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Introduction

I visited China’s National Tea Museum in Hangzhou in June of 2014. While I was excited to visit the plantation, I wasn’t too excited to read through the museum at that day. So instead of spending all of my day reading each in everything in the museum, I decided to take pictures of all the descriptions and read them later. When I returned to the US, I realized that these images could be a very good resource for tea people who haven’t been to this museum. Unfortunately some of the photos were difficult to read, so I decided to work with the photos, to a point where I could read them and then type them. That is what led to all of this.

This entire document contains images of the descriptions that are within China’s National Tea Museum in Hangzhou. While most of these images are mine, all of these images were taken within China’s National Tea Museum and all the information is theirs. I am not sure if I got all the descriptions within the Museum, but I did get a lot of them!

This document is in the order of which I took the images, so some of it maybe in the actual order of the museum.
Introduction

Tea is one of China’s major contributions to mankind and world civilizations. China is the origin of the tea tree and the first country to discover and use tea. The tea industry and tea culture started from the drinking of tea. Over thousands of years, as the custom of drinking tea penetrated more and more deeply into Chinese people’s lives, tea culture has been steadily enriched and developed as part of the age-old national culture and a gem of traditional oriental culture. Today as a worldwide beverage, tea serves as a tie of deep affection between the Chinese and people in other parts of the world.

Wild arborous tea plant in Ailao Mountain

Located in Ailao mountain nature reserve that is 2450 meters above sea level, it is of arbor type, 25.6 meters high, with the base of the trunk 1.2 meters long. And is one of the ancient wild arborous tea plants. *Picture of big tree**

Wild Arborous tea plant in Bada, Xishuangbana.

Located in Dahei Mountain virgin forest in Hesong, Bada Township, Menhai County, Yunnan, it is of arbor type 23.6 Meters high, with the base of the trunk 1 meters long, Ancient Wild Arbor Tea Plant
There is a tree from Bangwai
Located in the village of Bangwai, Fudong Township, Lancang County, Yunnan 1990
Meters above sea level.....and is also a transitional one between the wild type and cultivation type. 11.8 Meters high 1.14 Meter Base.

Arborous tea plane of cultivation type in Nannao Mountain

Nannao Mountain, Gelang River Township, Menghai County Yunnan.

5.5 Meters High
The Initial Stage of Chinese Tea

After being founded utilized in the ancient age, tea was used as medicine, food, and beverage. Initially tea was drunk only in the ancient Ba-Shu in southwest China. As economic and cultural communication intensified, the practice of drinking tea spread to the middle and lower reaches of the Yangtze River and the Central Plains. Bud of Chinese tea culture appeared during the Wei, Jin, and the Southern and Northern Dynasties, when economic and cultural communications and fusion between the north and the south helped tea drinking to spread further northward. The main consumers of tea at the time were the upper class aristocrats and scholars, who viewed tea drinking as a spiritually elegant enjoyment. Chinese tea culture had displayed its distinctive charm by then.

The Use of tea and its development has been a long process, during which tea was used as medicine, food, and beverage.

Fa Jiang Pian, a dictionary written by Sima Xiangru of the Western Han Dynasty, includes chuancha as the name of a drug, which refers to nothing else but the tea.

In the story told in Yi Yuan, a book of the southern Dynasties, wife of Chen Wu, a man from Shan County, was fond of tea and would offer tea to the deceased in an ancient grave near her house whenever she was gin to drink tea.

The entry “jia, bitter tea” in the ninth volume (Trees) in Annotation to Erh Yah by Guo Pu (276-324) of Eastern Jin Dynasty says, “The tree is in the size of the gardenia. Its leaves never fall in winter, and can be made into soup. Leaves picked earlier are called cha, and those picked later are called, Ming. They are also known as chuan and are called kutu in Sichuan.”
The drinking of tea originated in the ancient Ba-Shu (the present Sichuan) in southwest China. After the First Emperor of Qin unified China, economic and cultural communication helped to introduce the tea to the Central Plains. The generally accepted name cha was preceded by such ancient names as jia, chuan, she, ming and tu, most of which derived from the dialect of ancient Ba-Shu.

According to Cha Pu by Mao Wenxi of the Five Dynasties and other historical records. Wu Lizhen of the Western Han Dynasty planted seven tea trees at Shangqing Peak on Mount Meng in Sichuan. Later there was a saying to the effect that the seven trees were immortal, and that anyone taking four tales of their leaves would immediately be immortalized.
Tea as a tribute:

In the ancient Ba-Shu, the tea had begun to be used and presented to court as tribute no later than the Zhou Dynasty. As recorded in the Chronicles of Hua Yang Guy by Chang Qu of the Jin Shang Dynast, King Wu (of Zhou) enforced members of his clan in Ba and made them dukes. Tribute to the court from the region included mulberry, silkworm, hemp, ramie, fish, salt, bronze, iron, vermilion, lacquer, tea, honey, turtle, etc. Prized fruits included the litchi the tea, and so on.

Tea as a commodity:

In the Han Dynasty, when the drinking of tea was widespread in the Ba-Shu region, tea became a commodity in circulation. Ton Yue by Wang Bao of the Western Han Dynasty includes the provision of “brewing tea and preparing tea sets” and “buying tea in Wuyang”
As recorded in Guang Ya by Zhang Yi of Wei in the Three Kingdoms Period, “In Jing and Ba, tea was picked and made into cakes. If the leaves were old, they would be mixed with rice gruel. For making tea, a tea cake would be baked until it turned red, then ground into powder which was put in a porcelain vessel and steeped in hot water together with shallot, ginger, and tangerine peel.” The method of making tea cakes and brewing tea appeared in the Three Kingdoms Period. The making of tea cakes remained dominant till the Tang and Song Dynasties, except that the processing technique and brewing method were more refined.

