



eco-cha  
TEA CLUB  
Alishan High Mountain Black Tea

Harvest: Small batch  
Season: Summer 2019

Region: Meishan, Taiwan  
Elevation: 1200m

Oxidation: Medium  
Roast: Unroasted

**Flavor:** *SComplex, sweet fruity aroma. Malty, thick caramelized sugar with citrus notes. Dry, pleasantly sweet, lingering finish.*

**BREWING GUIDE:**

 7g

 300ml

 95°C

 3 minutes

## GARDEN

We continue to be delighted with our source of Alishan Tea that we discovered a few years ago. It is a residential farm, run by a husband and wife team, with an onsite factory, and surrounded by pine and bamboo forest in the Alishan High Mountain Tea area of Taiwan. It embodies pretty much everything we aspire to support in the local industry, and represent to tea lovers around the world.

## TASTING NOTES

Eco-Cha Tea Club's batch #48 is Alishan High Mountain Black Tea. It has a very balanced, integrated flavor profile, and offers subtle notes of a Qing Xin Oolong. The brewed leaves still have a greenish hue, even though the stems are quite reddish, indicating nearly full oxidation. It is an interesting hybrid of tea types, but definitely acts more like a Black Tea made from the small leaf type Qing Xin strain.

The leaves were harvested from the bumper crop, following this year's spring harvest. They were allowed to

mature enough to offer a substantial brew with a balanced character that is neither bitter nor astringent. It has brown sugar/oatmeal cookie profile with subtle notes of citrus (we taste bergamot), coffee, and cocoa. It's an amazingly integrated flavor profile that makes it hard to distinguish individual notes.

The brewed tea is a bright copper/red with beautiful transparency and luminescence. It's refined yet substantial character allows it to be brewed with less leaves to offer more complexity, but it can also handle a higher leaf:water ratio and still maintain a balanced character. We recommend starting at 1:20 leaf to water ratio and using above 90°C water, starting with a 40 second brew time, 30 seconds for the second brew, and adding 10 seconds per brew from there on.

## THE STORY OF THIS TEA

Batch #48 of the Eco-Cha Tea Club is an Alishan High Mountain Black Tea. Our source of Alishan High Mountain Oolong and Alishan High Mountain Jin Xuan



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Oolong makes Black Tea from his summer crop of Qing Xin Oolong tea leaves. The summer crop is actually a bumper crop from their spring harvest. The new leaf growth that was too immature to pick at spring harvest is allowed to continue growing to at least half maturity before it is harvested and processed as Small Leaf Black Tea.

This source has only been making Black Tea for 3 or 4 years, but this year they've made significant progress in producing an exceptional High Mountain Small Leaf Black Tea. We believe it's at least partially because they allowed their leaves to mature a bit more than in previous years. This is recognizable in the appearance of the brewed leaves, and we think that it is also the reason that this batch is much less astringent. In our experience, the previous batches we sampled from this source were fickle to brew, and easily became astringent. This character coincided with the fact that the leaves were quite young.

With each visit to this farm, we find ourselves uttering "This is the most beautiful tea garden"! A prominent reason

we say this, beyond the fact that it is quite pretty from almost any point of view, is that it is on a residential farm, interspersed with big trees, and surrounded by forest. It is also at the top of the hill, with no further development above it. At 1200m, the climate provides ideal growing conditions, and is environmentally more sustainable than more remote, higher elevation tea farms.

The owners of this farm and factory are a couple in their early 40's that are really in their prime of their career as specialty tea producers. It is truly a pleasure to visit them — so much so that we seize any opportunity to head into the hills of Alishan Tea Country to see what they are up to!