



eco cha
TEA CLUB

Top Award Winning Dong Ding Cui Yu Oolong Tea

Harvest: Machine harvested,
medium batch

Season: Spring 2020
Region: Songbolin, Taiwan

Elevation: 400m

Flavor: *Mildly smoky, toffee aroma . Caramel, campfire-roasted yams flavor.
Sweet, toasted nutty finish.*

BREWING GUIDE:



8g



300ml



95°C



3 minutes

GARDEN

Songbolin is a historical tea producing region that is home to some of the best tea makers in Taiwan. This Top Category Award winning batch of tea was procured by a top competition player, and cured with a precision that has won him Champion Prize three times in this same local competition .

TASTING NOTES

Dong Ding Oolong is a name given to traditionally made tea in the Lugu area of southern Nantou County, Taiwan. The quality standard of this tea has been largely determined by local competitions in the last 40 years. While Dong Ding is the name of a mountain in Lugu that is most renowned for this tea type, the name now designates a recipe more than a locale. It represents processing methods and the flavor profile that results from these methods.

The processing methods involve wilting and oxidizing the leaves with finesse to produce a uniform transformation of the chemical compounds in the tea leaves that offer a rich, balanced, yet complex

flavor profile. This flavor profile is then enhanced by slowly roasting the leaves at low temperatures (80-120°C). The final result is a smooth, caramelized character with toasted nutty flavor notes, and a heady lingering finish that is exceptionally satisfying.

This batch of award-winning Dong Ding Cui Yu is made from well cultivated and skillfully processed tea leaves from the hybrid cultivar Tai Cha #13, or Tsui Yu (Cui Yu). Our friends then sorted the leaves to use only the best quality portion of this harvest to roast to perfection. The brewed tea offers a complex balance of fresh vibrant tea leaf character and toasted grains and nuts flavor notes, with a fruity/smoky finish. If you like a tea with a hearty character, this one's for you!

THE STORY OF THIS TEA

Batch 57 of the Eco Cha Tea Club is a Top Award winning tea that was entered into the spring 2020 Nantou County Tea Trade Association's Dong Ding (Ton Tin) Cui Yu Oolong Tea competition. This association focuses on promoting tea production in



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lower elevation regions, namely Zhushan and Mingjian Townships in southern Nantou County. These towns are at the foot of the mountain below Lugu Township and the Shan Lin Xi high mountain tea growing region. Zhushan and Mingjian, along with Lugu are home to the densest population of tea makers in Taiwan. And these three low and mid-elevation areas are the predecessors to all of the High Mountain Tea growing regions in central Taiwan. All three place names have generations of tea history. It's a long and complex story, but — in short, these 3 neighboring towns share a common history of pre-modern tea production.

Dong Ding Oolong is the name that is given to the type of tea that is most prominently distinguished from the modern innovation of High Mountain Oolong in Nantou County. Although Dong Ding is the name of a mountain in Lugu with a deep history of tea production, this name now represents a processing method more than anything else. This pre-modern processing method was never exclusive to communities on and around Dong Ding Mountain in Lugu.

They were simply pre-modern Oolong Tea processing methods. Songbolin in Mingjian is also the home of traditional tea making. And in the end, it comes down to who is growing and processing the tea more than anything else, even though the micro-climate has unquestionable significance.

Our friends in the photo above have won First Place Award in this competition 3 times! And their tea consistently receives the Top Award (top 5%) Category. They only source tea for this competition from one farmer who specializes in producing higher quality tea leaves, made for this competition. The farmer invests more in farm management, and skillfully processes his leaves to a higher degree of oxidation — making them suitable for roasting. Several other First Place Award winners have also used leaves from the same source.

This spring, our friends procured three standard 18kg bulk bags of Tai Cha #13 a.k.a. 翠玉 or Cui Yu (Tsui Yu) a.k.a. Jade Oolong — to prepare for this competition. Tai Cha #13 is a hybrid strain that was bred by the Tea Research and Extension



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Station to have a distinctive flavor and aromatic profile. It was registered and promoted shortly after the more widely cultivated and well known Tai Cha #12 a.k.a. Jin Xuan a.k.a. Milky Oolong in the early 1980's. This preparation for competition involves destemming and sorting the leaves, and roasting them repeatedly to achieve the competition standard of flavor and aromatic profile as well as appearance.

After sorting and roasting, the quantity of fully prepared competition grade leaf was reduced to less than the amount needed for 3 entries, so there was about 10kg leftover after two entries went into competition. This is how we were offered this batch of tea that ended up receiving Top Award category in the spring 2020 competition.

Our Roasted Tsui Yu Oolong is from this same source, and the tea leaves that he prepares for this competition, but don't quite hit the mark for competition entry become part of their standard stock of this tea type. Basically, our in store Roasted Tsui Yu Oolong is the same type of tea that is entered in this competition.

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