

GLOBAL TEA HUT

國際茶亭

TEA & TAO MAGAZINE

October 2020

茶花藝



CHABANA
FLOWERS FOR TEA



PURPLE SKY

This month we are beginning a new series on Chabana, the art of arranging flowers for tea. We will start with some background and history of traditional flower arranging in general, as well as some of the styles to begin or deepen our practice of arranging flowers for tea. And we have a wonderful aged sheng puerh to drink as we learn.

*Love is
changing the world
bowl by bowl*

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recycled & recyclable



Soy ink

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From the editor

In October, the weather in Taiwan is perfect for outdoor tea. When it isn't raining, we can sit outdoors and brew up some nice aged oolong, yancha, aged sheng puerh and shou puerh. The amount of amazing tea that have been donated this year makes the selection easy these days. We feel very abundant and blessed to have so many wonderful teas to choose from. The autumn is metal, so we nourish it with earth teas like shou and aged sheng and control the metal with fiery teas like traditional oolongs and sometimes red teas (in the morning).

Together with friends around the world, we have been sharing a lot of gratitude for having Tea in our lives as we pass through this difficult year. It is such healing medicine. Tea truly is a blessing... Whether under lockdown and unable to leave the house, or travel, the Chajin can turn to tea. When there is adversity and hardship, as we have all no doubt faced this year, we also can turn to our practice to reflect on the world we would like to live in and on our role in it. Staying peaceful through adversity allows us to learn from the challenges, to grow and make lasting changes. Whenever we remove our charge from the situation and replace it with loving-kindness, the solution always flows more smoothly, even if the solution requires taking a hard stance against something. This is as true in our personal lives as it is in our communities and societies, local or global. When we stay peaceful, we gain perspective and remove our negative charge, allowing us to hear the perspectives of others, no matter how different from ours or how "wrong." Then, we can also see more clearly how, when and where to take effective and helpful action. And if that action is a strong stance against something, we can do that with loving-kindness and peace in our hearts and eyes. Tea can provide all of this and more.

In the space of tea, we find whatever solace we need. If we seek relaxation and release, the tea space is warm and freeing. If we seek to explore and learn, there are an infinite number of directions to choose. If we want to cultivate emptiness, meditative mind and receptivity, tea facilitates that as well. And if we want to contemplate our role in life and the world and the positive changes we want to see in our lives and societies, tea provides the space for contemplation and introspection. Tea practice is also about service, teaching us to share our peace, insights and wisdom with others and to do so out of a love for kindness that is more often received more fully and deeply by others. Truly, we are all blessed to have Tea in our lives!

As we start to reach the top of this year's hill and head down into the next year of Global Tea Hut, we would like to ask all of you to submit some ideas for topics you would like to see us cover in the coming year. We did this last year and it resulted in some of the amazing issues you have read

this year, so we would like to encourage you to reach out and let us know some areas you would like to learn about in the coming year. Also, we feel like there are many burgeoning writers in the community who should be submitting work for the Voices from the Hut section of this magazine. If you have anything at all to say about tea or Cha Dao, please submit using the contact info on p. 47. We would love to read about your tea journey!

This is a special issue that we have been planning for years. Tea and flowers have had a relationship for millennia, including outdoor sessions in gardens to view flowers and the art of arranging flowers as part of our chaxi practice. A chaxi practice, creating a special "stage" for each tea session to honor our guests and the occasion, is one of the life-transforming aspects of tea that is powerful and ripples throughout our lives, changing much more than just how we prepare tea. Bringing flowers into our tea space is one way to honor the unique glory of each tea session—the "one encounter, one chance" spirit of tea. It is also a powerful way to bring Nature into our space, sharing the enlightenment of the plant kingdom in the form of flowers with the wisdom of another enlightened plant, Tea. Flowers are rich in wisdom as well, teaching us impermanence, beauty and to celebrate the small things in life. May this issue start or deepen your practice of "*chabana*," arranging flowers for tea, or inspire you to begin one. May it also remind us all to literally stop and admire and/or smell the flowers of life—all the precious ordinary moments that are all dharma flowers in their own right...



—Further Reading—

This month, we highly recommend reading or re-reading the November 2018 issue, which is all about chaxi. Learning about chaxi in general will provide a wonderful context for understanding *chabana* and where it unfurls in a life of tea, even practically. All past issues are on our website in the archive.

TEA OF THE MONTH



Over the course of this month, we will be drinking a very special wet-stored tea from the late '90s or from 2000, which is a replica of the famous 1980s “Purple Sky (紫天)” cake. These replicas were common in the late 1990s and early 2000s. As the prices of older teas began to skyrocket and as more people appreciated what made them special, businessmen wanted to cash in on the reputation of such famous cakes while puerh lovers wanted to commemorate their favorite cakes of yesteryear and try their hands at similar blends.

The original Purple Sky cake was one of the famous 8582 blends. The birth of 8582 and 8592 cakes are inseparable from Nantian Trading Company (南天貿易公司). Nantian Trading Company was founded by Mr. Zhou Cong (周琮), whose ancestral home was in Tengchong, Yunnan. He went to work in Hong Kong before the founding of the People's Republic of China in 1949 and later founded Nantian Trading Company. In the late 1970s, Mr. Zhou was influenced by his father and returned to Yunnan to do business and began to get involved in the puerh tea industry. Mr. Zhou used his understanding of the Hong Kong market to cooperate with Menghai Tea Factory (勐海茶廠). In the beginning, Nantian only made loose tea, almost exclusively for restaurants.

In those days, tea was graded according to leaf size. The higher grades—7, 8, 9, and 10—were all larger, more mature leaves and were cheaper. These higher grades were all taken over by Nantian. They say that Mr. Zhou wondered why puerh teas from the Antique Era (pre-1949) all included larger leaves from older trees and wanted to create cakes that hearkened back to that era. Perhaps this is how the idea for 8582 and 8592 cakes was born. While well-known today, these internal factory codes weren't public knowledge at the time. The first two numbers are the year the blend was created (not the tea, but the blend itself), the third is the average leaf size and the last is the factory (2 is Menghai), since there were fewer factories in those days and they could therefore be counted in single digits.

At the time, the production of 8582 and 8592 was very low compared to other cakes. All wrappers for different cakes were the same, using the State “Qizi (七子)”

wrappers of the CNNP (“China National Native Produce & Animal By-Products Import & Export Company”). In 1988, Mr. Zhou traveled to Yunnan to discuss a way to distinguish his cakes from others in the Hong Kong market. The factory agreed to put the purple “天” stamp on all the goods of Nantian Trading Company, not only 8582 and 8592 cakes, but also on the outer packaging of loose tea. And thus, “Purple Sky” cakes were born.

This replica was made in 1999 or 2000 and has undergone wet storage. This is a great chance for us all to taste some wet-stored tea. “Wet storage” is the modern way of discussing traditional storage, or what was just “puerh storage” back in the day. All tea was wet-stored, in other words. Wet storage simply means that it was stored in a place or area with more humidity. But that is relative, so you have to wonder “more humidity” than where...

Since the puerh boom, puerh tea has often been kept in very dry conditions, whether intentionally slowing down the aging in controlled rooms or in areas that are much drier than where tea was traditionally matured: for example, in dry cities like Kunming or Beijing. Trying to separate their tea from traditional tea and create new markets, merchants of such teas began calling their teas “dry-stored puerh (乾倉普洱)” and the traditional tea stored in Hong Kong, Taiwan and Malaysia “wet-stored puerh (濕倉普洱).” Nowadays, the terms are even more confusing, as different authors, vendors and puerh lovers all use them to mean different things.

There certainly is a point at which humidity can be too high and puerh tea can mold. But storing tea in Hong Kong or Taiwan and the resulting “wet storage” is, in our view, a good thing. We would say that if you don't appreciate a slight mustiness in your aged tea, you aren't going to like too many well-aged cakes. Anyway, wherever your tastes lie on the dry to wet scale of puerh storage, our Tea of the Month falls smack into the wet storage category, offering us all the chance to learn more about puerh storage and taste some traditional storage.

Purple Sky is dark and earthy, with a rich and bold flavor that is great to drink now and also a wonderful candidate for aging. Read more about it on p. 45.



Purple Sky (紫天)



Yunnan, China



Aged Sheng Puerh



Han Chinese



Unknown



Brewing Tips

冲泡技巧 完成好茶

This month's tea, Purple Sky, is a delicious wet-stored puerh tea. Unfortunately, such compressed puerh teas cannot be brewed leaves in a bowl, as it is difficult to get the amount right and the bits will get in our mouths. So, for this month, we will be brewing in a sidehandle pot or, much better, gongfu tea. To really bring out the best in this tea, we should use gongfu brewing.

If you aren't a fan of wet storage in your puerh, we would suggest a longer rinse for this tea. As Master Lin always says, "the last thing in is the first thing out," which means that the storage flavors and aromas are what is steeped out first when preparing an aged tea. In light of that, a longer rinse can wash away a lot of these flavors, especially with a middle-aged tea like our Tea of the Month.

Gongfu brewing is all about heat. And heat is what will make this month's tea shine. If you pay some extra attention to heat this month, you will really get the best out of this tea. If possible, this means using charcoal. Charcoal brings the element of fire, as opposed to just heat when using an electric burner of any kind. Gas flames are a kind of intermediary, as they have a flame and do introduce the element of fire, but the fuel is different, as is the color and type of flame produced with gas, resulting in a very different structure in the water. In fact, it is always a good time to experiment as well, so if possible, try the water from electric, gas and charcoal side by side and then use them all with a tea you are familiar with and take note of the differences.

If you are going to get started with charcoal, it is important to remember that carbon monoxide is incredibly toxic and we therefore need to be careful. Make sure your tea space has adequate ventilation. If not, you can maybe heat your water on a porch or balcony and then bring it in to another type of heat to maintain temperature, like an alcohol or electric stove. Ideally, we would use charcoal both to boil and maintain heat, but this is a safe alternative for spaces without enough airflow.