The practice of drinking tea went downstream along the Yangtze and took root in its middle and lower reaches. The early Han Dynasty saw Changsha, Hunan and Chaling County under its jurisdiction becoming centers of tea production. Tuling County was established in 106 B.C. (the fifth year of Yuangeng period in the Western Han Dynasty.) The Han tomb in Mawangdui, Changsha, excavated in 1973, was found to contain a seal with the word Tuling, bamboo slips and wooden tablets bearing the term “tea box”, and tea packing. An intact celadon urn unearthed from a late eastern han tomb in Huzhou, another center of tea production, bears a character for “tea” carved on its shoulder, which suggests that tea had appeared in the middle and lower reaches of the Yangtze by that time. Located by the Taihu Lake in the lower reach of the river, Huzhou used to produce a famous tea called the Yangxian Tea.

As recorded in “The History of Wu” in the History of the three kingdoms, Sun Hao, the last monarch of Wu, was a heavy drinker and frequently gave banquets to his ministers. He secretly gave tea to Wei Yao, a senior minister, allowing him to drink it instead of liquor.
Chinese tea culture came into being during the Wei, Jin, and Southern and Northern Dynasties, when economic and cultural communication and fusion between the north and the south promoted the practice of drinking tea to spread northward. The main consumers of tea were the upper-class aristocrats and scholars, who wrote many poems and odes about tea and advocated the use of tea to cultivate frugality.
The Incipience of Tea Culture in the Tang Dynasty

The powerful Tang Dynasty boasted a strong economy and thriving culture. It was a heyday of ancient Chinese tea culture, which, according to historians, came in vogue in the Tang Dynasty and flourished in the Song Dynasty. Tea became part of everyday life as a major commodity. There appeared many famous varieties, some of which were selected as tribute to the emperor. It was in this period that taxes began to be levied on tea, and the first books on tea were written. The period saw the incipience of customs and techniques of drinking tea, which would have a far-reaching impact on later generations. In particular, the appearance of The Tea Classic by Lu Yu was an epoch-making event in the development of Chinese Tea Culture.

In the Tang Dynasty, continually influenced by the custom of drinking tea from the south, tea was quickly popular in the north. The thriving and influence of the Chan Sect of Buddhism was one of the major reasons for that. This is well described in What Feng Heard and Saw by Feng Yan “In the Kaiyuan period, a monk known as the Demon subduing Master in Lingyan Temple on Mount Tai vigorously preached the Chan Sect. Followers of the sect were required not to sleep or eat at night, but they were allowed to drink tea. So they brewed and drank tea everywhere. As many people followed suit, the practice became a custom.”

Another major reason for the thriving of tea culture in the Tang Dynasty was the appearance of tribute tea. Tang tribute tea fell into two categories. Some varieties, such as Zisun Tea from Huzhou and Yangxian Tea from Yixing, were produced by government-run workshops. Two poetic lines by Lu Tong go that “No plant dares to bloom before the emperor has tasted Yangxian Tea”. Another category consisted of tea presented as tribute by almost all the famous tea producing areas.
Chapter three “the production of tea” of the tea classic gives a detailed description of the production of tea cake in Tang Dynasty. The steps were showed in pictures.

Steps:
1. Picking
2. Steaming
3. Pounding
4. Pressing
5. Putting into mold
6. Taking out of mold
7. Spreading out for air drying
8. Piercing
9. Banking
10. Stringing
11. Sealing

In the Tang Dynasty, there were such varieties as coarse tea, loose tea, dust tea and tea cake. The round tea cake was the mainstream product. It’s processing involved seven steps—picking, steaming, pounding, pressing, baking, piercing and sealing. Brewing round tea cakes was the dominant method. Xiao Yi Obtaining “The Orchid Pavilion” by Tang painter Yan Liben shows how Tang people brewed tea.
“People have learned new things about the tea since the birth of Lu Yu.” The appearance of The Tea Classic by Lu Yu in the mid Tang Dynasty brought tea culture to an unprecedented height.

Lu Yu (733-804), Hongjian by courtesy name, was born in Jingling, Fuzhou (the present Tianmen, Hubei) during the Tang Dynasty. Based on the extensive research he made in tea producing areas south of the Yangtze and the summarization of his predecessors’ experience, he wrote The Tea Classic, the first monograph on tea in the world.

The Tea Classic, which gives a comprehensive description of tea culture, makes a deep and detailed research into and a summary of the origin, history, production, processing, brewing and tasting of tea as well as many facts of cultural and natural history, elevating the tasting of tea to art.

Lu Yu has been venerated as “the Tea Sage.”

Many famous varieties of tea and beautiful tea service made their way into the Tang imperial court. Tribute tea was offered to ancestors first, left for consumption by the court next, and the rest was bestowed on intimate ministers of the emperor and foreign envoys. The gilded silver tea service unearthed from the underground chamber of Famen Temple in 1987 truly reflects the extravagance of the tea culture at court.

