



In February, we start the Year of the Horse. This has been an incredible journey, watching Global Tea Hut grow. Until now, the primary focus of these monthly envelopes was to support our shared desire to maintain our current free tea center, Tea Sage Hut, and build the future, bigger center, Light Meets Life. For most of you, the fact that you get a magazine, tea and a gift is a bonus. Most of our members are people we've met who believe in our vision. They signed up for Global Tea Hut to support our work. But we hope to reverse the focus this year, so that everyone will feel that the magazine and tea themselves are central, and the fact that it supports a non-profit an added bonus. If you are here primarily for the tea and magazine, and less to support our non-profit work, you will still find that the improvements along the way will make this experience more and more rewarding!

As Global Tea Hut emerges from its cocoon this year, shaking the moisture off its full-color wings, it will have a greater power and influence over the tea world in two very significant ways: firstly, we are going to start growing away from the themes we've focused on in these "newsletters" up until now. In fact, we think you will find the shift in topics to be great enough that we can no longer call them "newsletters" anymore—they are "magazines" from now on! Most of our articles to date have focused on the personal tea journeys of GTH members, a spiritual approach to Cha Dao and community news, of course. We would never take that out from the magazine, as it is a big part of what defines this tradition. However, we plan to reduce such themes to approximately 25% of any issue, utilizing the remaining 75% of the space to inform you about tea: learning about history, translating Chinese articles, travel pieces about tea regions, teaware artisans, tea processing, more brewing methods, etc. Don't worry, this doesn't mean we are going to bore you with facts and move towards an intellectual approach to tea—far from it! We hope to cover the full spectrum of tea, from history to enjoyment, and from theaflavins to spiritual depth: Loving Tea in all Her glory! In this way, our tradition will be able to have a positive impact on more tea lovers throughout the world. No matter how you brew your tea, or what your approach to tea is, receiving Global Tea Hut will be an enjoyable expe-

rience, and will help demonstrate to all tea lovers the importance of sustainable, environmentally-friendly tea production.

This brings us to the second way in which our growing magazine can have an impact on the tea world: As we gather membership, we will start to have the funds to travel and interview more farmers and artisans, teaware makers and tea friends. In this way, we will begin to connect organic farmers to each other and to the world. Global Tea Hut itself can have an incredibly positive impact on tea production worldwide! And maybe through other tea influence all agriculture, especially in Asia! In other words, this magazine and tea are a way we can all make a difference!

The improvements that will happen as membership increases should be a good incentive for you to help us spread the word. Nevertheless, we feel that we should also show up for you *before* you start sharing Global Tea Hut with everyone! After all, isn't it our responsibility to demonstrate that we can make a better magazine? Shouldn't you get to see what GTH will look like, at least a little? We think so. From now on, each issue of GTH will contain some glimpses of the future and where we envision this magazine in the months to come, as membership increases.

Transparency on all levels is key to us, as a non-profit, and the honest truth is we currently don't have enough funds to make all the improvements we hope to this year as we get closer to our goal of 2,000 members. Still, we can take some baby steps, which you will hopefully see as hints of the wonderful changes to come, and be further inspired to share GTH with your friends and families. Consequently, right now, in this issue, you are going to see s teaware artisan interviewed, more tea articles, and even a few more splashes of color as we gear up for the best tea magazine on earth!

Help us provide the world with the best tea magazine ever made—full of informative tea articles, a balance of Cha Dao and self-cultivation, connection to a community of tea lovers, as well as organic tea to drink as you read. And unbelievably this whole amazing project will help build free tea centers around the world!