Then, we want to get some good quality, non-toxic, hardwood charcoal that is also smokeless. Usually, this is not the type used in barbecue. In the West, you may find some great charcoal at a Japanese import shop, as Japanese barbecuing sometimes does have different types and grades of charcoal. Some such shops may even carry charcoal created specifically for tea ceremony, which is even better. You may have to experiment to find the type that is right for your tea and budget. Also, try to get a starter that is made of compressed sawdust and is not covered in wax paper or other chemicals.

There are two types of braziers, open and closed. Open braziers have space around the charcoal arrangement. They offer more freedom in use and to control the temperature but are more difficult to learn how to use. We suggest starting with a closed brazier. It is far easier to set up and use and make a part of your daily tea practice. We find that when charcoal starts to become too difficult or take too much time to prepare, it is far more difficult to incorporate into daily tea and becomes something just for special occasions. With a closed brazier, we can pack the brazier, light it and then go get ready for tea. After it is going, then, we just bring the whole brazier into the tea space, or bring the kettle to the brazier if we are boiling on a porch or balcony.



Gongfu

茶道



Sidehandle



Water: spring water or best bottled

Fire: coals, infrared or gas

Heat: high heat, fish-eye, 95°C

Brewing Methods: gongfu or sidehandle (gongfu is ideal)

Steeping: long steeping, then one flash, then start growing longer

Patience: 20-25 steepings (gongfu)

茶 Heat will be paramount with a tea such as this. Try using the best heat source you can, especially charcoal or at least gas. And a long rinse will help with the storage flavors of a tea like this.



茶花藝

Chabana

FLOWERS FOR TEA







Introduction

茶人: Wu De (無的)

Before we start arranging flowers, it would be good to discuss the layout of this magazine and future conversations on the topic. We have to understand some basic concepts, like what distinguishes chabana from other types of ikebana. This is a rich topic, and one worth arranging slowly, like the flowers we bring into our spaces and lives. Throughout this issue, we will explore some general ikebana history and philosophy and then discuss three of the six types of arrangements in traditional ikebana.

Flowers are the enlightenment of the plant kingdom, offered to the animal world in a glorious living art of color and fragrance that also propagates the next generation of seed, sprout and ultimately flower. Flowers teach us impermanence, remind us to know that we are dying as we live and that the beauty is fleeting, and thus all the more beautiful. Through flowers, we return the offering of the plant kingdom to the Divine that feeds life, opening our altars and our hearts.

Tea is also a living beauty. Like flowers, we become our own art piece—walking, sitting and drinking our way through the painting that becomes our life. That is Cha Dao. This doesn't mean that our lives become feigned or artificial, expressions of some mind-made ideal, but rather that we begin to notice the beauty and wonder in the most ordinary moment—we begin to recognize that we are surrounded by miracles. Much of this is achieved

through our practice of creating a “tea stage,” called a “chaxi (茶席).” Our practice of chaxi reminds us to honor every unique, precious petal of a moment as “one encounter, one chance.” We are present or we miss all of reality. That presence too is a living beauty. Tea reminds us of where we should be living our lives: *here and now*. This beauty is a simple one. It is a reminder to listen: listen to the moment, to our bodies and to the world around us, as opposed to being wrapped up in our thoughts, desires, fears and dramas. “Listen,” Tea whispers to us. The more we do, the more we live beauty, like a lily shining for the brief life we share with the world.

We make a chaxi for every tea session to honor Tea, honor our guests and also honor the occasion. If listening is the flower bud emerging from the stem, honoring is the opening. When we can listen and honor, we have found our way into the painting. It is a natural landscape—in fact,

it looks just like where we are here and now—only now shining again. Our daily lives can make the sacred all around us dull; the world loses its holy shine. Ceremony polishes the world, so that we start to see all the golden threads to adventure, the glimmers and shimmers of sacred. (All of which were there naturally when we were little children.) Over time, we begin to see this way all the time. This vision, this eye, is what is truly attained. An ordinary eye sees nothing special, but a trained ceremonial eye sees all the magic and light in the most ordinary things, and that is extraordinary! The person of the Dao knows the altar is just stone and wood, but prays all the same. For in the end, the shift in our vision is what is important, not what causes it. Listening and honoring, we are living Cha Dao, living beauty.

Making a habit of practicing chaxi every day in every session changes our lives. The way we see is altered, which means the whole world shifts.



And flower arranging is a huge part of chaxi. Of course, one can make a chaxi without flowers, and we often do, but bringing flowers in adds Nature, creativity and expresses our own awakening and living beauty without the utterance of a single word.

Chaxi are, in fact, akin to a mandala, which we could define here as a temporary work of art that expresses and/or alludes to the cosmos or a teaching (dharma). We create temporary works of art that we move through ceremonially, each one reminding us of the cosmos around us, Nature and/or a specific teaching that opens our minds and hearts. In this way, our chaxi practice should connect us to Nature more, like the tea that inspires it. We step into the mandala, sit down in it and drink it up, becoming the lesson or the reminder to find the world in ourselves.

There is a difference between *ikebana* and *chabana* that is worth discussing. “*Ikebana*” is flower arranging in

general, and “*chabana*” is one type of *ikebana*, which is flowers for tea. Like almost all things tea, this art begins in dynastic China, is preserved and improved upon in Japan and then also finds its way to Taiwan, which was the tea culture capital of the world for the latter half of the twentieth century. This mix and blend is the basis of most tea-related practices in the world today. *Ikebana* has a lot of uses, intentions, traditions and methods. Flowers are arranged for altars, lobbies, meditation rooms and much more. And many of the methods used in these arrangements would not be suitable for tea. However, we thought we would start with an issue all about flower arranging in general and then move into tea flowers specifically in a future issue of Global Tea Hut.

In a chaxi, the subject and focus of every session should be the tea. No aspect of a chaxi should distract from the tea. This is challenging with flowers, as they can be bold and also fra-

grant and can therefore easily distract us from the tea. For that reason, one of the axioms of *chabana*, as expressed by the tea masters of the past, was that flowers for tea should appear “as they are in the fields.” In other words, we should make the flower arrangements in our chaxi subtle, unadorned and simple so that they enhance the space, as opposed to taking it over. Simplicity is key in this, as it is in all things tea. The aesthetic of tea is “*shibui*,” which means the “unadorned” or “austere,” which is really what distinguishes *chabana* within the overall art of flower arranging (*ikebana*).

Also, by making our arrangements for tea appear as if the flowers were next to a path or in the woods, as they are in Nature, we further the connection between Tea, ourselves and Great Nature. In this way, we bring the outdoors in and sever the false disconnect between our lives and Nature, recognizing that the boundaries aren’t real at all, extending through us.

As with water, your tea practice would be benefited greatly by finding wildflowers yourself, as opposed to always buying your flowers for tea. Also, if you do go for flower hikes to find and create arrangements for tea, look for interesting wood, plants, moss, rocks and other accessories that can sometimes stand on their own or, at least, enhance our flower arrangements and chaxi overall. Some can even be kept and reused.

It cannot be overstated that the key in all chaxi practice is simplicity. As a teacher, the thing I correct more than anything else when it comes to chaxi is an overabundance of elements, which means not respecting space. Space is a key element in a nice chaxi and must be used consciously. We should choose our spaces wisely and intentionally make use of what is around all the elements. The same is true of flower arranging as well. For most of us, this is the challenge, and it is yet another area where a chaxi practice can be of such great benefit to our lives.

The principles, tools and methods used in *ikebana* are all useful for *chabana* as well, so studying them is not a waste of time at all. In fact, a class on *ikebana* is a wonderful place to start learning how to arrange flowers for tea. And that is why we have decided to start this “Chabana Series” (hopefully spanning many issues) with an issue introducing the history, philosophy and practice of *ikebana*. There is always a line between what we can discuss in a magazine and what needs to be learned in person. For that reason, it is always helpful to find a local teacher. You will be happy to know that once we build Light Meets Life and open up a course schedule again, we plan to have an *ikebana* teacher come into our Intro to Cha Dao courses to offer a class on *chabana*.

We have translated six articles for you in this issue. Three discuss the philosophy and origins of Chinese flower arranging and then three explore half the types of arrangements based on the container: the vase (*ping*, 瓶), dish (*pan*, 盤), jar (*gang*, 缸), bowl (*wan*, 碗), bamboo tube (*zhutong*, 竹筒) or basket (*lan*, 籃). In this way, we will begin our exploration of *chabana* with some general and practical discussions that can get us all started on our flower journeys.

Like all things related to a tea practice, we view a discussion of flower arranging for chaxi as a topic that we need to have many, many conversations about. Whether it is water, tea-pots or charcoal arranging, all things tea-related are like this. We start with generalities and slowly move from the gross to the subtle over the course of many discussions. There really is no way to talk about *chabana* without first discussing the broader topic of *ikebana*, in other words. And so this is the first in a series of explorations that will hike through the forest of the topic and arrange lots of glorious flowers for tea. In future issues, we can cover the other three types of vessels used for arranging flowers and then also move into specific skills. We can also start to apply these skills to chaxi, making our tea sessions more beautiful.



茶 On p. 31, we go more into depth on one of the six vessels used in traditional flower arrangements, the bamboo tube. It is a great way to start converting our flower arranging lessons and skills to tea. Bamboo has a long relationship with tea. Its natural simplicity makes it a perfect candidate for chabana. This arrangement also demonstrates how river stones, or other things we find, can fit into our flower arrangements. Also, this demonstrates clearly what we mean when we say that flowers for tea should appear as they are in the wild, and therefore not distract from the subject of the chaxi, which is always the tea.



Scholar Flowers



茶人: Huan House of Flowers (浣花草堂)

There is a deep and vast history of flower arranging throughout China and the rest of the Far East. The refinement of flower arranging and its introduction into the tea room has a lot to do with the scholars who created an art and culture around flower arranging. Flower arranging is a transient art that connects us to the fleeting beauty of Nature Herself, and it is therefore at home within traditional Chinese cosmology.