The bestowing of tea was a major part of court tea etiquettes. The emperor used it to cement his ties with his ministers. For instance, in Thank Your Majesty for the Bestowing of New Tea on Behalf of Minister Wu, Liu Yuxi expressed his joy at receiving a catty of new tea from the emperor.
Lu Tong (circa 795-835), Yuchuanzi by fancy name was born in Jiyuan, Henan. As a young man, he lived as a hermit in Mount Shaoshi. Despite his poverty, he was an avid reader and a learned man. Twice he rejected a high office offered by the court. A fancier of tea, he composed a well-known poem entitled Thank-you Note to Minister Meng for the New Tea He Sent Me, which is also called “the poem of seven bowls of tea.”
Song Dynasty

The Thriving of Tea Culture in the Song Dynasty

The Song Dynasty is marked by a highly developed tea culture, with a tendency towards refinement and luxury.

The tea drinking method had changed from boiling practiced during the Tang Dynasty to infusion (diancha), a technique both artistic and skillful. Ground tea powder was put into a tea bowl, boiled water was poured into it, and a “tea brush” was used to stir the infusion. Song tea was characterized by “Dragon and Phoenix Round Tea Cakes” an exquisite tribute variety. “Tea competition” skills and the tea serving art.

Tea Competition in the Song Dynasty

Tea competition was initially popular in Jian’ou of Fujian. In the Song Dynasty, it became a common practice among the nobility, the literati and the common people.

Cake tea was mainly used in the competition, which was judged by town points. One was what color of the tea foams was and how distrusted the other was how soon the mark resulted from the tea’s licking the interior of the teacup appeared. White, small and even foams were considered better. In the completion, contestant who succeed in making the mark appear as late as possible would be the winner.

As an interesting and technical activity, tea competition almost vanished in the Ming Dynasty, when loose tea replaced cake tea as the mainstream.
Teahouses in the Song Dynasty

Teahouses in the Song Dynasty flourished in the Song Dynasty. It was both a product of the economic and cultural prosperity and an important part of people’s everyday life. Teahouse of this period increased in amount, and its business covered a wider field. Moreover, teahouse owners laid stress on the beautification of teahouse. In Bianjing (the present Kaifeng, Henan), the Northern Song capital, there were a vast array of teahouses, some which also traded in clothing and paintings etc. besides tea services. In Lin’an (the present Hangzhou, Zhejiang), the southern song capital, the number of teahouses was bigger than that of Bianjing in the Northern Song. Some teahouses were decorated with flowers and paintings by famous artists, thus formulating their own styles.

Along the River during the Qingming Festival (Qing Ming Shang He Tu), a masterpiece by Northern Song painter Zhang Zeduan, vividly shows the prosperity of Bianjing. It also portrays a scene of people going to the market drinking tea and taking a rest.
Beiyuan dragon and phoenix round tea cakes

Beiyuan dragon and phoenix round tea cakes, a combined name of dragon cakes and phoenix cakes, is a general term for tribute tea from Beiyuan in the song dynasty. Beiyuan is located in Mount Fenghuang in the present Jian’ou, Fujian. The production of dragon and phoenix round tea cakes began there in the Taiping Xingguo Period (976-983) in the Song Dynasty. In the Xianping Period (998-1003), Ding Wei made “large dragon cakes” as tribute to the court. In the Qingli Period, Cai Xiang made “small Dragon cakes”, which were superior to the large ones. In its heyday, Beiyuan tribute tea had as many as over 4000 varieties.

Zhao Ji (1082–1135), Emperor Huizong of Song, wrote a book called Da Guan Cha Lun (The Treatise on Tea). The participation of the supreme ruler provided the development of tea and tea culture during the dynasty with a deeper social and political background.

Tea cultivation in a Platation at Ziyungping, a cliff-side inscription, was made in 1109, the 3rd year of Daguan period in the Northern Song Dynasty. It is located in the lofty Daba Mountains, at the present sheping in Shiwo Township, Wanyuan County, Sichuan Provence. It is China’s oldest and best preserved stone inscription on the operation of a private tea plantaion.

The Song Dynasty attached more importance to civil service than military affairs. After the founding emperor relived some generals of their powers, the scholars indulged in amusement. Integrating tea with entertainment and arts, they created “the literati tea”, followed by the most distinguished scholars, such as Cai Xiang, Fan Zhongyan, Ouyang Xiu, Wang Anshi, Mei Yaochen, Su Shi, Su Zhe, Huang Tingjian and Lu You. They wrote many poems and odes on tea and advocated the tea banquet, tea etiquettes and tea parties.
Mount Jing in Yuhang, Zhejiang, has been an origin of quality tea for centuries. Legend has it that Faqin planted several tea trees there, whose leaves he picked and offered to Buddha. Years later the trees spread all over the valley, exuding an extraordinary fragrance. Monks of later times often served tea from the temple to their guests. As time went by, a set of tea serving etiquettes was formed and known as “tea banquet”.

In the southern song dynasty, Japanese monks Enni Ben’en and Nanpo Jomin came to Mount Jing to study Buddhism in 1235 and 1259 respectively. They returned to Japan with tea seeds and tea serving etiquettes, which were spread in their homeland.

Eisai, an eminent Japanese monk who came to China to study Buddhist scriptures twice, in 1168 and 1187 during the Southern Song Dynasty, returned to Japan with tea seeds and the tea drinking method. He wrote a book called Kitcha Yojoi (Book of Tea and Regimen).

Southern Song copper seal of the middle gate of a tea market

Back of the copper seal
In 641, the 15th Year of Zhenquan period in the Tang Dynasty, Princess Wencheng took tea to Tibet as part of her dowry. It was also in the Tang Dynasty that tea began to be sold to the border of China as a bulk commodity. As recorded in The Biography of Lu YU in The New History of the Tang Dynasty, “The trade of tea for horses began after the Uyghurs paid homage to the emperor for the first time.” That was the beginning of the trade of tea and horses, which lasted over a thousand years through the Tang, Song, Ming and Qing Dynasties. Tea was introduced to the northwest and southwest as a commodity.

