

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 Shiva Rose.

I must say the truth about my very first meeting with Tea is not romantic and poetic at all. In fact, the first time I sat in a tea meditation, I became agitated, frustrated and annoyed. It was four years ago and my dear sister Tian Wu had invited me to her Venice abode for a ceremony. My monkey mind was wrestling with my spirit, not unlike a crocodile in a muddy swamp trying to swallow a dove. That day, the crocodile ate the dove in one gulp. I decided I wouldn't be sitting for "tea" again any time soon... Until one month later, when there was an event at my home where Tian Wu was serving again. This time, however, the dove flew towards the divine light of Tea and made the crocodile docile and tame. This time, my spirit was stronger than my ego monkey mind, and it began to respond and listen. This time I sat, I became quiet and allowed the tears to stream down into pools of lost resistance unto my lap. This time, the thought that swirled in my mind, as the steam from my cup swirled unto my wet face was, "Ahhh, you are safe. You are home." This time, I didn't feel the defenses of loneliness. I felt a kinship with Tea, a kinship with the people I was drinking with and a kinship with spirit. You see, for me, who has the nature of a hummingbird, being still is a luxury. I care for many creatures, and have many responsibilities. To have permission to be still, to rest my mind, to be nourished by Tea without having to give anything back—this all seemed so foreign. I now have come to see that being still and simply receiving is what I needed to learn. This is also about accepting our feminine nature, since the feminine is about being present, open and receptive.

Tea has now become a way of life for me. I remember Tian once told me that tea is an adaptogen and can relate to us in whatever way we need. This is the way I see Her now. Pouring water unto the leaves and seeing them unfurl can lead to whatever medicine I need in that moment: A fatherly nudge that may be the paternal strength I crave; a maternal, gentle softness that's carried on the wind as I am brewing the tea; a childlike wonder at the sounds of crickets, birds and frogs that seem to get louder and louder with every cup; seeing the greenness around me become greener, more vivid, more awake with every sip; feeling an opening



茶人: Shiva Rose

where I can handle more of what life offers me—the good, the bad and the challenging—my container expanding as my heart and spirit expands.

On this life-changing trip to China with Global Tea Hut, I remember Wu De saying, The smaller the doubt the smaller the awakening, the larger the doubt the larger the awakening. I am grateful now for having that large doubt when I first began. I had to earn this relationship with Tea and with my deepening practice. I am forever grateful to Tian Wu and Wu De for creating these spaces for us to gently grow.

Part of this great awakening is connecting with the beautiful spirits around the world that share this practice. Knowing we are all connected through Tea makes this a shared practice. This global community is truly magical, leading to so many life-changing encounters, tea sessions and new friendships. In this practice, we are witnesses to the beauty that unfolds in us. In this way we are kin. In this way we are a family—always, even when miles are between us. This community and these bowls of tea help to close the gaps, bringing us all together every month. I will look for you in these bowls and cups we share!