The art of Chinese flower arranging originated during the Six Dynasties (220–589) and reached its pinnacle during the Tang (618–907) and Song (960–1279) dynasties. By the Yuan (1279–1368), Ming (1368–1644) and Qing (1644–1911) dynasties, it had already become a time-honored art, and it has continued through to the present day. Flower arranging is a unification of spirit and Nature, an act of creation that produces a state of meditative flow. It's an integrative art form that is born from the interaction between natural environment and human sensibilities.

Ming Dynasty poet and travel writer Yuan Zhongdao (袁中道) once said, “Flowers are made from a sort of bright energy, shining between Heaven and Earth.” Hence, flowers can beautify one's appearance: fine flowers keep one youthful, while not-so-good flowers impel one to strive for improve-

ment. Scholars and literati observed Nature and experienced everything in it with the heart of a poet; they expressed their poetic intention through the medium of flowers and plants. The subtlety of this poetic and artistic creation gave their works a scholarly air. The Eastern style of flower arrangement has a kind of elegant stillness to it. A number of historical figures are known for their outstanding talent in the field, including the tea-loving Emperor Song Huizong (宋徽宗); the famous poet Su Shi (Su Dongpo, 蘇東坡); Yuan Zhongdao, the writer of the above quote; Ming Dynasty painter Chen Hongshou (陳鴻壽); and Ming Dynasty writer, tea aficionado and art collector Zhang Qiande (張謙德).

On the premise of philosophies such as “let the whole of Heaven and Earth into your heart” (a saying of Su Dongpo) and “the Dao follows Nature,” these scholar-artists opened a

deep connection to Nature and spirit that could be channeled into flower arrangements and other art. When faced with imposing green hills, we feel the sentiment embodied in the lines, “when I see the green hills, I am filled with delight; I imagine the green hills, on seeing me, feel it too.” When we admire a lotus bloom, we think of a certain noble virtue, of how it has “grown out of the mud yet remained unsullied.” When we see a chrysanthemum, we feel its lofty ambition, “all the prouder after enduring the frost.” When we glimpse the tiny winter plum blossoms defiantly persevering against the cold, bravely unfurling their life force amid a world of ice and snow, we also feel the truth in this principle of Nature that applies equally to the world of human affairs: “without enduring the bone-chilling winter, we would not get the sweet fragrance of plum blossom assailing our nostrils.”





SCHOLAR & TEA FLOWERS

人文和茶花

When we say “scholars,” we are talking about the word “*wenren* (文人)” in Chinese, which literally means “person of culture or literature.” This can refer to those who have cultivated literary and moral virtues, scholars, officials, literati and those who are enamored of reading and study. It’s essentially an umbrella term for the intellectuals of ancient China. Chinese calligrapher and painter Chen Hengke (陳衡恪) believed that scholars ought to embody four essential qualities—“moral character, knowledge, creative talent and the ability to think”—and that “once one possesses these four qualities, they can then be perfected.” The term “scholar flowers” refers to scholars using flowers as a medium to express their inner feelings and inspiration. One particular style of scholarly flower arrangement, “tea flowers,” is a simplified version of the “study flowers” and “room flowers” styles.

The tea flowers style first appeared in the Ming Dynasty, during the period lasting from the Hongzhi to the Wanli eras (1488–1595), and was born out of the popular trend among

literati for all things ancient—for example, appreciating antiques such as flower vases and ritual vessels. Since it made a nice accompaniment for the tea art that was in vogue at the time, admiring tea flowers while sipping tea became a favored pastime for scholars and literati. In fact, during the Tang Dynasty, Chinese people already knew the delight of sipping tea and appreciating flowers, though at the time the “tea flowers” type of flower arrangement didn’t yet exist (and they are absent from most historical texts). There’s a poem by Tang Dynasty monk Jiao Ran called “Nine Days of Drinking Tea With Mr. Lu Yu” that goes:

*Nine days at the mountain monastery;
Yellow chrysanthemums grow
by the eastern fence.
The common folk
like to drown themselves in wine;
Who understands
the worth of fragrant tea?*

Hence, chrysanthemum blooms floating in a tea cup will add to the fragrance even more. The spirit and

intent of tea flowers is to enhance the experience of drinking tea; to teach people to value calm serenity and quiet the heart, mind and desires, and thus to experience the Dao of Heaven and Earth. The appeal of tea flowers lies in their innocent and unaffected expression of feeling, their pure and serene charm. They represent the pursuit of quiet simplicity and transcendence of worldly concerns, which arises from the sophisticated charm of their spirit. “If the spirit is not at ease, then the hands will not create order.” (This is a quote from a classic book called *Huainanzi*, 淮南子, that discusses Daoism and other philosophical and religious topics.)



Writing a Landscape



茶人: *Huan House of Flowers* (浣花草堂)

There are many different styles and philosophies behind flower arranging. Like a chaxi, a flower arrangement is open to boundless creativity and unlimited themes. Trying to create a microcosm that represents the macrocosm is one of the easiest places to start our flower journeys, and it is one of the best ways to add reminders into our practice to stay connected to the seasons, the weather and the cosmos all around us, which is one of Tea's great lessons.

Chinese flower arrangements have a long history and come in many different forms. By use, they can be categorized into flowers for religious offerings, imperial court flowers, scholar flowers, flower arrangements made by ordinary folk and tea flowers at tea houses. By season or occasion, there are flowers for Chinese New Year, the Dragon Boat Festival, other festivities and everyday use. In terms of the type of room they're presented in, there are palace flowers, lobby flowers, hall flowers, study flowers, room flowers, tea room flowers and so on. In terms of the shape of the flower vessel, they can be categorized into vase flowers, dish flowers, jar flowers, bowl flowers, tube flowers and basket flowers (these first six are the main types of vessel in Chinese flower arranging), plus wall flowers, hanging flowers and so forth. Finally, in terms of the inspiration and intent of the art-

ist, there are conceptual flower arrangements, those intended to express an idea or feeling, those that recreate a natural landscape (called "writing a landscape") and those focused on creating a certain shape.

Throughout the history of Chinese flower arranging, some of the most classic styles include the pre-Tang era (pre-618) ancient religious offering flowers and conceptual flowers; the Tang (618–907) and Song (960–1279) dynasties' grand classical-shaped flowers (or classical shape-mimicking flowers), banquet decoration flowers and conceptual flowers; the Five Dynasties-era (907–960) free-form Zen meditation room flowers; the expressive flowers of the Yuan Dynasty (1279–1368); the Ming Dynasty (1368–1644) grand conceptual flowers, scholar flowers, frame flowers and neoclassical flowers; and the Qing Dynasty (1644–1911) "writing a landscape" flowers, scholar

lattice flowers, "homophone"-shaped flowers (which employ wordplay based on the names of the flowers to convey symbolism), shaped flowers with fruit or vegetables and grand conceptual flowers arranged by ordinary folk.

The "writing a landscape (*xie jing hua*, 寫景花)" style of flower arrangement originated from the Tang Dynasty "spring dish" style. In this style, the artist is faithful to Nature, aiming to create a truthful portrayal of natural scenery in its many guises, with the emphasis on natural beauty. The creator of the piece sees the dish as a representation of the earth, keeping the natural state of the plants and flowers in mind and aiming to praise the mystery of the Creator, avoiding any falseness or fussy sentimentality in the work. This results in a natural ease in the branches and leaves, with a clean and appealing sense of space that calms the senses and purifies the heart-mind.



During the Ming and Qing dynasties, this landscape-based style of flower arranging enjoyed a surge in popularity due to the influence of *penzai* (盆栽), the art of depicting trees and landscapes in miniature (similar to Japanese *bonsai*). The realism employed in these pieces is perfectly summed up in this quote from Shen Sanbai: “It can embody the very wind and sun, rain and dew; its beauty is so exquisite it could even be called Divine.” Of all the styles of flower arranging, *pan hua* (盘花, dish arrangements) best embody this quality.

Each time we create a work in the “writing a landscape” style, we imagine all the natural landscapes and scenery that we’ve seen and use the materials at hand to bring them to life: precipitous mountain ridges, small flowing streams, the weird and wonderful stone shapes of rock gardens, fields of wild flowers and grasses. Every part of the

piece showcases some part of Nature: a plant, a tree, all these different landscapes. At most, they are the work of a Divine hand; at least, they can bring a little tranquility to the mind. Just like traditional Chinese landscape painting, this style is fully focused on portraying Nature; only flower arranging is a little closer to Nature itself—it’s a living, three-dimensional display. For long-time scholars of flower art such as us, the “writing a landscape” style is one of the easier styles in which to express oneself. It is also perfect for Cha Dao. However, the reason we are so fond of using this style for our pieces is not because it’s easy, but rather because it provides an outlet for describing all the wonderful scenery that resides deep within one’s heart.



寫景花

微觀世界中的宏觀世界



人到自然







Flower Offerings

茶人: Huan House of Flowers (浣花草堂)

Flower arranging as an art was also created, maintained and influenced by Buddhist monks, nuns and lay practitioners who were creating arrangements as offerings to their altars. Having an altar can be a beautiful way to open the heart and mind and also to practice our flower arrangements. Whether we create flower arrangements for the Buddha or another deity or for our chaxi, all great arrangements are really offerings to the sacred, from Nature to that which is holy in Nature and in us.

During the Han Dynasty (202 BCE–220 CE), Buddhism spread eastward into China, and with it came various aspects of Buddhist culture. Later, during the Northern and Southern Dynasties (420–589), the practice of offering flowers to the Buddha saw a lot of development and gradually evolved into the art of flower arranging. From that time forward, throughout the Tang (618–907), Song (960–1279), Ming (1368–1644) and Qing dynasties (1644–1911), flower arrangements gradually found their way into many other areas of life and became a fully-fledged branch of China's traditional arts: flower art. Through the medium of flower art, the Buddhist concept of “one flower, one world; one leaf, one Bodhi” took on sublime significance, representing spiritual cultivation and enlightenment.