The ancient Tea-horse Road was a traffic artery formed by the trade of tea and horses between Han Chinese and the first year of Zhide period in the reign of Emperor Suzong during the Tang Dynasty. Since they lived on a plateau and their staple foods were the butter, the beef and the mutton, Tibetans relied on the tea for digesting fat and reliving heat. The trade began because no tea was produced in Tibet while the inland abounded in tea yet lacked horses. The ancient Tea-Horse Road, which still exists, was formed by the continuous transport of mules, horses, fur and medicine produced in Tibet, Sichuan and Yunnan and such inland products as tea, cloth, salt and everyday articles.

The road splits into two routes, one from Yunnan to Tibet and the other from Sichuan to Tibet. The Yunnan-Tibet Rout starts from the tea producing area in Xishuangbanna, reaches Changdu via Lijiang, Zhongdian, Deqin, mankang, and Chaya, and continues to the Weizang Region. The Sichuan-Tibet route starts from the tea production area in Ya’an Sichuan and enters Kangding, where it splits into a southern branch and a northern one. The northern branch goes northward from kangding reaches Changdu (i.e. the northern branch of the present Sichuan-Tibet highway) via Daolu, Luhuo, Ganzi, Dege and Jiangda, and leads to the Weizang Region. The southern branch goes southward, reaches Changdu (i.e. the southern branch of the present Sichuan-Tibet highway) via Yajiang, Litang, Batang, Mangkang and Zuogou, and leads to the Weizang Region.
The transitional Tea Culture of the Yuan Dynasty

In the Yuan dynasty, there were three kinds of processed tea – loose tea, dust tea and cake tea. The latter two were dominant among tribute tea. Wuyi tea replaces beiyuan Tea as a variety of tribute tea, and an imperial tea plantation was established at Jiuqu on Mont Wuyi in Fujian. Through the method of infusion of the Yuan Dynasty was still prevalent, methods of boiling tender leaves increasingly increasing popularity.

The Return to Simplicity of Tea in the Ming Dynasty

On the 16th of the 9th lunar on the of the 24th year of Hongwu’s reign (1391) during the Ming Dynasty, Emperor Zhu Yuanzhang issued an edict that loose tea be praised by someone in late times’:

“Considering the heavy burden on people, the emperor had the production of dragon cakes stopped and tender buds presented as tributes.... Nowadays the best buds are picked and steeped in boiled spring waters, and the tea is ready to be served. This is a new tea drinking method which is bound to last for generations to come.”

Ming people thought that the method was very simple and preserved all the natural taste of tea. Tea competition was no longer practiced, tea cakes gave way to loose tea, and the Tang and Song practice of boiling or infusing dust tea was replaced by the infusion of leaves with boiled water. These were epoch-making changes in the art of tasting tea.
Some Ming Scholars, such as Wen Zhengming, Tang Yin and Xu Wei, were great artists well versed in music, chess, painting and calligraphy and fond of tea. They were capable of initiating a new pattern of literati tea.

They attached more importance than their predecessors to the section of natural environment and the cultivation of aesthetic taste. This is well reflected in their paintings in which hermits may play the zither and boil tea by limpid springs in mountains, accompanied by the mingled sounds of the spring, the wind, the zither and the boiling water in the pot. They may also sip tea while sitting opposite each other in a thatched pavilion or sitting alone facing green mountains or gazing at a vast river.

Once in nature instead of merely material product the tea becomes a medium for people to return to nature and harmonize with it.
In the Qing Dynasty, Chinese tea culture began to go into every family and penetrate into common people’s everyday life. Teahouses boomed and tea drinking were popularized. At the same time, Chinese tea quickly took its place in the world, once monopolizing the world tea market. And the Chinese tea rites gradually spread to the west too.

Chinese tea swept the world in the early Qing Dynasty before the opium War. After the war, the export of Chinese tea continued to increase. In 1886, it hit the historical record of 2,680,000 dan (134 million kg). As a bulk commodity, Chinese tea once monopolized the world tea market. However, shortly afterwards, the export of Chinese tea plummeted as it gradually lost its overseas market to India, Sri Lanka, Indonesia and Japan.

Gotheborg, a famous ocean-going merchant ship of the Swedish East India Company during the Era of Great Navigations, came to Guangzhou, China, three times.

On January 11, 1745, the Gotheborg I left Guangzhou on its voyage home, with some 700 tons of Chinese goods onboard, including tea, China, silk, and rattan articles. The tea was put in 2,677 boxes and weighed 366 tons. Eight months later, at about 900 meters from the port of Gotheborg, the vessel suddenly struck a reef and sank.

In 1984, some Swedish men found the wreckage at the bottom of the sea. In 1986, archeologists explored it underwater and salvaged a large amount of China and tea.

In 1995 the Swedish East India Company began to use the 18th century techniques to reproduce the vessel, which was finished ten years later. On October 2, 2005, the new Goteborg began to retrace the voyage made 260 years ago.
Wu Juenog was the founder of modern Chinese tea industry. He took and advocated scientific measures with regard to tea production, trade, research and education, and spent over seventy years trying to revive the Chinese tea industry. He was called the “contemporary tea sage”.

