

# The Art of Chinese Tea Drinking

April 18, 2016  
Monday  
5:00 – 7:00 PM

Wyatt 2nd floor  
Univ. of Puget Sound

## Presented by

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## Event supported by

Chinese Language and Culture, Asian Studies Program, University of Puget Sound (UPS)

Confucius Institute of the State of Washington (CIWA)

## Tea Tasting Sequence and Variety

Cold Brew

Alishan Jinxuan 阿里山金萱 (Jiayi, Taiwan)

Hot Brew

Hangzhou Dragon Well 杭州龍井 (Hangzhou, China)

Wenshan Baozhong 文山包種 (Pinglin, Taiwan)

Oriental Beauty 東方美人或白毫烏龍 (Yunan, China)

## Brewing Guidelines: Cold Brew

Almost any type of tea can be brewed cold, but you will get the best taste from lightly oxidized oolong teas, like Jinxuan. You will notice that cold-brewing brings out new tastes to familiar teas. Some teas are even improved with cold-brewing

- First give the tea leaves a quick rinse with cool water before letting them steep, glass or ceramic vessels are still the best choice to avoid imparting any foreign taste to the tea.
- Use about 6 - 8 grams of loose tea leaves for every liter of water (a heaping tablespoon per quart of water). Let the tea steep in the refrigerator for about 4 hours.
- If it is too strong, simply add water. If it is too weak, add more leaves the next time.
- The tea can be left refrigerated for up to 5 days, but if it becomes cloudy or acquires a sticky texture, it has become contaminated with bacteria and should be thrown away.
- Use up any unrefrigerated tea within 2 hours.

## Brewing Guidelines: Hot Brew

The taste of oolong tea very much depends on the brewing method.

- In general, boil your water, and wait for a little while to brew green tea.
- Avoid drastic decrease of water temperature (warm up the pitchers and cups).
- The sweet taste of green tea comes from the substance called amino acid which can dissolve in the water at a lower temperature, but the taste of oolong tea comes from poly phenol and its oxidized substances, and those substances could only dissolve in the water at higher temperature. In other word, you would not enjoy the real taste of oolong tea if it is brewed at too low a temperature.

1. **Jinxuan Tea** is often grown in Alishan, or Mout Ali area, which is a natural preserve located in the mountains of Chiayi County in central Taiwan. It has become one of the major landmarks associated with High mountain oolong. There are about 200 small farmers in the area. The name Jinxuan refers to a specific tea varietal developed by the Taiwan Research and Experiment Station (TRES) dedicated to the improvement of the tea industry of Taiwan. Jinxuan, often nicknamed as "Milk Oolong," offers a particularly creamy texture with a distinctive milky smoothness and sweetness. With mild floral notes, it is a perfect variety of green tea to be brewed cold.

2. **Dragon Well** is grown near the famed West Lake in Hangzhou, Dragon Well has been honored since the Tang Dynasty. It is said to be at its best when brewed with water from the nearby Tiger Run Spring which is high in natural minerals and sweet in taste. The Best Dragon Well tea grows on the hills west to the West Lake in Mei Jia Wu Village. The place has all that are essential to the growing of quality tea- fertile soil, moderate climate, plentiful rainfall, mist and cloud that enclose the hills all the year round. Extra care in breeding and picking, as well as using traditional hand roast method also contribute to the superior quality of the tea. Every 500g special grade Dragon Well tea need about 26,000 pieces of tender shoot handpicked before April 5 which are then roasted by hand with extra care for about 10 hours. The Dragon Well tea is flat-shaped, stiff, of even size and smooth. The tea comes out in lobes when infused in a glass with clear water. Dragon well tea is renowned as "green in hue, strong fragrance, mellow taste and pretty appearance". The Chinese believes Dragon Well has a cooling effect so it is even more popular during the spring and summer seasons. Compared to other green tea varieties, Dragon Well is more full-bodied and complex than most.

Water Temp °F (°C)	Quality of Water	Quantity of Leaf (tsp / 8oz water)	Steep Time (minutes)	Infusions
160°F (71°C)	Best with Spring water	2	2-3	2-3

Use moderately hot water, 150 to 170 F, to brew this tea, otherwise, it may bring out bitterness.