Religious flower arrangements are one of the classic types of Chinese flower arrangement, with Buddhist offerings being the main variety. Aside from their artistic value, Buddhist flower arrangements brim with rich and moving significance—offering flowers to the Buddha not only expresses the respect and piety of the one making the offering, but transforms the flowers: they no longer simply bloom and wither for themselves alone, but their Divine beauty becomes an offering to the Buddha. In this way, offering flowers to the Buddha and the Bodhisattvas creates merit not only for the person making the offering, but also for the flowers themselves.

In Buddhism, the act of offering flowers to the Buddha and the Bodhisattvas has four meanings: one, respect for the Buddha; two, devotion to the Buddha; three, gratitude to the Bud-

dha; and four, taking the Buddha as one's teacher and studying his teachings.

Buddhist flower offerings come in three forms, which evolved from the two types of flower vessel that are mentioned in Buddhist scripture: flower baskets (*hua ju*, 花筥) and flower dishes (*hua min*, 花皿). The first type consists of scattered flowers, while the second involves flowers arranged in a dish. The second volume of the *Infinite Life Sutra* contains this passage: “Hanging paintings, lighting lamps, scattering flowers and burning incense; in this way I dedicate my merit and express my wish to be born in the dharma realm.” Scattered flowers are one of the traditional “Four Offerings” to the Buddha, the other three of which are incense, light and tea. Of course, flowers these days are more often in vases on altars large and small.





Scattered flowers take the form of a basket filled with lotus petals or pieces of paper in the shape of flowers, which are scattered at Buddhist ceremonies or other special events to add to the occasion. Flowers bring color and beauty to the altar, creating a Heavenly and upward-moving energy. Early dish-based flower offerings involved filling a dish with fresh flowers or petals. These are also called “piled flowers.” Later, following the invention of special dishes for holding flower arrangements (known as “*zhan jing pan*,” 占景盤, “dishes for holding scenery”), these evolved into today’s *pan hua* dish-based floral offerings to the Buddha.

The third style of Buddhist floral offering is the vase offering (*ping gong*,

瓶供). The arrangement method is similar to what was found in ancient Egypt. It originated in India as a synthesis of lotus flowers and the *Purnaghata* style of auspicious vase, and made its way to China around the Northern and Southern Dynasties. The following description of this style of offering appears in *History of the Southern Dynasties: Splendid Tales of the Prince of Jin’an*: “Some people make offerings of lotus flowers to the Buddha. The monks will use a copper jar and fill it with water to soak the stems in, so that the flowers do not wilt.”

The arranging of flowers is itself a method of self-cultivation and can be used to encourage mindfulness, a natural aesthetic and a connection with

Nature. Through the practice itself, we are also transformed and have the potential to change those who appreciate our flowers as well. As in Nature, flowers uplift us all.

The art of Chinese flower arranging originated from Buddhist floral offerings. Today, flower enthusiasts have revived many ancient types of flower arrangement in order to better promote Chinese traditional culture. We hope that these things of beauty capture the hearts of even more flower lovers, so that we may cultivate our hearts and minds through flowers. Flowers, with their own enchanting power, can truly change our lives.



佛法僧



Our Fifth Annual Photography Contest

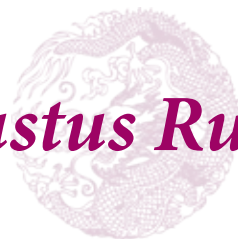
年度攝影比賽

Every year, members and non-members submit photographs that express their Tea spirit. We so enjoy seeing how people creatively show the ways Tea is manifesting in their lives. It is always so hard to choose our winners each year. We discuss our favorites, ask guests what they think and are often awestruck by so many of the entries that it is hard to choose a winner. Alas, it is a contest! We would like to commend the bravery of all the photographers and to say that we love them all. Check out all the entries:

bit.ly/teaphotocontest

This year, our winner is:

Augustus Rushing



He's from the USA. What a wonderful and beautiful photograph! Not only are the lighting and the scenery incredible, but in looking at this photograph, we are inspired to hike to a distant tea destination. You can hear the waterfall, feel its cool spray and notice more language in its voice now that you have had a few cups of tea, at least we can looking at this photograph...



There were so many amazing photographs this year that we chose five runners-up to receive some great cakes of tea:



Simon Osten, Germany



Ben Youngbaer, USA

Dhyana Arroyo, Spain



Alix McIntosh, Scotland





Rita Tsui, Taiwan



Bamboo Tubes

茶人: Huan House of Flowers (浣花草堂)

There are six types of vessels used in traditional flower arrangements. In this issue, we will cover three of them, starting with bamboo tubes (zhutong, 竹筒). Bamboo has a rich and deep connection with Chinese culture, art and history—perhaps more than any other plant, even tea. Bamboo also has an ancient and starstruck love affair with tea, too, and so many teas are packaged in bamboo (some were even mixed with bamboo leaves back in the day). The simplicity of bamboo makes it the perfect place to start and a wonderful vessel for arranging flowers for tea.

The art of Chinese flower arranging originated 1500 years ago during the Six Dynasties (220–589) and is one of China's important classical art forms. Flower arrangements are used at festivals and as religious offerings; in other settings, whether for decorating the imperial court or being admired by scholars, they always make ingenious use of the beauty of flowers to lift the artistic atmosphere to its highest heights. People even designated the fifteenth day of the second lunar month as the traditional “Flower Festival,” also known as the “Birthday of a Hundred Flowers,” which has become an important national festival in China.

Traditional flower arrangement places importance on the use of space and the spirit of life. The combination of these two elements is the most distinct characteristic of Chinese flower art; displaying different works of flow-

er art in different locations at different times will produce various different effects. In order to give every piece of flower art the best possible home to settle in, various types of vessel were adopted—these became the six traditional types of vessel used in Chinese flower art: the vase (*ping*, 瓶), dish (*pan*, 盤), jar (*gang*, 缸), bowl (*wan*, 碗), bamboo tube (*zhutong*, 竹筒) and basket (*lan*, 籃).

Students and researchers of Chinese flower art all know that vase flower arrangements (*ping hua*, 瓶花) are very difficult to accomplish—many practice attempts are needed to create a successful vase-based piece. “Tube flowers,” or *tong hua* (筒花), are just as challenging; an artist must practice for a long time to be able to achieve the unique style of tube flower arrangements with their graceful allure. We think this is one of the reasons why we like *tong hua* arrangements so much.

The use of bamboo tubes as a vessel for flower arrangements goes back a long way—records indicate that it originated during the Five Dynasties period (907–960, between the Tang, 618–907, and Song, 960–279, dynasties). There's a passage in *Records of the Pure and the Supernatural* by Song Dynasty writer Tao Gu that describes their use: “Each year at the height of spring, the roof beams, ridgepoles, windows, walls, pillars and stairs are decorated at intervals with bamboo tubes, each one packed with a medley of flowers. It is like a bright paradise.” From this passage, we can see that more than a thousand years ago, bamboo tubes were already being used as flower vessels to hang on the wall or suspend elsewhere in a house as decorations. Bamboo has a powerful relationship to all of Chinese life and art and is really the perfect vessel for creating a flower arrangement.





PRINCIPLES OF TUBE ARRANGEMENTS

筒花插作細則

Ancient scholars were great fans of bamboo, and thus bamboo tubes became an important type of vessel for flower arrangements. They differ based on their intended use, with either one, two or several partitions for the flowers. They can hang on the wall or stand upright in a study, tea or meditation room. They can be arranged solo, in pairs or groups of three, or even joined together in larger groups. Bamboo cylinders are straight and upright; made with the least amount of human input of all the types of flower vessel. *Tong hua* tube flower arrangements should be elegant, clean and simple.

The art of making vessels for flower arrangements is also extremely complex. Those who are familiar with bamboo vessels know that bamboo is susceptible to insect damage and to splitting as it expands and contracts from the heat and cold. Managing to preserve a bamboo flower vessel for a long time is a unique life skill in itself. During the crafting process, the vessel must be fired and lacquered to prevent it from splitting, growing mold or fading.

Bamboo tubes are light and graceful, while tube-shaped pottery vases are heavy and sturdy. With tube flower arrangements, the emphasis is

on the envoy stems, which must create elegant lines. For smaller *tong hua* arrangements, soft, flexible twigs or grasses make for the most pleasing result. Bamboo or pottery cylinders can have either a single opening for the flowers, or two sections each with an opening, which differentiates them from the other styles of flower vessel. With two-section vessels, the upper part is best positioned slightly to the north of the center line and the lower one to the south. In order to create a sense of balance, the upper and lower sections should not be directly above and below each other. When arranging flowers in this type of vessel, the flowers in the upper section will create more of a sense of movement if they're arranged to protrude horizontally or hang downward over the edge; but care must be taken to maintain the balance. The *kenzan* (劍山), a type of implement for fixing flowers consisting of brass needles in a lead base, is not suited to basic *tong hua* arrangements. Y-shaped branches with nicely shaped bases are a good choice; branches with unusual shapes can also be considered.

The flowers in *tong hua* tube arrangements also developed from the six basic flower shapes, namely vertical, inclining, protruding horizon-

tally, spread horizontally, hanging downwards and composite. However, their biggest point of difference from the other types of flower arrangement is the long, slender, clean lines of the vessel that call for a sparing amount of flowers, creating a relaxed, understated feel. Thanks to this, they have found favor with scholars and Chajin from all walks of life, and these cylindrical flower vessels can be spotted at all sorts of spaces and events, reflecting their unique superiority.

One special quality of bamboo vessels is that bamboo as a material is intimately linked to our daily lives. Bamboo has its own spiritual meaning, too, symbolizing noble character and integrity in all one's dealings. So the use of bamboo for flower vessels signifies persevering in the study of traditional Chinese flower arranging with the moral character of bamboo, with continuing upward momentum, and passing on this wonderful culture to future generations.



