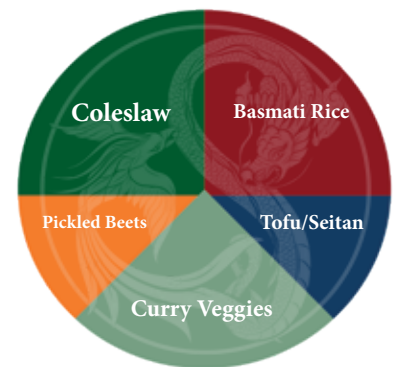
Vegetable Curry

Salad (25%)

Coleslaw

This bowl is another heavier bowl for the warm weather or the celebratory occasions in life, when you need more spice and flavor to liven things up. Guests always love this bowl when we serve it.

*The pickled beets are premade (see the fermentation article on p. 25).



Vegetable Curry with Tofu/Seitan

- potatoes, chopped into bite-sized pieces
- long green beans, cut into pieces
- baby corn, cut in half
- carrots, cut into bite-sized pieces
- tofu/seitan (or neither)
- any suitable veggies (cabbage, eggplant, bell peppers, onions, broccoli, cauliflower, etc.)
- 1-2 garlic cloves
- 1 can coconut milk
- curry powder and ground chili
- virgin coconut oil

Heat a dry skillet until it is too hot to touch (cast iron is best for this). Turn the heat off and add the curry and chili powder, stirring constantly and vigorously until the curry starts to smell delicious. Slowly stir in coconut oil a drizzle at a time until you have a nice curry paste. Put the paste aside and let it sit for 20-30 minutes (or overnight, which is ideal). Meanwhile, bring a pot of water to a boil. Boil the potatoes until they are slightly soft (at least 5-10 minutes).

In another pot, add more oil and a spoon of curry paste. Stir-fry your veggies, tofu (seitan) and the potatoes for around 5 minutes. Add in 500 ml of water and bring to a boil, then slowly add the rest of the curry paste to the water. Stir it until it simmers. Cook until the veggies are tender. Lower the heat and add in the coconut milk. Stir it in and wait until it is hot. (Leaving this sit for 2-3 hours and then reheating before serving will be way better as the potatoes and veggies will get infused with curry. If you do this, you don't need to pre-boil the potatoes.)

Basmati Rice

- basmati rice (~¼cup per person)
- 2-3 star anise
- dash of cinnamon
- 2-3 crushed cardamom pods
- 1-2 cloves
- 2-4 tbsp. coconut milk
- salt & pepper

Measure and rinse the rice very well under cool tap water. Add 1 part rice to 1.5 parts water. Add rice and water to a pot. Add star anise, cloves, salt and pepper, and cardamom pods. Bring everything to a boil quickly, then reduce heat to a simmer and leave with the lid on for 8-10 minutes. Don't open the lid! Use a timer. Turn off the heat and mix in coconut milk and replace the lid, letting the milk evaporate.

Coleslaw with Lemon Dressing

Dressing Ingredients

- ¼ cup olive oil
- 2-3 tbsp. lemon juice
- 1 clove garlic, pressed or minced
- ½ tsp. ground and roasted cumin
- ½ tsp. salt

Salad Ingredients

- finely sliced purple cabbage
- finely sliced cabbage
- shredded carrots
- ¼ cup chopped fresh parsley
- ¾ cup mixed seeds (pumpkin, sunflower, etc.)

In a medium serving bowl, combine the prepared purple and green cabbage, carrots and parsley. Set aside. Measure out your seeds into a small skillet. Toast over medium heat, stirring frequently, until the seeds are fragrant and the pepitas are starting to make little popping noises. Pour the toasted seeds into the mixing bowl and toss to combine.

To make the dressing, in a small bowl, combine the olive oil with the lemon juice. Add the garlic, cumin and salt, and whisk until thoroughly blended.

Drizzle the dressing over the slaw and toss until all ingredients are lightly coated in dressing. Add lemon juice if the slaw needs a little more zip. Cover and refrigerate to marinate for up to several hours.



Dessert 甜品

CACAO CHIA PUDDING

Chia Pudding

- ½ cup chia seeds
- 1 tbsp. goji berries (garnish)
- 2 tbsp. cacao powder
- maple syrup (add to preferred sweetness)
- ½ cup toasted almonds (garnish)
- 1 tbsp. coconut flakes (garnish)

Whipped Coconut Cream

- 1 can coconut milk (chilled overnight)
- ½ tsp. vanilla extract
- maple syrup (add to preferred sweetness)

Begin by adding chia seeds, cacao powder, maple syrup and coconut milk to a small bowl. Whisk vigorously until all the ingredients are well combined. You want to make sure there are no chia seeds stuck to the bottom of the bowl. Place the chia pudding in the fridge overnight to soak.

To make the coconut cream begin by scooping off the cream which should have separated after being chilled overnight. Add the coconut cream, maple syrup and vanilla extract to a chilled metal bowl, and whisk until smooth and fluffy.

Soak goji berries for 30 seconds in hot water until they are soft. Gently toast almonds in the oven or in a frying pan and crush into small pieces. Once the chia pudding has soaked, place in the desired serving bowl, place a scoop of coconut cream on top, and scatter goji berries and crushed almonds on top. Enjoy!