In 1930, he organized and participated in a survey in main tea producing areas in southeast China. He founded tea improvement centers in Xuushui of Jiangxi, Quiman of Anhui and Sheng County of Zhejiang for the improvement, study, demonstration and dissemination of techniques of tea cultivation and processing, paving the way for reviving Chinese tea industry.

To train tea specialists, thanks to his efforts, the Agricultural College of Fudan University established a tea department and a special training course in tea in 1940. It was the first tea department and specialized course in tea in a Chinese Institution of higher learning. Wu was the first dean of the department, which trained a large number of senior tea specialists.

The Qing Dynasty saw the heyday of the Chinese teahouses. Ubiquitous in both urban and rural areas, teahouses were indispensable public places in everyday life as well as social and entertainment centers, where a splendid and diverse teahouse culture was created.

In the Qing Dynasty, tea house were ubiquitous in urban and rural areas, and there appeared many tea shops. Wenghongsheng Tea Shop in Hangzhou, founded in 1730, enjoyed a high reputation for specializing in quality West Lake Longjing picked before Spring Equinox, before Qingming Festival, and before Grain Rain day. Wangyutai Tea Shop in Shanghai was famous for selling only black tea and green tea from Anhui.
Chinese tea swept the world in the early Qing Dynasty before the Opium War. After the war, the export of Chinese tea continued to increase. In 1886, it hit the historical record of 2,680,000 dan (134 Million Kg). As a bulk commodity, Chinese tea once monopolized the world tea market. However, shortly afterwards, the export of Chinese tea plummeted as it gradually lost its overseas market to India, Sri Lanka, Indonesia and Japan.

Tea Culture at the Qing Court

The Qing emperors were fond of tea was popular at court. The Imperial Household Department set up “the Imperial Teahouse.” Emperor Kangxi and Emperor Qianlong, especially the latter, were known for their love for tea. Emperor Qianlong left many stories about his love for tea and wrote many poems and odes to praise tea, water useed to make tea, and tea service.

The Qing imperial palace and a storehouse for tea and received over thirty varieties of tribute tea every year, with each in a few dozens of or even over a hundred bottles. Emperor Qianlong introduced the tea banquet to Chonghua Palace held on the third day after the New Year’s day each year. The banquet was given as manay as sixty times there in the Qing Dynasty. As a result, tea drinking was in vogue in the upper class and was also followed by the common people.
The Tea Association Stele was made in the 24th year of Qianlong’s reign in the Qing Dynasty to commemorate the establishment of a folk association for raising money for providing tea to passers-by. It used to stand in Wanfu Temple in Jiangshan, Zhejiang. It is an important relic reflecting folk tea culture in the early Qing Dynasty.

The stele records the raising of money by Abbot Yueland and other monks as well as some laymen for providing tea to passers-by from 1715 (the 54th year of Kangxi’s reign) to 1759 (the 24th year of Qianlong’s reign).

In China, it was customary to set up “tea temples” by main roads for passers-by to rest and quench their thirst. Wanfu Temple was one of them.

The Tea Case Stele in Yiwu, Yunnan

The Tea Case Stele was erected in Yiwu Township, Yunnan in the 18th year of Guangxu’s reign in the Qing Dynasty. In Yiwu, which used to be one of the six mountains where Puerh Tea was produced, there were many disputes over the submission of tribute tea, the sale of spring tea, and taxation. Unable to bear the exorbitant taxes and the tyranny of officials, the locals filed repeated complaints to the Prefecture of Puerh which took the case seriously and ordered the local officials of Yiwu to comply with the people’s will and never levy high taxes anymore. Moreover, it raised the tea price, reduced tea taxes, and, considering the abuse of power by lower officials, imposed a limit on business expenses. That year those involved had a general description of the case engraved on the stele so that it could be remembered.
In the Ming Dynasty, the culmination of centralized absolute monarchy made it impossible for scholars to utilize their talents as a result they devoted themselves to traveling or to such hobbies as music, chess, painting and caligraphy, with which tea was in harmony. That is why many Ming experts on tea were erudite scholars. They wrote over fifty books on tea, many of which have been handed down through generations.

For example, original opinions on tea drinking are presented in Zhu Quan’s Cha Pu (The Tea Manual) and Chen Jiru’s Cha Dong Bu (Complements of Tea Affairs). Based on previous works, Tian Yiheng wrote Zhu Quan Xiao Pin (Essays on Brewing Tea). Lu Shusheng and a monk called Mingliang from Mount Zhongan tried making Tianchi Tea and wrote Cha Liao Ji (The Teahouse), which reflected the temperament and taste of a hermit. Zhang Yuan recorded his long experience of tea tasting in the outstanding book Cha Lu (Records on Tea). Xu Cishu, who was well versed in the theory of tea, wrote Cha Shu (Reports on Tea). Of all such authors and books, Zhu Quan and his Cha Pu (The Tea Manual) made the greatest contribution.

Zhu Quan (1378-1448), the 17th son of Emperor Zhu Yunzhan was known as a good looking and intelligent man. Suspected by his elder brother Zhu Di, who succeed to the throne, he lived as a hermit in the south for a long time. A believer of Buddhism and Taoism, he devoted himself to the study of tea, playing music and reading while staying aloof from worldly affairs. In The Tea Manuel he explicitly stated that he drank tea not only because of the taste of tea itself, but also as an expression of his lofty aspirations and a way of self-cultivation.

He explored the tea drinking method after the replacement of tea cakes with loose tea, reformed the traditional method and tea service, advocated simplicity, and was for preserving the true nature of tea.
The tea, which was brought into the colorful world from jungles in southwest China, has been through a tortuous and arduous journey.