生 長 于 竹

像是漫步穿過樹林



Dish Flowers

茶人: Huan House of Flowers (浣花草堂)

Dish flowers are another of the ancient styles of ikebana, using flat dishes of any kind to create a microcosm of a body of water the flowers rise out of. For this type of arrangement, which is also very suitable to tea, we can use any dish that we have lying around. We love to find antique, lost or left out dishes for flower arranging. In fact, restoring and re-purposing old things meant for something else, giving them a second life in tea, is one of the tea lover's greatest joys. Look around and you may find many interesting dishes for flowers.

Flower arranging is the most classic example of art in everyday life. The lovely appearance of flowers allows us to sate our thirst for visual beauty, while the giving and receiving of flowers brings joy to the heart, transmitting feelings of love and goodwill through the flowers. Culture can be understood as the synthesis and distillation of all of life's details; it permeates all aspects of life, ever-present and ever-growing. The culture of flower art is also ever present and continually developing; although it has been through periods of relative obscurity over its thousand-year history, its glow can never be truly dimmed. Traditional flower art is truly a treasure beyond compare. Through flower arranging, we find a way to cultivate ourselves, which is enough, but then we can also express that cultivation to others through our creations, which speak for the heart and for Nature.

“*Pan hua* (盤花),” literally “dish flowers,” is a branch of Chinese flower art that involves arranging the flowers in a shallow dish or tray filled with water. Its origins can be traced back over two thousand years to the pottery dishes of the Han Dynasty (202 BCE–220 CE) and the “shallow dish flowers” of Indian Buddhism. Our forebears in the Han Dynasty already had a richly developed imagination and sense of artistic expression. They used round pottery dishes to echo the shape of an expansive pond or lake and arranged other pottery shapes such as trees, pavilions or ducks within the dish, thus symbolizing the boundless space of the Earth. This art form is the earliest known example of the Han people using dishes as vessels for flowers.

In Chinese flower art, the vessel is seen as representing the Earth, and particular attention is paid to the position and orientation of the flowers—

to the “Heavenly law” governing the space between the flowers, and to the “Earthly law” of the position of the flowers within the vessel. These principles play out most clearly in the art of *pan hua*, which is why beginners first study flower arranging in dishes. Each dish of flowers helps build a foundation of knowledge. When arranging in a dish or tray, it is easy to find a “foothold” for each flower as well as the direction of the Heavenly law. The *pan hua* technique also lends itself to appreciating the calm space of the water surface and the lively beauty of the flowers gracefully standing above, to experience the feeling captured in the poem, “to become a butterfly among the flowers; sleeping blissfully in the sunny garden house.” (Poem is by Qing Dynasty, 1644–1911, calligrapher Qian Tao, 錢濤, from the book *Hundred Flowers Play on Words*, 百花彈詞).

盤花





Pan hua arrangements are characterised by the wide, flat space they offer, which makes it difficult to stand the flowers up. Because of this, early *pan hua* arrangements were all of the type known as “*min hua* (皿花),” where sprays of flowers were simply placed onto the dish. This most classic of flower arrangement techniques is known as a “landscape in a dish,” since each dish offers its own unique scenery. This was one of the earliest types of spatial art during that period. As time went on and techniques progressed, the art of arranging flowers in a dish gradually evolved and became richer. In later times, a new technique was developed to make it easier and more efficient to arrange the flowers: the nineteen-hole lotus seed head flower arrangement method. This technique was invented during the Song Dynas-

ty (960–1279) and involved placing a lotus seed head sculpted from copper on top of a porcelain dish. A radish could be placed inside the lotus pod, so that the flowers could be inserted through the holes and stuck into the radish. After use, the gadget could be removed and washed, providing a solution that was both beautiful and convenient. One surviving example of this type of copper lotus pod can be found in the collection of the Ashmolean Museum at the University of Oxford in England. At the beginning of the Qing Dynasty, Shen Sanbai (沈三百) invented another kind of implement for securing the flowers, which consisted of copper nails that could be fixed directly onto the bottom of the dish. This was another new improvement to the flower dishes of past generations. During the twentieth century, the Jap-

anese made further improvements to this technique, creating an implement made of copper needles in a lead base. This was the “*kenzan*” (剣山, literally “mountain of swords”) that we are familiar with today in the Japanese art of *ikebana*. It provided an even better method of securing the flowers, opening up new avenues for artistic expression.

Many-Faceted Pan Hua

In terms of creative intent, Chinese flower arranging can be grouped into four main categories: “writing a landscape,” conceptual, “expression of the heart” and “creating a shape.” The “writing a landscape” type involves arranging the flowers in the vessel to imitate natural scenery,



creating a wonderful miniature world as described in the line “a tiny landscape can send its message over a thousand *li*.” Conceptual flower arrangements are dignified and can contain symbolism relating to the social order. With the “expression of the heart” style, the artist aims to express their own mood or interests, combining different types of vessels and flowers to communicate their aspirations, their feelings of affection or sorrow. The “creating a shape” style is focused on the shape or form that the flowers create; the artist uses the flowers to recreate the proportions of things, pursuing aesthetic beauty by creating new spaces, new life, new shapes.

There are also many variations of *pan hua*. They can be roughly divided into the following broad categories: vertical, leaning, protruding horizon-

tally, spreading horizontally, hanging downwards and composite. A student of Chinese flower arranging must study each of these *pan hua* techniques as part of their basic training. In addition, to create a piece of flower art that truly reflects the style, the artist should also consider whether the work embodies a special meaning, and make sure that contextual elements such as the current solar term and the surrounding venue, ornaments and atmosphere come together to create a fitting foundation for the flower arrangement.

Modern flower arranging can also make use of the location, surroundings and people as elements of artistic expression. Although the act of assembling a flower arrangement is easy in principle, for an artist to truly express their inner feelings and intentions through the work takes many years

of study, practice and accumulated experience. There’s a poem that goes, “When fragrance fills the void, flowers are often near... Those who are connected by destiny will think of each other often.” Every work of flower art can be seen as an expression of inner sentiment; through the medium of flowers, we can accompany each other, even just for a while.





茶人: *Lai Xueli* (赖雪麗)

Jar flowers are the most distinct of the six types of vessels and a bit more difficult to arrange. This lesson is moving into more advanced aspects of flower arrangement, which is the perfect ending point for this introductory issue, leading into more exploration in future issues within this Chabana Series. We hope the articles in this issue have inspired you to begin or deepen your practice of arranging flowers for tea, as it can be a practice of self-cultivation in and of itself, while also adding so much to our tea practice.

Of the six main styles of Chinese flower arrangement, the vessels used for the “*gang hua*” (缸花) or “jar flowers” style have the most distinctive shape. They are characterized by a large mouth, full, round belly and ample space within the vase. These vessels have been described in ancient texts with phrases such as “the prime minister’s belly is large enough to pole a boat around in,” and “it is large and has an ample capacity.” These paint a vivid picture of the feeling that the *gang* style of flower vessel gives the viewer: it has a grand presence that echoes the demeanor of an influential figure—someone honest, straightforward and capable who isn’t a stickler for trivial details. From ancient times until the present day, this shape of jar has also proven itself the best type of vessel for storing food, water and often even tea.

History of Jar Flowers

The *gang hua* style of flower arranging originated in the ninth century during the Tang Dynasty (618–907) and reached its peak in the Ming (1368–1644) and Qing (1644–1911) dynasties. In *Bestowing Nine Flowers*, Tang Dynasty writer Luo Qiu (羅虬) said the following regarding arranging peonies: “Ensure they are sheltered from the wind; cut the flowers, immerse them in spring water in a jade jar and place them on a carved stand; hang paintings and select some music, then admire them while reciting poetry.” From the mention of a “jade jar” in this passage, we can infer that at that time people had already started using jade or white porcelain water jars as flower vessels. In addition, jar flower arrangements are depicted in Ming Dynasty paintings such as

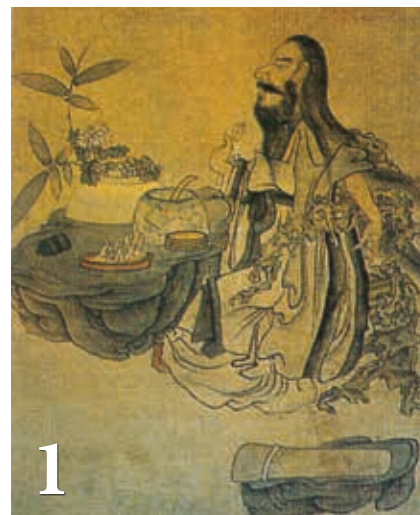
Chen Hongshou’s (陳洪綬) ink wash *Dawn Scroll Painting* (Figure 1) and Ding Yunpeng’s (丁雲鵬) *Arhat Ink Wash Painting Collection* (Figure 2). These works reflect the fact that *gang* jars were already widely used in daily life; they captured the hearts of both ordinary folk and sophisticated scholars. The *gang* can be considered an essential part of Chinese people’s sense of aesthetics, of finding beauty in everyday life.

The *Dawn Scroll Painting* depicts a decoratively shaped rock, atop which sits a flower vessel in the *gang* shape, containing an arrangement of bamboo and chrysanthemums. The artist has selected a large chrysanthemum head as the focal point, accompanied by bamboo branches, which signify the aspirations and integrity of a scholar. This arrangement very much embodies the lofty grandeur of *gang hua*.



缸花藝

復興古代花辦



These are the antique paintings mentioned in the article, each showing jar flowers in ancient times; a testament to the long heritage of this art. Flower arranging was part of all areas of life, from the simplest altars in ordinary homes to elegant arrangements for offerings in temples, from royalty to scholars and tea rooms.



