

From the Editor

In January, it gets cold in Taiwan and we begin our weekly trip to the hot springs to soak our bones. As the weather gets colder and colder, we always reach for the aged sheng puerh, shou puerh and aged tieguan-yin. Something that we often do—especially in a thermos when we are at the hot springs—is mix a bit of dian hong red and shou puerh. It is nice to use about sixty or seventy percent shou puerh and then the rest is dian hong. Try a shou that is dark, rich and creamy when blending like this. The dian hong obviously means that it is not an evening tea anymore. You will find that this makes a stellar brew on a cold morning.

Hard to believe we have come to another year of Global Tea Hut! So much has changed around here. It is amazing to see all the growth, watching the magazine improve and the community grow. I still remember when Global Tea Hut filled the entire first floor of the Center at 150 members and took more time than any of us had. We therefore couldn't possibly imagine growing beyond 250 members, which seemed so huge at the time (we literally had no room for it). And now, we've crossed a thousand members and are planning to reach 10,000 by 2020, which will help us to build our bigger, better tea center, Light Meets Life. As I have said in previous issues, I know that this only means more work, but I am nevertheless motivated to build the new Center by the fact that our courses here at the Tea Sage Hut are constantly full and we are always turning people away. There is obviously a need for a new Center. Also, having a space architected from the ground up to be the world's only and best, absolutely free Tea Center and school is an important and historical step—one which will hopefully inspire other such Centers around the world!

This is going to be an amazing year of Global Tea Hut. We will travel together to some new tea regions, learning about new and amazing kinds of tea. We have already broken ground, publishing the largest-ever works on puerh, Taiwanese oolong and Liu Bao in the English language. We will continue that this year, exploring some new and rarer kinds of tea we have never discussed before. We will also continue our Classics of Tea series, moving up in time to the Qing Dynasty this time. There is also a plan to devote an issue to some important Chajin here in Asia, as well as a few famous tea houses that have been around long enough to merit an article or even a whole issue. Of course, we have the most stellar Annual Global Tea Hut trip planned for this spring, traveling to some of the most exciting tea regions in China. This time, we will be learning a lot about oolong tea, soaring with the black dragon. We are also working on a second tea tour around home here in Taiwan in the winter. This will be a smaller group, but should be exciting. Aside from that, there will be retreats and workshops around the world, continuing our efforts to spread Tea spirit and change the world bowl by bowl...

One of the most important experiments that a Chajin can conduct is to switch brewers mid-session—same tea, teaware, water and heat and the tea becomes profoundly different when you switch the brewer. This is like handing the same instrument and sheet music to two different musicians: you get two very different songs. In fact, the same musician plays the same song different every time. Such an experiment is profound, as is a bridge to tea as a practice, a way of life... a Dao. Through this insight, I realize that I am the tea. I recognize that my lifestyle affects my ability to make nice tea. The more peaceful I am, for example, the better my tea. The same goes for our physical health, which creates better body mechanics, more grace movements and posture—all of which certainly affects our tea. And, of course, diet is very relevant to this.

Along with sharing some of the simple dietary philosophy we have here at the Center, one of the things guests ask for the most often when they visit the Center is recipes to make our delicious and nutritious food at home. This issue is devoted to many of the simple recipes we use at the Center to cultivate ourselves, body, mind and spirit. We hope that no matter what your dietary needs are, you will find some dish that inspires you and brings joy into your home and family. Like tea, food is a great way to make new friends and celebrate the old. May this whole month be a feast that brings us all closer together!



Before starting any diet, you should speak to your doctor. You must not rely on the information in this magazine as an alternative to medical advice from your doctor or other professional healthcare provider. If you have any specific questions about any medical matter, you should consult your doctor or other professional healthcare provider.

—Further Readings—

This month, as a very special bonus, Connor has written a commentary on the “Five Reflections” of Zen, which we say over every meal here at the Center. His commentary offers some great insight to food and self-cultivation. We will be posting his wonderful article on the blog, which is accessible via the website.