

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 Elina Naan.

It is very common these days for people to forget about their dreams. Life takes over and suddenly you realize that the life you are living isn't very lively and maybe hasn't been for a while... Well, that's what happened to me.

But when 2012 arrived, everything changed within a minute. And I mean *everything* (and really within one minute). The way I felt in my own skin, the way I saw the world and even the way the world saw me, all changed. I was suddenly happy and free. I was myself. But the journey had just begun, and there was still a lot to sort out. Since you are reading this, I'm sure you all know what the catalyst for this change was.

One day when I walked into the local teashop to buy bowls for my friend, I stayed there for a while, chatting. When I was leaving, I heard they were looking for a little extra help in the shop. I offered myself. At that time, I had been working as a director at the Estonian National Television for seven years, and it was quite bizarre for me to go work in a teashop. Instead of giving orders, I was of service at the shop and studying the Leaf. It was a transition, and has been a deep journey in getting to know myself. I want to share my love and gratitude to Steve Kokker, who has opened the tea-door to so many of us here in Estonia.

It is almost impossible to put into words how much Tea has taught me. For me, She is the most honest and greatest of teachers. She is so uplifting, gentle and safe medicine. At the same time, She's selflessly sincere, deep, humble and open. Tea knows the way from heart to heart and I'm so thankful that I have chosen this time and space to learn from Her, by serving.

I have been holding weekly tea gatherings in Tallinn and all around Estonia since 2013. Feminine circles are close to my heart. Tea, with all the elements, brings so much comfort and unites people who have chosen to sit together. Every time I raise a bowl, I am amazed at how this sacred liquid knows all the little cracks and crevices that we have inside us, and gently fills us with wisdom and insights, and deep affections, while bringing us back to our center. And while holding the circle-bowl, you can feel how, even in silence (or especially when in silence) we become one—one love.

Does this sound too esoteric or a little peculiar? I would guess not to you, because you have felt the same



茶人: Elina Naan

and that's why you love the Way of Tea—even if you use different words to express the sentiments of a tea ceremony. It might sound too easy or maybe too impossible to some people, but that is why I feel it is important to really change the world bowl by bowl (this expression is golden), because the world *is* changing bowl by bowl. I am so thankful and happy to be a part of this tea family and part of this world we are living in—serving tea, learning, growing, trusting this journey of ours and loving every moment of it...

If you feel like getting to know a bit more of my doings, you may take a look at my website. And, of course, when coming to Estonia, please join me for a bowl of tea.

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