

From the Editor

In August, we turn past the zenith into the second half of the year. It is still very hot in Taiwan, so we continue to focus on green and white teas, lightly-oxidized oolong (when we can find organic), along with lots of young sheng puerh. Of course, red tea is good any time of the year. This is a great time to taste all the wonderful teas being produced this year, including our Light Meet Life fundraiser teas. We have a great sheng puerh and some stellar dian hong cakes as well. It is still too hot for outdoor tea sessions most days, but early morning and late afternoon are good times for a walk or for farm work. This is a pleasant time to be in Taiwan, as everyone is more laid back in the summer. Of course, the Center continues to thrive, and I continue to travel in the name of Cha Dao.

The new ten-day course schedule at the Center is great, allowing a bit more structure to manage the growing workflow here. We will continue to improve the content of these courses. Eventually, we will even theme some of them, but for the remainder of this year, all the ten-day courses are “Introduction to Cha Dao.” In almost every course, we have arranged for participants to harvest and process tea, depending on the availability of leaves. It is our aim to provide the lessons and facilities so that all participants who come here for ten days will leave with a foothold in a tea practice, understanding the basics of tea ceremony, tea and tea preparation in ways that allow them to head back home and continue the practice—even serving their friends and family.

We have a truly beautiful Light Meets Life fundraiser this year, including some amazing tea and teaware. We have six cakes this year: a gorgeous sheng, Moonlight White, three dian hong cakes and a beautiful, intentionally produced old-growth shou cake that everyone is sure to love. So many of you continue to email us about getting some gongfu teaware, especially authentic *zisha* clay, which is challenging these days. As a result, we have made three teapots, a kettle and stove set (for gongfu) and a waste-water container (*jian shui*, 建水)—all from Yixing. May these create abundance for all of us to have a future, permanent Center, and may they improve the tea you drink and the tea you share.

After two months or so of using the app, we would love to have your feedback! We hope that more sessions are happening around the world as a result, not to mention all the communication and learning that this app can facilitate. Technology is great when it brings people together and helps us to learn and grow together. Email us if there are features that need to be added or fixed. We hope to improve and evolve the app over time so that it suits the needs of this community!

Also, our photo contest will be closing on the fifteenth of this month. If you still haven't submitted your photo, please be sure to do so. There are some amazing prizes this year, including tea, tea art and great teaware.

Remind your friends as well, because the photo contest is open to non-members. Remember though, there is only one entry per person. We will judge the winners in September and announce them at that time.

This month, we turn our attention to one of my favorite places in the world: Dehong. This remote and autonomous prefecture of Yunnan Province is nestled right up against the border of Myanmar. Due to its remoteness, it has changed much less than other parts of Yunnan, and you can still encounter living culture, pristine Nature and unique tea culture. The tea there is often cleaner, with less influence from mainstream, industrial agriculture.

Amongst the teas of Dehong, there is a unique wild mutation that has purple buds. This purple tea is very special, tasting like no other tea in the world. It can be made into sheng puerh (like Rainforest, which some of you will remember), but is especially delicious as a red tea like our Tea of the Month, Evening Sky. This is one of our all-time favorite teas here at the Hut, and we are so happy to share it with you this year! It affords us the opportunity to talk about mutation, botany and purple-bud tea in greater depth and learn about Dehong as we sip deeply from one of the most vibrant and delicious teas on earth.

We also have a great article on the creation of kettles by our very own Petr Novak and an article on the problems with “old-growth” tea in the puerh market. We also have an important article about the app, which we know so many of you are enjoying. This is a full and rich issue, with lots of exciting content and one of our favorite teas ever!



—Further Readings—

This month, we recommend taking the time to read through the March 2016 issue of Global Tea Hut. It is all about red tea in general. You may also want to read about kettles, stoves and fire in the August 2015 issue. Both are in the “Past Issues” part of the website.