

High Mountain Hong Shui Oolong Tea

Harvest: Hand-picked
Season: Summer 2017

Region: Heya, Taiwan
Elevation: 1050m

Oxidation: Heavy oxidation
Roast: Unroasted

Flavor: *Sweet, fruitwood aroma. Pomegranate, pear, citrus notes.
Dry, sweet/tart finish.*

BREWING GUIDE:



GARDEN

This batch of tea was cultivated on the lower slopes of the Shanlinxi region. Our friend, the owner of the factory where this tea was made, told us that this batch comes from a tea garden that he praised for its farm management and quality of produce. He told us that this singular batch of tea was made to order by a young man who is the only remaining heir of his family's traditional tea making style. In sum: Quality produce processed as traditional artisan tea = YES!

TASTING NOTES

This month's batch of tea is a heavily oxidized, unroasted Oolong Tea harvested from the lower lying slopes of the Shanlinxi region. The character of this tea is an intriguing combination of Oolong and Black Tea. The aromatic qualities offer a rich sweet profile like fruit compote. On the palate, it has a broad range of flavor, with a base of deep musky notes into a complex fruity body with subtle hints of citrus in the

finish. The aftertaste lingers with a dry headiness comprised of interesting sweet/tart tones.

The artisan is of the conviction that this type of tea can only be produced in the summer, when it is hot enough to provide the proper wilting of the leaves that allows for sufficient oxidation. The leaves are also picked when they are slightly more mature, allowing them to withstand the extensive wilting and tumbling that results in an even gradation of oxidation. In a word, this type of tea is all about proper oxidation of the leaves!

THE STORY OF THIS TEA

This month's tea is truly a unique find that came to us only via our dear friend and teacher. We met him about 20 years ago, and only in recent years have begun to call upon his expertise and deep roots in the local industry. After decades of managing his family farm and apprenticing under local masters, he has simplified his position by renting out his factory to tea

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BREWING GUIDE:

 7g

 300mL

 95°C

 3 minutes

farmers and working with them to support their farming methods and tea making styles.

We see this designated role he has created for himself as a significant contributing factor to the sustainability of specialty tea making. He actively supports farmers and tea makers who are making tea that has a distinctive quality, and we can confidently say that he knows more than most in the industry what defines quality tea. He is a fourth generation tea maker that began his career by studying with the most renowned masters on Dong Ding Mountain and he also worked in factories on Da Yu Ling some 30 years ago. Since then he has been immersed in the industry as a farmer, tea maker and merchant. We feel humbled and privileged every time we are welcomed into his home and educated by his modest but solid comprehension of Taiwanese Tea.

Our friend procured the tea from a farmer friend who sold his fresh produce

to the only surviving heir of a family tea making tradition in the Yonglong/Fenghuang community in Lugu. This community is the heart of Dong Ding Oolong Tea along with the lesser known specialty of Hong Shui Oolong Tea. This young tea maker impressed our friend by his careful and arduous processing methods. He observed this 20-something-year-old heir of his family tradition implementing processing methods that are now rare. Most fundamentally, the oxidation of the leaves took a full 24 hours — with multiple shuffling and tumbling of the leaves to result in an even gradation of oxidation from the periphery inward. This required doubling the cost of labor in order to create this effect. This batch of tea was made to order, and was only made available to us because the owner of the factory was compelled to request a small portion of this batch from the farmer who provided the raw produce. Our friend offered us half of his share in this batch. This is what makes us inspired and especially qualified to facilitate the Eco-Cha Tea Club!