TeaWayfarer

Each month, we introduce one of the Global Tea Hut members to you, in order to help you get to know more people in this growing international community. 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 Tea fuels some great work in this world, and we are so honored to share glimpses of such beautiful people and their Tea. This month, we would like to introduce Bo Wong.

I grew up with Tea. Tea has always been there for me, from my grandma always drinking black tea, eyeing my other grandma's golden dragon tea set, to making my own herbal blends. My name is Bo Wong and I live in Brisbane, Australia; I live at the bottom of a mountain and my housemate plays giant gongs.

My family migrated to New Zealand from Malaysia before I was born. We were never normal, as I have fond memories of eating off banana leaves instead of plates, helping my grandma grow food and harvesting food from the sea. Later in life I got more into Tao practices and alternative health, so serving tea seems like a natural progression and something that always been within me, waiting to awaken.

After my first tea ceremony at a friend's place, I felt an instant connection, awareness and happiness that tea was something I wanted to know more and explore. I was hooked and have been presented with the most beautiful moments and connections of drinking tea in Nature and learning more about Her spirit.

I never knew there was so much to be learned about tea, all the different varieties, brewing methods, history, processing and quality. At first, it was a little overwhelming to discover there was this entire culture that could offer so much and I had never really known about it. Since then I've known it's the right path to go down and it makes my heart sing with joy.

I've learnt to be gentle with myself and all that tea has to offer, remaining nonjudgmental that I may not know as much as others, but instead I listen to the messages tea teaches me. It has taught me to slow down, listen to my heart, dance with life and be more present rather than stressed, rushed and constantly push through.

I love the simplicity tea ceremony in particular can offer and have been so drawn to serving tea in this way. I hold monthly tea ceremonies at my space and before my women's circles, in which I've seen the transformative power a simple bowl can hold, the connections and heartfelt conversations afterwards.

For me, being part of the Global Tea Hut continues to connect me to kind, caring people who I am honored to be friends with. The info has been such a blessing and is so synchronistic with what is going on in my life. I'm so glad to have met the spirit of Tea, be part of the Hut and all it brings into my life. I would love to share tea with more of you and hope that we continue to learn and grow together.



🍵👤: Bo Wong

I work with diet, food and health, offering consultations and exploration of a healthy, organic lifestyle, sharing what I learn with others as I grow in this beautiful life through writing, photography and videography. Tea plays an important role in what I do, both in terms of physical and spiritual well-being.

Tea has taken me on a wonderful journey which I will continue to share with others and ceremony has become a big part of my life. I've learnt to love more, trust my inner wisdom, build a stronger bond with nature and thrive to create beauty in every moment. This is my wish for everyone. If you're ever in my part of the world, I would love to share a bowl or three with you! Blessings, my friends.

Inside the Hut

COMING SOON TO GLOBAL TEA HUT MAGAZINE

茶主题: Tea & Zen Retreats

茶道

茶主题: Classics of Tea

茶主题: Chajin Stories/Biographies

茶主题: Meng Song



If you serve tea regularly and would like some extra magazines or tea tins to give out to help spread the word about Global Tea Hut, please let us know. We are also looking to donate magazines to public places.



We are trying to expand by connecting with podcasts, blogs, journalists and other communities. If you have a suggestion, please email our PR point person, Emily Cross at: emily.global.tea.hut@gmail.com



The live broadcasts are so much fun! We are doing two every month: one in the beginning, which is a great Q & A, and another broadcast at the end of the month, where we discuss the Tea of the Month.



This year's Annual Global Tea Hut trip will be announced this month. It is going to be a very exciting trip to Chaozhou (the birthplace of gongfu tea), Quanzhou, De Hua, Phoenix Mountain and Hong Kong!



Our Light Meets Life fundraiser teas and teaware are selling fast (some are sold out). We have some of the best cakes we have ever produced and some glorious gongfu teaware. All the proceeds will help build our future Center, called "Light Meets Life."



We are considering hosting two Annual Global Tea Hut Trips in 2018: our usual spring trip to a tea-growing region of Asia and a second trip within Taiwan itself. Would this second trip interest you?



We have been looking at land for Light Meets Life. Help us make our new Center a reality by reading the "10kx2020" pamphlet and contacting us if you feel there is any way you can help!

Center News



Before you visit, check out the Center's website (www.teasagehut.org) to read about the schedule, food, what you should bring, etc. Make sure you apply early for courses as they fill up fast (this is why we need a bigger, more awesome Center).



We are hiring! We have three jobs to fill: a PR position, a web designer and we are offering a one-year internship for a photographer/videographer. All three positions are paid. Check out the "10kx2020" pamphlet for details.



We are considering offering one longer, more meditative course for older/experienced students in 2018. This course would be twenty days, cover each brewing method more in-depth and also include more meditation each day. Would you be interested? If so, what time of year would be best for you?



It is worth getting on a waiting list if the course you wish to apply for is full. We often have last-minute openings!

January Affirmation

I am health embodied

Do I make negative, limiting stories about my physical constitution? I am free to enjoy eating healthy food. I am free to exercise and transform my body to live as embodied as I can, realizing healing and well-being.



www.globalteahut.org

*The most healthy food & Tea magazine in the world!
Sharing rare organic teas, a magazine full of tea history, lore, translations, processing techniques and heritage, as well as the spiritual aspects of Cha Dao. And through it all, we make friends with fellow tea lovers from around the world.*

GLOBAL TEA HUT
TEA & TAO MAGAZINE