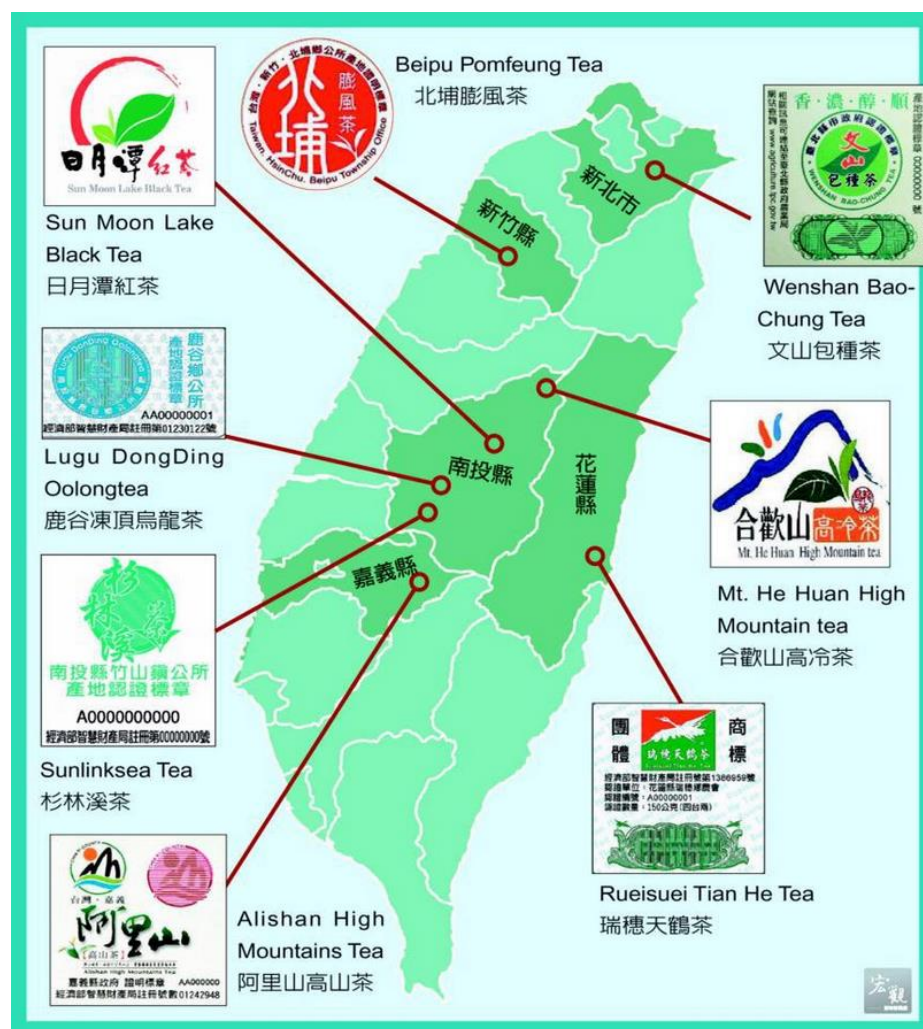
3. **Baozhong (Baochung) Tea** is a very lightly oxidized oolong tea. It is produced mainly in Fujian and in Pinglin Township near Taipei, Taiwan. Its name in Chinese, literally "the wrapped kind", refers to a practice of wrapping the leaves in paper during the drying process that has largely been discontinued due to advancement in tea processing. At its best, Baozhong gives off a floral and melon fragrance and has a rich, mild taste. 'Wen Shan' is the name of a high mountain in Pinglin where the Taiwan Baozhong tea gets its name. The hills of Wen Shan have produced some of the finest light oolong teas over the past 200 years. Baozhong has a milder flavor than other varieties of oolong tea yet stronger than Green tea. Baozhong tea is processed with a minimum of rolling and drying, resulting in large, deep green leaves that have undergone only slight oxidation. This green oolong is noteworthy for its floral aroma and light, refreshing taste that lingers gently on the palate. These deep green leaves produce a beautiful jade liquor that yields an exquisite flavor and aroma, followed by a sweet aftertaste.

