

Competition Grade Wenshan Baozhong Tea

Harvest: Machine harvested,
single batch

Season: Spring 2020
Region: Wenshan, Taiwan

Elevation: 600m

Flavor: *Fruity, floral aroma. Balanced, sweet, savory, and floral notes. Clean, refreshing finish.*

BREWING GUIDE:

 5g

 300ml

 95°C

 3 minutes

GARDEN

When we visited our ongoing source of Baozhong Tea to taste his spring harvest, we tasted both single days of harvest and blends of two different days of harvest. The leaves are sorted by an electronic scanning device that separates by both color and size. This batch is the premium picks from a single day's that was being prepared for competition.

TASTING NOTES

This is what an award winning Wenshan Baozhong Tea looks like, in its dry leaf state, of course. Notice the uniformity in the size and coloration of the leaves. The yellow hues are only in the spine of the leaves, which would naturally protrude into a stem, but the stems have been removed, along with the larger, lighter colored, over-matured leaf stock. This uniformity of leaf material offers a pure flavor profile. It allows for a complexity of aromatic and flavor notes, but it comes from a uniform stock which is essential in producing a purity of character. This is a fundamental aspect

of competition grade tea. It's not



muddled. It's refined.

For visual purposes, we probably should have used a sieve when pouring this brew from the pot into the pitcher, and then into the cup. But, we just don't believe in sieves when it comes to brewing tea! Our take is, at the expense of a visually unmitigated cup of tea, it's best to keep stainless steel screens out of your tea experience. And, even if you have a ceramic sieve, the question remains: Are you making a better tasting

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cup of tea by using it? We don't have an answer, other than natural is best! In the final analysis, the limpid luminescence can still be noted and appreciated, albeit with some tea leaf sediment!

We used 9g of dried tea leaves in this 200mL capacity gaiwan teapot, and brewed with boiling temp water for approximately one minute intervals. In our experience, Baozhong Tea has one of the widest ranges of tea brewing possibilities. Some advocate a much lighter brew, with less leaf:water ratio,

and lower temp water. These variations in brewing will only offer a broader range of flavor notes and character to the brewed tea. We simply learn by osmosis from the locals. But we fully acknowledge that it is hardly the only, or even optimal method to go by. So, in short, we encourage you to explore the brewing parameters! Especially with a tea like this one — which will basically perform well with all reasonable variations in brewing techniques!



Just look at those brewed leaves! You know what is striking about them, in our

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perception? They have not been tightly rolled. THIS, is the most prominent factor in producing the distinctive fresh green, aromatic quality that is unique to Baozhong Tea. The leaves have maintained their structural integrity, despite their rather extensive withering and oxidation process, because they have been treated with more finesse than the modern tea processing methods that have been developed in the last 30 or more years.

Wenshan Baozhong Tea is a traditionally made tea, with methods that embody a wisdom that dates back to the mid-19th century. In this respect, it's a noble tea, on par with the other traditionally made tea with generations of history and evolution of tea culture.

THE STORY OF THIS TEA

Batch #55 of the Eco-Cha Tea Club is an award-winning Wenshan Baozhong Tea that was entered in the recent spring tea competition of the local Farmers' Association. Preparation for competition involves removing the bulkier stems from the leaves, and also sorting the leaves by

coloration to achieve the most uniform stock of leaf material possible. The most prominent factor that gives Baozhong Tea its distinctive character is that the leaves are not tightly rolled. This preserves an integrity in the constitution of the leaves that allows them to maintain a fresh green quality, even though they undergo an extensive withering, oxidation, and even post oxidation process.

When we procured this batch, the farmer was still preparing different days of harvest, and deciding which batches to enter into the Wenshan Baozhong Tea competitions at the two local farmers' associations. This is a singular batch, meaning that it was not combined with other days of the spring harvest. Two days of the same harvest will often be combined to achieve a more balanced flavor profile and well-rounded composition in the brewed tea. Generally, this is not common practice in Taiwan tea production, but more common in preparing competition batches of tea.

It turns out that this batch of tea made from a single day's harvest got entered into the Shi Ding District Farmers'

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Association Wenshan Baozhong Tea Competition and achieved Top Category Award (頭等獎), meaning that it ranked within the top 5% of all 511 entries! Given that the amount of Wenshan Baozhong Tea makers is quite minimal in comparison to other tea types in other tea producing regions around Taiwan, the amount of entries in these competitions is less.

We only found out that this batch was awarded the top category award because we made a passing comment about it when we visited this farmer a month after sourcing it to check out his Black Tea making. Upon our mentioning it, he just uttered, "Oh, that batch got Top Category Prize" in the most off the cuff manner! We somewhat jokingly remarked that perhaps he should wait until after the competition results are in to decide on the selling price! He just laughed and said, regardless of the competitions, he still needs to take care of his loyal customers. This resonates deeply with us, and essentially represents the sustainable platform that we strive to operate on.