

TEA WAYFARERS

From now on, we plan to introduce one of the Global Tea Hut members to you each month in these newsletters. We hope that this helps us all get to know each other better. It's also to pay homage to the many manifestations that all this wonderful spirit and tea are becoming, as the tea is drunk and becomes human. The energy of the tea fuels some great work in this world, and we are so honored to show you some glimpses of such beautiful people and their tea. Since he's so amazing and soon to live here at the center, we thought we'd introduce you to Shane MARRS.

My name is Shane MARRS. I grew up in Vernon, British Columbia, Canada. After graduating with a science degree in mathematics I took a break from the academic life, went tree planting in B.C., and decided to travel thereafter. Influenced by my university exchange to Japan, I found myself living and working at a Shinto Shrine in Washington State as a student of Shrine Life and Aikido.

My next excursion took me to Costa Rica, where I would offer my support on a ranch in return for food and shelter. Getting back to the land was a very moving experience. Now in love with farming, and already well in love with tea, I thought of a way to bring those two aspects of my life together, and that took me to Hawai'i.

It was on the Garden Island of Kaua'i and the Big Island of Hawai'i where I would first encounter tea in the flush. Again, I would volunteer my time on farms in return for the bare necessities and an opportunity to live out my new dream: tea farming. That dream, like a tea bud unfolding only to present another, would last for six months across two islands on three different tea farms. I also learned about Organic & Natural farming, Permaculture, sustainability, and self-sufficiency, thus reigniting my family's green-thumb tradition in farming, and also starting a green-tongue tradition of my own.

My interest in the roots of tea, both metaphorically and literally, took me to Taiwan for three months. I would learn about all aspects of conventional tea farming, Oolong processing, and life in a tea village. I stum-

bled upon a very special place during that time: the Tea Sage Hut, where I plan to return and live a life of Tea and Spirit, Cha and Dao, in the company of so many amazing tea brothers and sisters.

For now, I'm headed back to Costa Rica to intern on an organic farm at a rainforest eco-lodge. You can follow my travels at:

www.tealoveandcare.wordpress.com.

