



eco-cha
TEA CLUB

Gold Medal Award Dong Ding Jin Xuan Oolong

Harvest: Medium batch
Season: Winter 2017

Region: Meishan, Taiwan
Elevation: 1100m

Oxidation: Light-medium
Roast: Medium-heavy

Flavor: *Roasted winter squash aroma with charcoal overtones. Toasted nutty, pumpkin pie character. Notes of campfire pine and fruitwood finish.*

BREWING GUIDE:

 7g

 300ml

 95°C

 3 minutes

GARDEN

This batch of Jin Xuan High Mountain Tea was grown in Meishan Township in the Alishan tea growing region. Since 2013, our friend whom we sourced this batch from has won First Place, Top 2% and Top 7% in this Dong Ding Jin Xuan Oolong Tea competition held by the Nantou County Tea Trade Association. This competition represents traditional tea making using the most popular hybrid tea strain in Taiwan — Tai Cha #12, or Jin Xuan Oolong.

TASTING NOTES

With the first brew poured off, the leaves offer a distinctly roasted character with nutty, fruitwood fireside notes. After the second brew the aroma of the brewed leaves turns a bit fruity, with a warming spice sweetness reminiscent of pumpkin pie. The tea has a roasted flavor upfront, followed by a sweetness like grilled fresh corn. Then it moves into a more balanced, rich, complex character and smooth texture. The second visual assessment

of competition teas is the purity of color and transparency of the brewed tea. It should be clear and luminescent.

These leaves have brewing endurance. They can be brewed 5 to 6 times and still produce a full flavored brew. From the third brew on, the flavor becomes a bit lighter but also more vibrant in character. Overall, it's a very well balanced brew, with a complexity that makes it difficult to pinpoint a particular flavor. This is the effect that a quality Dong Ding Oolong should achieve. And Dong Ding made with Jin Xuan tea leaves offers a smoother, milder character of this traditionally made tea.

THE STORY OF THIS TEA

This month's batch of tea being shared with the Eco-Cha Tea Club was entered into the winter 2017 Nantou County Tea Trade Association's Dong Ding Jin Xuan Tea Competition, and received the Gold Medal Award. This award ranks within the top 5% of all entries. This competition has been in existence for



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almost 25 years. It began with the development of Jin Xuan tea production in the early 1990's.

Jin Xuan is a hybrid cultivar produced by the government subsidized Tea Research Extension Station (TRES) in Taiwan and is registered as Tai Cha #12 (台茶12號). It was designed to possess a stronger immunity to naturally occurring "pests" in the regional climate of Taiwan while producing a somewhat larger leaf that increases yield. It is known for its buttery or milk flavor qualities and has a milder astringency and smoother texture.

We are particularly fond of this competition because the standard of the flavor profile by which these tea entries are judged resembles a traditionally made Dong Ding Oolong tea. In order to achieve this character, the leaves undergo medium oxidation, and are then roasted repeatedly to produce a hearty, robust character of tea. This level of oxidation and roasting is closer to a pre-modern processing method that involves heavily curing the tea leaves to stabilize their consistency and have a

longer shelf life. In fact, this type of tea is often considered to increase in quality with age.

Acknowledging that the labor intensive traditional methods that require knowledge and skill are being promoted by this association is encouraging. In our perception, Dong Ding Oolong tea is the most prominent representative of a traditional locally produced specialty tea in Taiwan. And this association has preserved and promoted this local culture by integrating this modern hybrid tea plant with traditionally developed tea making skills.