

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 Yuliya Maslyn.

I am a tea *lover*, not a tea nerd, and there is no definite beginning to my tea journey. Since my teenage years, I have been drinking loose-leaf tea, creating my own rituals, reinforced by random snippets of information and my personal interpretation of them. Tea time was my daily portion of miracle; it brightened up my life and elevated me from the mundane by taking me to foreign, poetic places. I hadn't yet found tea friends or come across a tea community, and my tea ceremonies were odd enough to keep casual tea drinkers away. As I grew and evolved, so did my tea practice, though it had no direction or focus, like many other aspects of my life.

A big milestone in my tea journey was, of course, discovering this Global Tea Hut community in 2014. I first heard Wu De talk in an interview about living tea—a narrative which resonated with my beliefs about life in general, but through the prism of tea, it gained a broader meaning. I subscribed to the magazine straight away. Over the following year, I just tuned in and absorbed the knowledge spread across the pages, intertwined with beautiful images. The more I read, the more obvious my lack of experiential knowledge became, especially transmitted through a direct encounter with authentic tradition. After one year of reading the magazine, I got in touch with some Global Tea Hut members in Tallinn and booked my tickets to attend Wu De's workshops there.

It was a mesmerizing experience to be served tea by Wu De, and to have a chance to finally embody all those words I'd read in the magazine. It's like falling into a vortex and getting pulled deeper in: Dark, warm, aromatic liquor envelops you, stops time and disorients you from the exact location, but gives you a pulsating sensation that signals you are at the right place and right time, and that it all couldn't be any other way. It's like free diving: Once you're under the surface, everything stops, and at the same time, everything happens to you. I was overwhelmed with gratitude for such a profound moment. This feeling of gratitude and reverence for Tea has grown day by day ever since.

The second year passed by, bringing me closer to the Global Tea Hut community. After spending another weekend with Wu De in Czech and learning more about the tradition, I started serving bowl tea to my friends. Very gently and humbly she started talking to me, and our dialog began. "We learn to teach, we teach to understand," became my mantra from that year with Tea, Yoga and Singing Bowls. Every time I serve tea, I witness magic happening: my guests' faces light up and their spirits elevate, creating nice vibrations in the tea space. The Leaf is the best teacher of presence, observance and patience. I need to be alert, relaxed, calm and creative to unpack the healing potential hidden in tea, and cultivating these qualities



茶人: Yuliya Maslyn

has a transformative and long-lasting effect. At first, I started to pay attention to each session, but very quickly this has come to stretch into the time between sessions, and gradually started affecting my personality. I can see how my interaction with others became smoother and I am more content within myself, honoring that sacred space created by the Leaf. Tea also helps me steer through the modern world with all the possibilities it gives us, where it is very easy to get distracted by the abundance of choices. When I get drawn into the midst of wants, shoulds and needs, Tea draws my attention back to the center and helps ground me—to slow down, reflect and remember what is important in life: connection to Self, Nature and Other people.

To interact with Tea is profound, humbling, gratifying and always elevating me to a better version of myself. Before joining Global Tea Hut, I was just *drinking* tea, but now I have a *practice*, which follows a tradition and brings joy to my life. The purity and simplicity of the Hut tradition gives me a resting space, where I can get into the flow and let the Leaf change this world into a better place bowl by bowl.

Speaking of that change, it would be an honor to share a bowl of tea with you. Please get in touch if you are planning to come to Stockholm, or visit www.yuliya.life/tea to find more about our local Swedish tea gatherings!