It exudes the distinct character of classical Chinese flower arrangements, bringing a feeling of historic nostalgia to the viewer. Ding Yunpeng's painting of a solemn, whiskered Arhat depicts a lotus blossom in a copper jar sitting atop a table. Its lively elegance calls to mind a maiden's rosy cheeks among pale jade clouds. Aside from the aforementioned works, *gang hua* flower arrangements often appear in Chinese New Year paintings. One example of this is the *Honor and Prosperity Painting* by Bai Zi (Figure 3), which depicts an ornamental flower jar on the left in the background. Another example is the *Four Arts Painting* (Figure 4), which features a *gang* being used as a receptacle for calligraphy and painting scrolls.

Because of its large mouth and generous belly, the *gang* jar is best suited to large, voluminous flower heads. Adding some branches for contrast makes for an even more poised effect. To create a sense of spirit when arranging a

piece of *gang hua* flower art, the artist will often leave one third of the water surface empty to give the inner sides of the jar a sense of solitary serenity. In terms of the shape formed by the flowers, the artist will seek a sense of majestic grandeur and dignity, while also capturing a sense of movement.

From the Tang Dynasty to the present day, the *gang hua* jar flower style has continued to develop and flourish. It carries a deep cultural and historical significance. When arranging a work of *gang hua* flower art, the artist must make use of different flowers with different points, lines and surfaces, using classical techniques to incorporate modern and imported plants and flowers into the work. Since jar arrangements require flowers with large blooms, varieties imported from Africa such as banksia, king protea, queen protea, other types of protea and hydrangeas are the best choice available. Other suitable flower varieties grown locally in Taiwan include the tiger or-

chid (*Cymbidium hookerianum*), peony chrysanthemum, king chrysanthemum and hydrangea.

When scholarly poems and songs are integrated into a work of flower art, it naturally enhances the artist's creativity and ability to express what they feel. This is a key reason that Chinese flower art has been passed down continuously through the ages ever since the Wei, Jin and Northern and South dynasties ("Six Dynasties," 220–589). It has taken root deep in the veins of all Chinese people, a cultural and artistic inheritance that soothes and enriches the hearts of all those of Chinese heritage. We have been bestowed with a great blessing, and we can be extremely proud of this elegant traditional.

The Basic Shapes

Gang hua arrangements can be divided into five basic shapes formed by the flowers and plants: vertical, lean-

瓶花



ing, protruding horizontally, hanging downward and neutral. Each is a complicated design, requiring some practice to master. It can take a long time to learn to create nice jar arrangements. We often start with a diagram of the arrangement we are trying to create, using symbols to represent the different stems.

Firstly, we must be clear about the proportions and symbolic meaning of the three main flower categories, referred to as “stems.” The relative length of the three main stem types can be expressed using the ratio 3:5:7, with three representing the “host stems,” five the “guest stems” and seven the “envoy stems.”

Host Stems

These are denoted with the word “*zhu* (主),” meaning “host” or “main.” They symbolize a monarch, leader or father, steady and authoritative. Associated with wisdom and rationality,

they form the core of the piece. The most noteworthy characteristic of the host stems is that they are usually positioned facing south, with the flower blooms directly facing the viewer. This is based on the tradition in ancient times that the monarch’s throne would always face south, which gave rise to the phrase “the king looks south.” Host stems are large blooms with a noble quality to them and should have the most beautiful appearance, color and fragrance and the utmost style. When drawing out arrangement diagrams, they are represented with the symbol □. Secondary host flowers are denoted with the symbol ■.

Envoy Stems

These are denoted with the word “*shi* (使),” meaning “envoy” or “messenger.” They are about 1.6 times or twice as long as the vessel the flowers are arranged in, or at most 2.5 times as long. If they are too long, it symbolizes

looking down on the world. The envoy stems are the longest of the three main stem categories, and of the three, they most clearly express the intent of the piece. When choosing stems for this purpose, it’s important to pay attention to their direction and angle; ideally, they should display elegant lines and be slightly bent with a nimble posture. The envoy stems symbolize mighty generals, servants, soldiers and messengers who can convey the intentions of the host stems. When the envoy stems are placed vertically, they give the work a sense of peace, dignity and respect; when they are on a slight incline, they imbue the piece with a lively, nimble, restless feel. When inclined at a more extreme angle, they signify pursuit, anger, military expeditions or roaming; when they are suspended downward, they give a sense of looseness that connotes struggle or dispirited feelings. In diagrams, the symbol for envoy stems is △, and the symbol for secondary envoy stems is ▲.

Guest Stems

These branches are described with the word “*ke* (客),” “visitor” or “guest.” They act as friendly companions to the host stems, sitting somewhat lower or higher than them. They symbolize honored guests or aides, complementing and assisting the host stems, giving the air of a military commander or prime minister. They tend to display less individuality and are usually of mid-toned colors. In diagrams, they are denoted with the symbol ○, while secondary guest stems are ●. In addition, some “auxiliary stems” are generally added to fill in any gaps and add to the grandeur of the host stems. However, these must not be too overpowering and steal the limelight. Their length can be decided according to what the piece needs; they are usually fine and limber, adding the finishing touch to the piece. Their symbol is a capital letter “T.”

1. The proportions of the three main stem types should be judged according to the modern approach—a ratio of 3:5:7. The diameter of the flower vessel plus its height is represented by the number five, which is also the length of the guest stems. Five plus two-fifths of five equals seven, which is the length of the envoy stems, while the host stems should be three-fifths the length of the guest stems (i.e., the number three).

2. Before you begin, plan out your intention for the piece and what ideas you want it to express. Once you’ve thought this out, you can start choosing the flowers.

3. Choose what size of *gang* you will use as your flower vessel: extra-large, large, medium or small. You’ll also need to consider the size of the display location when deciding the measurements of the *gang*; this will make for a more effective overall result.

4. Selecting the right combination of flowers in terms of type and color will make or break the piece and must be given due attention. Aside from spending time planning and preparing, doing practice studies before making the final piece is also a critical step. This will allow you to perfect the final piece, selecting the optimal combination of flowers and colors.

5. Choose any other accessories that will be displayed with the piece. Well-chosen accessories will boost the overall effectiveness of the work, while poorly chosen ones will have the opposite effect.

6. When choosing a name or theme for the piece, you can base it on your inspiration for creating it. This will help the viewer more quickly understand your piece and the creative intent behind it.

Appreciating a Jar Arrangement

Tree of Life (Money Tree)—Bodhi Heart (Shown Right)

The Money Tree is a legendary tree that drops coins when shaken. Although the whole tree is dry and withered, its firm and unyielding nature is revealed in its stance, as expressed in the spirit of the *Qiangua* (乾卦), one of the eight trigrams from the *Book of Changes* (*I Ching*, 易经): “Just as the Heavens ceaselessly revolve, so must a noble person be constantly striving for progress.”

The opening of the first hexagram (also *Qiangua*) in the *I Ching* includes the words “*yuan, heng, li, zhen* (元亨利贞).” Scholars have come up with many different interpretations for these, one of which is “great and originating, penetrating, advantageous, correct and firm.” The *Book of Changes: Telling the Future* (周易·象傳) contains this passage, quoted from James Legge’s classic 1854 translation: “Vast is the ‘great and originating (power)’ indicated by *Qian*! All things owe to it their beginning: it contains all the meaning belonging to (the name) Heaven. The clouds move and the rain is distributed; the various things appear in their developed forms. (The sages) grandly understand (the connection between) the end and the beginning, and how (the indications of) the six lines (in the hexagram) are accomplished, (each) in its season. (Accordingly) they mount (the carriage) drawn by those six dragons at the proper times, and drive through the sky. The method of *Qian* is to change and transform,

so that everything obtains its correct nature as appointed (by the mind of Heaven); and (thereafter the conditions of) great harmony are preserved in union. The result is what is advantageous, and correct and firm. (The sage) appears aloft, high above all things, and the myriad states all enjoy repose.” It’s clear that to survive, it must have been a very robust variety of tree, its posture recalling the “dragon on the wing in the sky” mentioned in the fifth “nine” of the *Qiangua*.

It’s just like the Tree of Life that holds eternal life and the Money Tree with its untold riches. People like to place these in their entry halls to symbolize the boundless hope these holy trees offer; they signify everlasting health and the lasting presence of divine spirits. The *Kun* section of the *Book of Changes* says: “*Kun* (represents) what is great and originating, penetrating, advantageous, correct and having the firmness of a mare.” This is followed by the passage: “Complete is the ‘great and originating (capacity)’ indicated by *Kun*! All things owe to it their birth; it receives obediently the influences of Heaven. *Kun*, in its largeness, supports and contains all things. Its excellent capacity matches the unlimited power (of *Qian*). Its comprehension is wide, and its brightness great. The various things obtain (by it) their full development. The mare is a creature of earthly kind. Its (power of) moving on the earth is without limit; it is mild and docile, advantageous and firm: such is the course of the superior man. ‘If he take the initiative, he goes astray’: he misses, that is, his proper course. ‘If he follows,’ he is docile, and gets into his regular (course). ‘In the south-west he will get friends’: he will be walking with those of his own class. ‘In the north-east he will lose friends’: but in the end there will be ground for congratulations. ‘The good fortune arising from resting in firmness’ corresponds to the unlimited capacity of the Earth.” The virtues of the *Kungua* are like a rich harvest from Mother Earth, representing an abundant crop, favorable weather and a peaceful, prosperous life for the people.



生命樹



SPECIAL OFFER:

Purple Sky

Aged Sheng Puerh

陳年生普洱

This Purple Sky is a replica of the famous 1980s version of the 8582 and 8592 recipes. In the late 1990s and early 2000s, puerh tea had a big boom and the prices of vintage teas started to skyrocket. Eventually, the most famous teas carried the lesser-known ones with them and many teas rose to the astronomical prices lovers of aged sheng must face today. But the creation of these replicas is more complicated than just the economics of the situation.