Since it first became part of people's lives, the tea has embodied the harmony between man and nature as well as ideals of the Chinese nation.

**Machine of Twisting Tea Leaves**

Twisting tea is a working procedure of tea manufacturing process. It can break up tea leaves cell and shape tea leaves.

This machine was gleaned from mountain area in south Anhui province. It was made up of four wooden barrels and can be pushed by manpower.
How to evaluate Tea

Tea is generally evaluated by examining the appearance and color of the infusion, tasting and smelling it. The appearances is evaluated in terms of form, tenderness, color and luster, integrity, and impurities. The intrinsic nature is judged by the color, scent and taste of the infusion. With regard to the infusion, one needs to identify its type and shade color. In terms of scent, one mainly identifies the type, intensity and duration. As for the taste, one needs to find out if it is rich or light, thick or thin, mellow or acerbic, fresh or stale. The steeped leaves should be observed for tenderness, color, luster and unevenness.

Professional assessors’ grade and price tea by using their senses with the aid of specialized instruments—plates, cups and bowls, according to a standard procedure. The measure out 3.0 – 5.0 grams of tea, steep it in boiling water with the proportion of tea to water as 1:50 for three to five minutes, and then begin to evaluate its intrinsic nature.
Tea production has a long history and there are vast tea-producing areas in China. Over thousands of years, Chinese tea works have accumulated rich experience in plucking and manufacturing tea. They have also developed an abundance of famous teas, which are amazing in terms of workmanship, quality, flavor and taste. According to processing methods, Chinese tea falls into six basic categories: Green tea, black tea, oolong tea, yellow tea, white tea and dark tea. These may be further processed into scented tea, compressed tea, extracted tea and powdered tea etc.

Green tea, which tops Chinese in output, is yielded in all the tea producing areas in the country. China ranks first in the world in the output and variety of green tea. The processing of green tea involves three basic steps: pan-firing, rolling and drying. Pan-firing means the deactivation of enzymes at a high temperature for perpetuating the green color.

The black tea has red leaves and produce red infusion. The basic processing techniques are withering, rolling, fermenting and drying. According to processing methods, black Chinese tea can be classified into Gongfu black tea, Xiaozhong black tea and chopped black tea. The Gongfu black tea, so named because of the fine workmanship, has a delicate appearance. It can be classified into Qihong, Dianhong, Ninghong and Minhong according to origin, each having a remarkable quality. The Xiaozhong black ta is unique to Fujian. The burning of pine for withering and drying gives it a rich pine smoky flavor. The chopped black tea is in fine grains because it is chopped rather than rolled. It is characterized by its thick, strong, and fresh taste.
The oolong, a type of tea unique to China, has a rich flowery and fruit-like scent. It is produced in Fujian, Guangdong and Taiwan. Fujian oolong is produced in either the north or the south of the province, represented by Wuyi Yancha and Anxi Tieguanyin respectively. Guangdong oolong is represented by Fenghuang Dancong, and Taiwan oolong by Baozhong Tea. The basic processing techniques are sun-drying, air-drying, the fine manipulation of green leaves, pan-firing, rolling and drying.

The yellow tea is a Chinese specialty. The processing techniques are the same as those for green tea except for the additional smothering. It can be classified into yellow bud tea, Huangxiaocha and huangdacha according to the tenderness of raw material. The processing techniques include pan-firing, rolling, smothering and drying.

The dark tea, a special type of tea in China, is mainly produced in Hunan, Yunnan, Sichuan, Hubei and Guangxi. Ripe tea is selected as raw material and is processed with such basic techniques as pan-firing, rolling, heaping and drying. It is also called Bianxiaobai ("for border areas") tea because it was mainly consumed by ethnic groups in border areas.
AS the name suggests, the reprocessed tea is manufactured by processing finished or semi-finished tea. There are such varieties as scented tea, compressed tea, extracted tea, fruit-flavored tea and powdered tea.

Scented Tea:
Finished tea is mixed with flowers for the absorption of fragrance. Flowers that can be used include the jasmine, the gardenia, the bitter orange, the sweet osmanthus, Chloranthus Spicatus Mak and the rose. Scented tea is mainly produced in Guangxi, Fujian, Sichuan and Yunnan.

Preface:
“There are seven Daily necessities—firewood, rice oil, salt, sauce, vinegar and tea.” This old saying shows the importance of tea in the everyday life of the Chinese. Moreover, the phrase “Music, chess, calligraphy, painting, poetry, wine and tea” suggests the preference for tea that scholars have.

Tea culture has been thriving since the appearance of Tea Classic by Lu Yu. Each of the following topics is interesting in its own way—the cultivation, processing, drinking, ambiance, preservation, utilization, effects, art, development and export of tea as well as tea as a tie of friendship.
Tea plants, particularly those in Yunnan, Guizhou and Sichuan provinces, were bigger in genera. As they spread eastward, they turned smaller in size and tree leaves darker and thicker.
As a perennial evergreen plant, tea plant in its natural state has a long lifespan of more than a hundred years, but its economic age is only fifty to sixty. Generally it goes through such five phases in its life as young seedling, juvenile, youth, maturity and senescence phase.

Phase of young seeding
Root of tea plant during its young seeding phase

Phase of juvenile
Root of tea pant during its juvenile phase

Phase of youth
Root of tea plant during its youth phase

Phase of maturity
Root of tea plant during it maturity phase

Phase of ....
Plucking

Many famous Chinese teas are plucked by hand. But now plucking done by machine has partially replaced hand labor.

