

Letter from the Editor

In January, we cross into the middle of winter—a time for tea brewing to thrive. There is nothing better than sitting inside on a cold day, warm and full of soup (in our case my famous “bakutei”) and drinking lovely tea without a care in the world. Many of you have a snow-swept view out the window to compliment the sentiment. We hope this finds you warm and happy, sharing great teas with friends and family! For those of you who live in hot or warm climates, we hope that you appreciate your warmth, too!

Around here, we boil tea a lot, drink aged puerh, Liu Bao, and always try out new shou puerhs. As we mentioned last month, we also like to mix them with red teas in the morning. A bit of shou with a red tea can brighten a gray day! We also brew more tea, which means more kinds of tea brewing, like whisked tea and gongfu tea. Fortunately, the holidays also bring tons of guests which results in many different tea sessions happening simultaneously throughout the center. When brewing gongfu, it is often very wonderful to drink a traditional tea with heavier oxidation and roast on a cool or cold day. Cliff Teas, traditional Taiwan teas and aged Tie Guan Yin are all coming out of their meditative jars these days!

This is going to be our year! We have the same aspirations we had last year: to reach 2,000 members in this Global Tea Hut and thereby begin building our new tea center, Light Meets Life. And we need your help. Spread the word this year and we're sure to meet our goals! We have a feeling that we'll gather the resources needed to break ground on our new center this year. There are more guests coming here than ever before, and there's more support for this Global Tea Hut experience as well!

We are very proud of all the improvements we made to this experience in 2014—from the better and brighter photography to overcoming printing issues, all of which have resulted in a more beautiful and colorful magazine. The variety and quality of the articles have also improved greatly, and with more contributions coming in from all of you, we can expect that to continue! We also plan to travel more this year, bringing a greater journalistic element to these pages over the coming year. We are proud of the love and hard work that has gone into all the design and layout shifts as well. We feel that this magazine is finally starting to find its professional style and voice, and it's getting closer and closer to where we want it to be. None of us have any training, so the learning curve has required a lot of time, love and heart—all given freely by many people devoted to this tradition, Cha Dao and the wisdom that Tea can bring to all our lives.



After celebrating all that we have achieved in the last year, this beginning is also a great place to herald our future goals: along with more journalism and travel, we hope to introduce new organic farmers and production methods, find and share new and exciting teas and tea folklore, and also begin some translation projects we have had on our shelf for some time, sharing some ancient and modern tea wisdom from Chinese to English. We are also discussing the ways we can make this experience more communal and real, connecting you to each other so that this feels like more than just a magazine, but a family of Tea brothers and sisters! Aside from organizing more events, gatherings, workshops and lectures worldwide, we hope to figure out ways to use the Internet to connect to each other more often and in heartfelt ways...

We have a great magazine in store for you this month, with some articles from the community, as usual. This month we are going to start what we hope to be a trend for the whole year: to introduce you to some of the teachers that have been influential in our tea journey. It's important for us to learn the source of our brewing methods, wisdom and lifeways from the previous generation of *Chajin*, who have so graciously passed down what they know. We hope to present you to many more tea masters than just those in our lineage, celebrating all tea traditions and the insights they have shared with us. You are going to meet one such bright star in this issue, and over some great tea too...

Happy New Year!