In the 1970s, Taiwan's economy boomed and like the tea emperor Song Huizong said in his *Treatise on Tea*, culture thrives when the economy and safety of the nation prosper (ironic considering what happened to him later in life.) Very quickly, Taiwan became the tea culture capital of the world. The tea industry boomed—everything from bubble tea to tea houses, hundreds of teapot shops (saving the art of Yixing teaware from economic collapse) and the rise of modern tea scholarship. As the domestic tea indus-

try grew large and began to move away from traditionally-processed, artisanal, small-batch oolong to large-scale industrial, lightly-oxidized oolong, many tea masters in Taiwan began drinking other teas, disinterested in this commercial trend that was aimed at the mainstream. Most of them shifted their attention to puerh. And it was a great time to get interested in aged sheng puerh, as businesses in Hong Kong (where the vast majority of aged sheng was warehoused) were looking to liquidate in fear of the 1997 return to Mainland rule. At that time, the majority of aged sheng puerh came to Taiwan.

With it came a passion. The first of modern research began, with the publication of books, magazines and more devoted exclusively to puerh tea. Puerh lovers started traveling to Yunnan in the early 1990s and found the whole art, tradition and production methodology dying there. These Taiwanese puerh tea lovers fortunately saved puerh tea from collapse in some

regions like Yiwu by hiring the locals to find old-timers to teach them to produce large commissions of tea.

And with this growing scholarship and interest, more and more details about past vintages started to come out. This was important because the rise in demand for aged sheng had driven the prices up (culminating in the boom of the later '90s and early 2000s) and so there were scams. A whole science of "wrapperology" evolved, as experts dove very deep into the separation and categorization of different vintages based on changes in the *neifei* (內飛, inner trademark ticket) or even how the stamps used to make wrappers wore down over time or got nicked, creating gaps in certain characters on the wrappers. This also meant that more and more of what used to be internal codes for recipes, known only to the workers in the factories, became public knowledge and puerh lovers started to search for and understand 7542 and 8582, etc. (Knowledge we take for granted nowadays.)



As a result of all this, replicas started to boom in the late 1990s. Some were made in homage to the great recipes/cakes of yesteryear. Tea lovers who had drunk these teas were interested in traveling to Yunnan to see if they could blend something similar. Others were just attempts to cash in on the rising prices of the old versions. And still others were probably produced to be sold as fakes to unwitting mainland customers who were starting to take an interest in aged sheng puerh. And so, any given replica could be an homage, made in what some puerh lover thought to be in honor of the original, or they could be purely economically-driven attempts to cash in. For us, none of that matters.

What attracts us to this cake, and others like it, is not its tenuous relationship to famous versions, but rather the price/quality ratio, which is always the bottom line. While the cake has an unknown vintage (to the date) and also some wet storage, the price reflects that and what you get for the price is very

nice, indeed. In the end, that is all that matters, or that is what we think.

This Purple Sky and the Factory Codes, the Tong Xing and any more we find will be on the website for you to try. You can get a well-aged tea at an extremely affordable price. We will be offering a deal on tongs (seven cakes) as well. The wet storage on this Purple Sky means it is more drinkable now, but you can age it further if you want as well.

迷了天
紫色夜空夢

寶藏

茶 100-gram packet = \$35

茶 1 cake = \$100

茶 1 tong (7 cakes) = \$550



Voices from the Hut

This month, we have a special account of Wu De's retreat at the Esalen Institute this year. We were planning to have these retreats be annual, but it is hard to make plans as things stand now. Retreats are all on hold. But this wonderful journey recorded here, along with some lessons to contemplate, might be the food for our own personal retreats for the foreseeable future. There is a lot to relate to here, and even more to steep, boil or whisk.

If you would like to contribute some writing to Voices from the Hut or have an idea for an interesting topic, you can reach Matthew on the Global Tea Hut app (in the "Voices from the Hut" section), on Instagram (IG: foldedleaves), or at the email: voicesfromthehut@gmail.com. We cannot wait to read all the exciting articles to come!

BOWLS OF SOUL IN BIG SUR

🍵👤: *Andjelka Jankovic*

"Like you, I am scared to go within..."

These were the first words that Wu De spoke at the beginning of a week of Cha Dao at the Esalen Institute earlier this year... I had tried to attend a course at the Tea Sage Hut in Taiwan for many years, but the busyness of my life always seemed to take over and I could never align the time to go. This came to a head last year, when my work in marketing for one of the world's biggest food brands was becoming increasingly unfulfilling and an inner voice telling me that I had a greater purpose was practically screaming. I decided to take a career break and go on a quest through North America to "live into the answers" (in Rilke's stirring sentiment) to the questions of my life. Unfortunately, the moment I left my job, sold almost everything and moved the last of my possessions into my brother's shed, it was also announced that the Center would be closing.

All I really wanted to do at that point was get lost in Nature, so I left my native Australia and went hiking, traveling all the way from the top of the Canadian Rockies to the southernmost tip of the Rocky Mountains range in the United States over the next six months. During my trip, I learned that Wu De would be holding a meditation and tea retreat at the Esalen Institute in Big Sur, California. However, by the time I went to sign up, it was sold out—naturally, since it was at Esalen. I am not one to give up easily, so I persisted and pursued the gracious (read: patient) staff at the Esalen Institute reception over the coming days and weeks, hoping that a spot would become available for any reason. However, after about the sixth phone call, a member of the staff politely told me: "Look, you're fiftieth on the waitlist; I'd forget about it." It was not happening, so I had to let it go.

And I did... But a few months later, in February, I got an email out of nowhere that a last-minute spot had opened up on the retreat. I was volunteering at an intentional community in New Mexico at the time, and getting to Big Sur would be a logistical nightmare, not to mention my visa would be ending soon—but I was overcome with such a strong feeling (that could only be described as a "full-body yes") that I took the opportunity. I booked my ticket and decided I would figure out the rest later—like how I was going to make it back to L.A. after the retreat to catch my flight home to Australia (ultimately, a Russian tea sister gave me a ride).

After two flights and a scenic bus ride along the famous HWY 1, I arrived at the edge of the continent—literally. Esalen is built right on the cliffs of the Coast and is one of the most staggeringly spectacular places I've ever been.





A pioneer in holistic health and spiritual healing, Esalen is like staying at an upscale ashram that's also a wellness haven for the senses. It is surrounded by the wildness of the ocean, a painting-like sky, giant towering trees and an invigorating sea breeze that makes you close your eyes and pause just to take it all in. The year-round fruit and vegetable gardens, bounty of flowers and bees, and the untamed redwood forest surrounding the property put Nature at the center of our immersion with Wu De and the Way of Tea.

Walking into the hall where we would convene every day, I caught sight of the retreat schedule, which would have had any tea lover in rapture: meditation, tea class, tea practice, discourse and mealtimes repeated

across the next five wonderful days. I was coming into the experience curious and eager to uncover why I've always felt a strong pull to tea. I'd looked for tea ceremonies everywhere I traveled and attended memorable ones in Japan, Canada and the United States. Back home in Perth, I'd tracked down a copy of Wu De's book *The Way of Tea* and it resonated with me at a bone-deep level. It was the Truth with a capital T. But I didn't know where to even begin with my own tea practice. And so, I kept searching. I came to the retreat with the intention of integrating tea into my daily life and learning how to share my love of tea with others in ceremony. In retrospect, I was starting a deeper relationship with tea and with myself as well.

I was also excited to meet Wu De in person after listening to a few of his conversations on various podcasts, including *Life of Tea*. I am almost certain I accidentally gave him those "oh my gosh, it's Wu De" eyes when we first crossed paths in the dining hall (a look he later told us that he doesn't like, as he would prefer to be anonymous). Hearing Wu De speak is a real treat; he is eloquent and self-aware, and I was drawn to his humility and humor, as well as his masterful storytelling. In real life, he is just an ordinary person—in his words, "I am just a dude. I am broken and dented, too." But as many of us know, Wu De is more than that. He is a student at heart and a sometimes-reluctant teacher, with a special ability to articulate Buddhist



concepts with contemporary relevance and weave in cultural and poetic references with illuminating gravitas. He is also deeply in love with life, which makes him someone to whom many people are drawn. Like the Dao, you can't explain Wu De so much as you have to experience him.

We started each day with meditation and three bowls of tea in silence. And each day, when those first few sips of hot liquid entered my mouth and moved down my throat, I felt them go all the way into my roots. So profound in its simplicity, a sense of "calm joy" (as Wu De often says) washed over me and an aliveness arose in my spirit—an embodied presence that had rarely touched my life before, except through music and being in the mountains.

Over the next five days, we—a group of fifty eager students of the Leaf—immersed ourselves in tea, Zen philosophy and community. For us first-timers, this meant practicing and fumbling together while taking notes and imprints from the more experienced Chajin on the retreat. And at the end of each day, groups of new tea friends would come together to bathe in the healing mineral waters of the Esalen hot springs. I remember one night sitting there looking up at the constellations of stars in contemplation, wondering if life could actually get any better than a day of tea ceremony, meditation, wild nature, amazing farm-to-table food (I'm still thinking about that sourdough rye bread) and connecting with beautiful beings...



SEVEN LESSONS FROM A CHA DAO RETREAT

茶道禪修的七堂課

At the time of this writing, I have been back home in Australia for six months. Since my return, I have been cultivating a daily tea practice and have just started serving bowl tea to family and friends. I still have many more quest(ion)s and the forces that got me a spot in Big Sur will forever be a mystery. However, I know that whenever I sit on my cushion, take a deep breath and start boiling the water, a calmness washes over me and it feels like a homecoming every time.

Many of Wu De's words come back to me often, in waves of remembrance or in moments of recognition when I am with Tea. It is of course impossible to remember everything that Wu De said at Esalen, but these are the seven lingering lessons that stuck:

I. Find your gifts and give them away for free. Time, food, tea, service, money, possessions, teachings, love—the key to living forever is to give it away. The alternative is having it taken from you. Find what you're here to master and learn with the intention of passing it on. Cultivate a giving heart and don't withhold your gifts—your joy is the world's joy.

