

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. We thought we'd introduce you to the incredible Nick Dilks.

I am fairly new to tea having been introduced to Oolong by my good friend, San Bao, who runs the tea ceremonies at the health spa we both work for in Koh Samui, Thailand. That was about two years ago. Before that, I had been put off tea as a young kid who was forced to drink milky 'builders' tea by my Dad at mealtimes! Later in life I got into Buddhism, particularly connecting with Zen, and was surrounded by inspiring stories of monks sipping tea in the mountain peaks... I desperately wanted to like tea, and even had a friend who did Oolong tea ceremonies, but found myself the lone Buddhist at our center who didn't drink tea. . .

However, two years ago I sat at San Bao's tea ceremony determined to give it another try and a lovely Kwan Yin Oolong tea was placed before me. I drank it and, lo and behold, I loved it! I immediately bought a starter kit: a tray, some cups and a couple of tea pots, and I've never looked back. I started to give other teas a try and found something miraculous happen: though I rarely liked them at first, maybe after ten brews some started to taste great. Perhaps this was my palate slowly given up my association of tea with my Dad!

San Bao has been very helpful all the way, sharing his passion with characteristic big heart. He also introduced me to Wu De by way of Wu De's first book and the old *Art of Tea* magazines. He also told me about Global Tea Hut.

In December I had the good fortune to visit Taiwan with San Bao and his partner, Gila, and had the opportunity to visit the Tea Sage Hut community. We had such a great time, and I would recommend that you all get there if you can. I love receiving my tea package from the gang every month. It is lovely to think of you all around the world, and because I am so new to tea, each month so far has been a new type of tea for me.

Normally, when I get into something I go mad reading books and trying to find out as much as I can about it. But with tea something different is happening: I am just enjoying whatever comes my way . . . and rather than seeking to master the subject of tea, I am waiting to see what the master, the Leaf, has planned for me!