Bud leaves or new twigs are raw material for tea. In most tea producing areas, such leaves can be plucked in three seasons annually, namely spring, summer and autumn.

Leaves of tea tree

Mature tea leaves are of different sizes, ranging from 5 to 30 centimeters in length and 2 to 8 centimeters in width.
Bud leaves picked from new twigs can be processed, using different methods, into six major types of tea—green tea, black tea, oolong tea, yellow tea, white tea, and dark tea, each having unique characteristics.

**Processing of green tea**

There are many different kinds of green tea. Various processes are required for the manufacture of green tea, but the basic techniques are pan-firing, rolling, and dying.

**Processing of black tea**

The basic techniques for black tea processing are withering, rolling, fermenting, and drying. Among which fermenting is an essential step. According to processing method, black Chinese tea can be classified into Gongfu black tea, Xiaozhong black tea, and chopped black tea.

**Processing of oolong tea**

The basic techniques for Oolong tea processing are sun-drying, air-drying, rotating, heating, rolling, and drying. They are the combination of manufacturing techniques for green tea and those for black tea.
Processing of yellow tea

The basic techniques for yellow tea processing are heating, rolling, smothering and drying. The third step is crucial for its quality.

Processing of white tea

White tea is manufactured in simple but special ways involving neither pan-firing nor rolling. The basic techniques are withering and drying.

Processing of dark tea

The basic techniques for dark tea processing are heating, rolling, heaping and drying, among which the third step is crucial. Dark tea is the main raw material for compressed tea.
Brewing

A satisfactory pot of tea depends on the quality of tea set, the quality and temperature of water, the tea-water ratio, and how long tea is steeped, besides the quality of tea itself.

Water for brewing tea

“Water is the mother of tea” Good tea and good water match perfectly.

LuYu, a scholar in the Tang, pointed out that water from mountains was superior to spring water, and which was in turn superior to well water. A Ming scholar highlighted the importance of water by stating that plain tea turned to be very nice tea when brewed with good water, however, when brewed with inappropriate water, nice tea tasted not pleasing.

Nowadays running water, spring water or purified water is favored.
Water proper for tea making

Clean water from mountains, mineral water full of mineral substances and purified water are good choices, among which the third might be the most suitable water for tea making.

Water improper for tea making

River water and well water are improper for tea making. As the environment is increasingly polluted today. Melted snow and rain, greeted as “natural spring” good for tea in ancient China, are no longer recommend

Utensils for brewing tea

“Tea set is the father of tea. “ Tea cannot be tasty and aesthetic unless it is well matched with the tea set. First-rater green tea is usually brewed in transparent glasses so that one could see the graceful movements of the bud leaves during the infusion. Scented tea and oolong can be brewed in bowls with lids. Purple clay teapots go well with Pu-erh tea because they help to fully extract beneficial contents of the tea.
Brewing tea in a glass

One can observe the tea unfolding and moving up and down when tea is brewed in a glass cup which is particularly good for tender green tea.

Brewing tea in covered bowls

Light and handy, porcelain covered bowls go well with tea. Tea won’t lose its original flavor when brewed in such bowls.
Brewing tea in purple day pots

The color, fragrance and flavor of tea will be maintained with purple clay teapots used for brewing. Such teapots won’t be too hot to touch and retain heat well.

How to brew Longjing tea

Generally glass cup is used for Longjing tea brewing. Put 2 grams of Longjing tea into the cup and then infuse a quarter cup of water at a temperate at 80 C. After an about 20 or 40 seconds during which the tea components are extracted out, hot water should be infused in the water kettle up and down continually for three times. Termed as the nodes od phoenix causing the leaves to turn over. ***Better picture?
Storage

The major factors causing the deterioration of tea are temperature, water content, oxygen and light intensity. First, the water content shall usually be lower than 6% Second the storage sites shall be cold (0-5 C), dry, dark, and sealed, reducing contact with the air to the minimum.

Effects

Why should I need any pills/since I have tea? Tea is wonderful healthy beverage.

Tea contains over 500 chemical compositions, including dozens of major nutrient and medicinal ones, such as tea polyphenol, amino acid, tea polysaccharide, alkaloid, vitamin, chlorophyll and carotene as well as such elements as potassium, selenium and zinc. These compositions have rather comprehensive health-preserving effects.
Storage methods of tea

1 Keeping in quick lime vat

Wrap the quick lime with clean cloth and put it into the vat. The amount of the quick lime shall not be less than 1/5 of the vat’s volume. Replace it regularly.

2 Keeping in nitrogen-filled packages

Put tea into an aluminum-plated compound bag. Extract the air from inside the bag and fill it with nitrogen.

3 Vacuum Storage

Seal the tea packages immediately after air is extracted from inside the packages with a vacuum package machine.

4 Keeping in airproof places

Oxidation will certainly cause the deterioration of tea, so it must be kept in airproof places. Iron cans, porcelain pots, food bags and thermos can be used.

5 Refrigeration

Seal the tea and put in in the refrigerating chambers of cold storage or a fridge. Maintain the temperature between zero and 5 degree C.

