

Longan Charcoal Roasted Wuyi Oolong Tea

Harvest: Machine cut
Season: Winter 2016

Region: Songbolin, Taiwan.
Elevation: 400m

Oxidation: Medium
Roast: Heavily Roasted

Flavor: *Subtle smoky, fruitwood aroma. Smooth, caramelized, dried Longan fruit character. Balanced sweet/dry finish.*

BREWING GUIDE:

 9g

 350mL

 95°C

 3 minutes

GARDEN

This batch of tea is a combination of spring and winter 2016 harvests from a young plot of Wuyi Oolong that is 100% naturally cultivated, using no chemical fertilizers or pesticides. Wuyi is an heirloom strain of tea from mainland China that is only recently making a comeback in Taiwan. This month's batch was heavily roasted using Longan wood charcoal.

TASTING NOTES

This month's batch of tea represents a renaissance in Taiwanese tea making. It is from a newly planted crop of heirloom Wuyi tea plants that is 100% naturally cultivated, and cured in a way that combines traditional and modern tea making methods. The leaves were sufficiently oxidized, and left to "settle" for several months before undergoing an extensive roasting process. The result is a character of tea that is reminiscent of the traditional Oolongs from mainland China, such as Dancong and Wuyi Oolongs.

The leaves were baked twice at low temperature for long intervals in a modern tea oven to prepare them for an extensive roasting processing using Longanwood charcoal in woven bamboo baskets. This batch was roasted for a total of six sessions lasting several hours each, and spaced over a couple of months in order to achieve the desired effect of a rich, mellow, yet complex and flavorful brew.

The roasted quality is prominent in the initial aroma coming off the leaves after their first steeping. This smoky, cured character is also evident on the palate, but integrated with a complex dried fruit, caramelized quality that gives it a broad flavor profile. It has a tangy/sweet, bold finish that is particularly satisfying.

In the heavy roast tea category, it is common to find leaves that have been overly roasted, with a very dark appearance and a stiff, burnt texture. This is not the case with this batch. These leaves were cultivated and cured

Longan Charcoal Roasted Wuyi Oolong Tea

Harvest: Machine cut
Season: Winter 2016

Region: Songbolin, Taiwan.
Elevation: 400m

Oxidation: Medium
Roast: Heavily Roasted

Flavor: *Subtle smoky, fruitwood aroma. Smooth, caramelized, dried Longan fruit character. Balanced sweet/dry finish.*

BREWING GUIDE:

 9g

 350mL

 95°C

 3 minutes

with traditional knowledge and modern expertise to offer an interesting batch of tea with a bold and distinct character.

THE STORY OF THIS TEA

The Wuyi tea leaves are noticeably narrower than other tea strains, and this is a significant reason why Wuyi has become a rare breed in contemporary Taiwanese tea production. The perennial yield is significantly less in volume than other tea types, particularly modern hybrid strains. This is the same plot of tea that we shared with the Eco-Cha Tea Club in March 2016, which was the first real harvest from this young plot of tea. The plants are healthy and abundant after a slow start, taking about twice as long to mature in comparison to conventional farming methods.

This plot of tea has been cultivated with zero chemical fertilizers or pesticides, and each harvest has undergone standardized testing for trace chemical residue with ND results, meaning no trace residues were detected. This, along with another nearby

plot of organically grown Wuyi Oolong that we also shared a batch from last year represent a renaissance of a tea type that was cultivated in this area up until about 30 years ago. In short, a couple of courageous tea farmers are reclaiming their roots and representing their heritage after a generation of modern development in the tea industry.

The first batch of tea that we shared from this plot of Wuyi tea plants was left unroasted, in the fashion of Taiwan's High Mountain Tea. This one is on the other end of the roasting scale, having undergone 6 roasting sessions in total. After being roasted in conventional modern ovens twice, this batch was handed over to a professional charcoal tea roaster. This is all the guy does: roast tea in woven bamboo baskets, using charcoal made from the Longan fruit tree. He does not let anyone into his workshop, and keeps his traditional secrets to himself, which he has been developing for several decades. He also roasted this year's January batch that we shared with

Longan Charcoal Roasted Wuyi Oolong Tea

Harvest: Machine cut
Season: Winter 2016

Region: Songbolin, Taiwan.
Elevation: 400m

Oxidation: Medium
Roast: Heavily Roasted

Flavor: *Subtle smoky, fruitwood aroma. Smooth, caramelized, dried Longan fruit character. Balanced sweet/dry finish.*

BREWING GUIDE:

 9g

 350mL

 95°C

 3 minutes

our Eco-Cha Tea Club members, which our members have raved about.

So here we have it, a naturally cultivated plot of heirloom Wuyi tea plants that our friend combined last spring and winter harvests to roast in a traditional fashion to represent his cultural roots in a way that is perhaps unprecedented in his already very successful career as a tea craftsman and merchant. This is why we feel obligated to share this small, singular batch of tea with our tea club members.