Water Temp °F (°C)	Quality of Water	Quantity of Leaf (tsp / 8oz water)	Steep Time (minutes)	Infusions
180°F (82°C)	Best with spring water	2	2-3	2-3

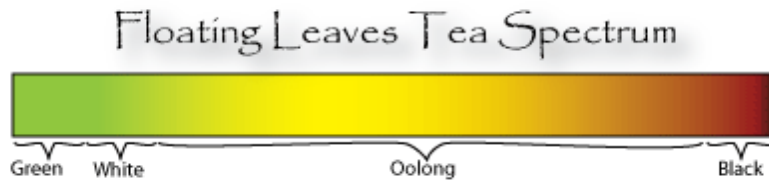
4. Oriental Beauty (Baihao oolong) is grown without pesticides to encourage a common pest, the tea green leafhopper, to feed on the leaves. The buds then turn white along the edges which gives the tea its

alternate name, white-tip oolong. The insect bites start the oxidation of the leaves and tips and add a sweet note to the tea. This tea dates from the end of the 19th century, when Taiwan started exporting its oolong teas overseas. Most tea farmers were new immigrants from Fujian with little tea growing experience. They had moved across the Taiwan (or Formosa) Strait in search of a place to start a new and prosperous life. They mostly sold their harvests to foreign agents for export to the West. Popular stories as to the origin of the tea and its names abound. It was once thought that a tea farmer in Beipu noticed that small green insects, later known as cicadas, had damaged the leaves of his newly picked spring crop. Rather than destroying his crop, he decided to process the leaves into tea. He then took his product to a local tea merchant, who liked it well enough to pay him twice the price of his usual tea. When he returned to his village, he boasted to his neighbors about his success. His neighbors believed he was exaggerating and so named his tea, 'Peng Feng Cha', or Braggart's tea. Legend has it that this tea was so good that it supposedly made its way to the queen of England who named it "Oriental Beauty" (or 'Dong Fang Mei Ren' in Chinese).

### Taiwan Tea Map



## Tea Spectrum



### All tea comes from the same plant

All true tea is grown from one single species of plant, *Camellia sinensis*. The difference between types of tea is in the processing rather than in the plant itself. The one key trait which differentiates the three major families of tea is oxidation, sometimes mistakenly called fermentation. Put simply, the longer the juices of the tea leaves are exposed to oxygen, the darker the tea gets.

### Green Tea

Green tea is un-oxidized tea. Immediately after harvest it is heated to prevent its juices from reacting with the oxygen in the air. The heat neutralizes the reactants in the leaves preserving green leaves in green color. In China, green teas are most commonly pan fried or baked to stop oxidation. In Japan, green tea is steamed after harvest, giving Japanese teas a very distinct flavor not commonly found elsewhere in the world. The best green teas carry a delicate, fresh flavor and are made from only the youngest, most tender leaves and buds.

### Black Tea

Black tea is at the other end of the spectrum. Where green is un-oxidized, black tea is fully or 100% oxidized. Rather than heating the tea to prevent oxidation, after harvest black tea is purposely shaken and stirred to break down cell walls in the leaves and expose their juices to the air. Like green tea, high grade black tea is made from the youngest and most tender leaves and leaf buds. These younger, tenderer leaves expose their juices more readily than older leaves, allowing them to oxidize fully and rapidly.

### Oolong Tea

This tea family, little known in the west, is actually the largest and most varied of the major three tea families. The oolong tea family makes up the entire region of the tea spectrum between fully oxidized and un-oxidized. Oolong teas range from extremely green to extremely dark. Surprisingly though, the flavor does not fade from a green tea taste to a black tea taste. Instead, like the colors of the rainbow, each stop along the spectrum has a unique flavor of its own, as distinct from each other as orange is from blue. Oolong teas are made from larger, more mature leaves and buds. These tougher leaves oxidize more slowly allowing the tea crafter to carefully monitor the level and rate of oxidation, bringing the process to a halt at that exact point on the tea spectrum that defines his or her intended tea. Similarly to green tea, heat is used to bring oxidation to an end.