“The more he gathers, the more he loses.” —Wu De, paraphrasing the *Dao De Jing*

II. Everything we build is a sandcastle. The security that you think holds you isn't real. Take the leap. You won't find stability and assurance in a world that offers none. It all continues to flow, and only you have the power to determine how you orient yourself to the current. It would be wise not to be against it.

“Letting go is the essence of spiritual practices.” —Wu De

III. Your orientation to the issue is the issue. A favorite of mine. Whatever you are resisting goes on persisting. It continues to show up again and again for you to learn the lesson. I love how Wu De says that the issue isn't the issue, it's how you're approaching and orienting to it—that is the issue. That's what keeps you stuck, or angry, or unable to turn suffering into self-healing and wisdom.

“Turn all obstacles into offerings, and all offerings into dharmas.” —Wu De

IV. There is only yes or no, and all maybes are no. Holler! At some subconscious level, I think we all know that your first instinct is usually the truth of the matter. Ego and narrative usually get in the way of clear decision-making. This is telling us to trust our deep knowingness (or intuition) as right. “I'm not sure” is a no, and as you grow, your maybes get smaller because your yeses get bigger.

“Trust someone who has made more mistakes and walked further.” —Wu De

V. All mistakes are tuition. This thing we call Earth school can sometimes throw some real doozies at us. See all mistakes as “tuition.” If you learn, it's not a mistake—it's a lesson. Bring mindfulness to the mud and mine the gems out of all your experiences.

“A good sign of spiritual progress is spontaneity.” —Wu De

VI. Don't seek too hard; let the right thing find you. A manifesto for trust and flow, particularly useful when it comes to finding your life's purpose or even romance. Sometimes in these situations, the best thing to do is nothing, since in frantic searching for the right thing, you might miss the magic of the present moment. I enjoy it most when Wu De peppers his dharma talks with matters of the heart like, “choose the person who chooses you” (I'm holding out for a future book on love and relationships).

“If you believe in tea, it doesn't need to be explained; if you don't believe, no amount of explanation will do.” —Wu De

VII. There is nothing you can add to this moment to increase it. Often, we want to hang on to an experience, preserve it, or extend it so it never ends. We have a delusion that we can own something. I often think about how Wu De says that you can't possibly have this moment any more than you are having it right now! Embrace *ichigo ichie* and marvel that we even have this moment now to just drink tea and be.

“Buying a tea is like buying a ticket for a friend to come and see you.” —Wu De



Afterwards

During the retreat, I had been eyeing one of Wu De's tea-dyed pieces of artwork at the back of the hall—a simple kettle boiling on a white background. I bought it and afterwards asked Wu De what the characters mean. He answered with a knowing glint in his eye, "Tea drinks people." At the time, I had no clue what he was talking about, but I carried it home with me and it now sits in my tea space. I glance back at it often, contemplating those three words. I think I now know more about what it means:

Tea wants to be human.

She wants to be sentient.

So she drinks us.

It takes a long time to get to know someone well, Tea included. As Mary Oliver says, to pay attention, this is our endless and proper work. Tea is alluring and astonishing; She is full of

love and spirit, a quiet reverence and wonder. A conduit for service, introspection, self-inquiry, sharing and joy. Tea speaks to us. She is heart medicine. A transmission of wisdom. The more I notice, the more obvious it is to me:

We drink tea to bring Her ancient teachings into this world. Tea becomes you...

In a live broadcast at the end of June, I asked Wu De: how do you know when a teacher is *your* teacher? He said, "Finding your teacher is like falling in love; it's karmic. You *know* it when you have found it." It took five years, a very long wait list, synchronicity and a whole lot of alignment, but it was all worth it to finally get here. Meeting Tea began a new way of life. I could never have imagined that one of the true loves of my life would be a leaf, but now I cannot imagine it being any other way.

It is true—make space for something in your life and it will come. This is not a spiritual bumper sticker. What is meant for you will be sent to you and everything will work out, though maybe not as you expect it to. The unknown knows more than you.

An unexpected invitation and a visceral *yes* back in the snowy high desert of New Mexico was perhaps the soul of Tea saying to me, "*come this way.*" Honoring and following that spontaneous feeling was one of the most transformative and enriching decisions I have ever made. Tea is now a daily anchor, a constant teacher and an intimate companion with continuous deepening dialogue that delights the intellect, incites the sacred and nourishes my soul to no end. She is more than anyone could hope for in a lifelong friend.



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 Emma Potz.

I would share tea gathered with stuffed animals and a tiny heirloom tea set that my mother had given me. The tea was simple and came from bags, but I remember the childhood joy that it brought me. Joy to be amongst my friends (the monkeys and dolls) and to be sipping hot liquor that I had brewed for them. Since then, tea has always been part of my life, making Her way known subtly and softly. Yet, in these years, She was still a beverage, even though I'd turn to Her in times of sorrow and comfort. It wasn't until I sat in ceremony for the first time that Her whispers became louder and I knew that my life would be changed forever. I remember being mesmerized by the stillness and simple beauty. As I sat in ceremony and drank my first bowls, I had this feeling wash over me—a feeling that I had been here before. I felt the Leaf flow through my body, embracing me tightly—the embrace of a beloved elder coming to remind me of her unconditional love, the kind of love that nourishes you with the deep knowledge that all is right in that very moment.

At the end of the ceremony, I remember Tian Wu's words, "Make space for Tea, and She will enter." And that's what I did. I started by making space for Her in my day by rising early and drinking bowls in the morning stillness. I remember going to bed at night with pure excitement, knowing I would wake to sit with all the Leaf had to share in the morning. The more space I made, the more She would enter. In those days, I had very little wares and only a few teas. All was so simple yet so profound, I was discovering the "extraordinary in the ordinary." As I made physical space in my home by clearing through shelves, tea leaves would find themselves upon them. Social gatherings were swapped for tea sits and I made space within my work. The late work evenings had started to become challenging for me and with a deep trust, I let go of my job. Shortly after, in true serendipitous form and by listening to Tea's whisper, I started working with Tian and Jessica in The Tea Room at AY^AM. I even found myself in Taiwan at the Tea Sage Hut. Life had truly become steeped in Tea.

Tea significantly changed for me when I became pregnant with my daughter. For the first trimester, I was physically unable to drink any. This created a huge shift in my practice and for a short while, I struggled to find out how to live a life of tea without consuming any. However, I continued to fill my altar cups, clean my tea space, attend our community days and set up tea sits within The Tea Room. Truthfully, all of this didn't come effortlessly or with ease, but it was through these actions that I started to understand what reverence really means and why it is so valuable to us in the bigger picture and in our daily lives.



🍵: Emma Potz, USA

Now that my daughter is just a few months old, I am finding different ways to practice, and they are ever-shifting. Sometimes this means she'll sit in my lap as I sit in quietude with the Leaf, and sometimes she'll squiggle in front of the tea table as I sit for as many bowls as she'll allow. With time being precious and fleeting these days, I am brought back to total simplicity. Leaves, hot water and a bowl... Tea has also allowed my partner and me to continue to connect as we navigate our new role as parents. In the evening, when our daughter is asleep, we share bowls in silence. From there, we reflect upon the day or just let the silence wash over us.

I've found that now more than ever it is so important to practice, as the next generation is witnessing everything that I do. What is it that I would like to teach her by my actions? If I am grounded and my mind is calm, it's much easier to let the challenges pass by, to witness them and not react. Tea reminds me of this. She reminds me to be gentle with myself and I am so grateful for Tea and this community.

Inside the Hut

COMING SOON TO GLOBAL TEA HUT MAGAZINE

茶主题: Incense & Tea

茶主题: Gongfu Tea

茶道

茶主题: Organics & Tea

茶主题: Food & Tea



Due to the success of our online course, which was an Introduction to Cha Dao, we are going to host another one this November 21st to the 25th. This course will be all about Boiled Tea. In the intro course, we covered leaves in a bowl and sidehandle brewing. In this course, we will go over everything to do with boiled tea, from cauldron boiling to sidehandle, and from ceremony to reusing spent leaves. This course will be different from the intro, focusing more on the specifics of boiling and less on life lessons—more tea and less philosophy.



We also have a whole section of the website devoted to boiled tea sets now, including lots of deals on different types of boiled tea sets to help you get ready for the course.



There are many new teas on the site, including Purple Sky, our Tea of the Month. Friends continue to donate teas to us, hoping to raise money for Light Meets Life.



Wu De's artwork website is periodically being updated with more tea-inspired works. He uses tea liquor mixed into the ink as well, filling each painting with tea spirit: teadyedart.com



The new website has a pretty expansive community page with events, testimonials and a directory of those serving tea. There are many ways to participate located on that page. If you have been a member for at least a year and are serving tea regularly in your area, you can email us to join the directory. If not, be sure to check if anyone is serving tea in your area and help support your local tea community! If you would like to leave a testimonial about your Global Tea Hut experience, you can also email us. It helps!

Center News



Let us know if you have any ideas for fundraising. We would be happy to support any local or global initiatives. We still have a ways to go before we can make an offer on a property. We have a few that are very promising, but still have some hurdles to clear.



We hope you stay excited for Light Meets Life. We want to involve you in the planning of what we hope you feel is *your* Center. The more form Light Meets Life takes, the more real it becomes. Please contact us with ideas about what you envision for the property and for the experience at ten-day courses. Perhaps you have an idea for a type of course you would like to see when we open. Please share your ideas with us. We hope to create a whole new calendar and curriculum for Light Meets Life. And it is *your* Center, after all!



We are so very happy about another online course. We hope to continue these digital courses into the near future, since we don't have a Center to host you. At least we can learn together online. Let us know if you have any ideas.

October Affirmation

I live beauty

*Tea is a path of living art, living beauty.
To create beauty in my life, I must first see
all the beauty around me and within me.
Then, I bring the two together.*



www.globalteahut.org

The most flowery 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