Utilization

Thanks to the advancement of science and technology, nutrient and medicinal compositions of the root, stalk, flower, fruit and seed of tea have been continuously utilized, leading to the appearance of a variety of tea products for medicine, food and the chemical industry.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Health-preserving effects</th>
<th>Chemical compositions</th>
<th>Remarks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Anti-oxidation and eliminating free radicals</td>
<td>Tea Polyphenol</td>
<td>Chiefly from green tea.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Against cancer and tumors</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protection for bacteria and viruses</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anti-aging and preventing radiation damage</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Antidote to heavy metal poisoning</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suppressing atherosclerosis; reducing blood fat and blood pressure</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increasing immunity</td>
<td>Tea polysaccharide</td>
<td>The older tea leaves are the more polysaccharide they contain. Oolong tea contain more polysaccharide than black tea or green tea.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reducing blood sugar and blood fat; against diabetes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preventing blood coagulation and thrombus</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suppressing atherosclerosis and protecting angiocarpy</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Against radiation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Functionally similar to tea polyphenol</td>
<td>Thea Flavin</td>
<td>Black tea contain the most theaflavin, which also exists.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preventing tooth decay</td>
<td>Fluorine</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Excitation, mind-refreshment, diuretic effect and cardiac tumult</td>
<td>Theine</td>
<td>Theine in tea is much different from synthesized theine. Instead of accumulating in the human body can be entirely discard in about seven days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aiding nerve growth and improving memory</td>
<td>Amino Acid</td>
<td>Spring tea contains more amino acid than summer tea.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aiding nerve growth and improving memory</td>
<td>Amino Acid</td>
<td>Spring tea contains more amino acid than summer tea.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Reducing pressure, sedation and significant suppression of thamine-included excitement of the nervous system.

Increasing beneficial intestinal flora and reducing plasma cholesterol.

Summer or autumn tea contain more polyphenol than spring tea.

Anti-oxidation and detoxification

Significant effect against digestive diseases and eye diseases.

Vitamins

Tea contain a variety of vitamins dominated by vitamin...
Development

Since the founding of the People's Republic of China, tea industry has been developing rapidly as a major cash crop. Breakthroughs have been made in the cultivation and processing of tea as well as the development of new products during the time shortly after the founding of the PRC. Teahouses, tea-related tourism and cultural industries have also been developing vigorously. All these show the infinite vitality and vista of limitless promise of Chinese tea industry.

Preface

Water is the mother of tea, while ware is the father of tea. In different areas in different historical periods, different ethnic groups, owing to various habits and ways of tea drinking, use tea sets whose material, shape, technique and designation are all different. Despite of all these differences, they are all easy to handle and look perfect. Just as people say, nice food is no better than beautiful ware. Exquisite tea sets are a feast for the eyes. Their artistic values often bring people great enjoyment.

Tea Sets before the Tang Dynasty

In the Neolithic Age. Chinese people began to use pottery water vessels, which could be considered as the origin of tea sets. It is recorded that the practice of drinking tea originated in the Ba-shu region. At that time there were no specialized tea sets, and the same artists would serve diversified purposes. Not until the Jin Dynasty or the Southern and Northern Dynasties did there appear celadon tea cups with saucers, which could be considered as early tea sets.
Ode to Tea was the first Chinese poem on tea. It describes the whole process from the growth of tea to the drinking of tea. The first three lines describe the place where tea grew, its state and the condition under which it grew. The fourth line describes tea farmers picking tea in early autumn. The fifth mentions the selection of water for brewing tea. The last line depicts the beauty of the brewed tea. The phrase “selected ceramic vessels from Dongyu” makes an explicit mention of ceramic tea sets.

Ode to Tea by Du Yu: Mt. Lingshan abounds in wonderful yields. One of them, the tea, covers hills and dates. It is nourished by the fertile soil and dew. In early autumn, during a lull of farming I went to pick tea leaves with my friends. We took water from the limpid Min River and selected ceramic vessels from Dongyu. The tea was served in gourds cups in the manner of Gong Liu. The froth of the new brewed tea was as bright as snow and as splendid as blossoms in spring.
As recorded in Lu Yu's The Tea Classic, “Among tea bowls, the best are produced in Yuezhou, the second best in Dingzhou, Wuzhou and Yuezhou, and the third best in Shouzhou and Hongzhou. Xing Porcelain is inferior to Yue porcelain in three ways. First Xing porcelain is like silver while Yue porcelain is like jade second, the former, being white, makes tea appear red while the latter, being blue, makes it green”

Tea Sets in the Tang Dynasty

In the Tang Dynasty, the popularity of tea drinking led to the appearance of systematic tea sets. In The Tea Classic, Lu Yu lists twenty-eight kinds of tea sets, classifying them into boiling articles, rolling articles, drinking articles and preserving articles according to their uses. Northern and southern porcelain kilns, notably Yue Kiln and Xing Kiln, produced a large number of tea sets, which were typically blue in the north and white in the south. Besides, tea sets were also produced by kilns in Chang sha, Wuzhou, Shouzhou, hongzhou and Yuezhou. Since the method of boiling tea was dominate in the Tang Dynasty. The major tea sets were the teakettle, the grinder, the tea cup, the saucer and the ewer. The bowl with an old Chinese character for tea produced by Ghangsha Kiln and the ewer with the black characters on its bottom unearthed from the tomb of Wang Mingzhe in Xi’an are typical tea sets of the period. Besides ceramics, gold, silver, lacquer and colored glaze were also used to make tea sets with unique characteristics. For example, the complete glided silver tea set unearthed from the underground chamber of Famon Temple suggests the extravagance of tea drinking in the imperial family.

Teacup by Pi Rixiu: People in Xingzhou and Yuezhou are capable of making the teacup / Which is as round as the moon and as light as cloud/ the fragrant froth swirls and clings to my teeth/ Under the pine, the same thing happens to Master Zhi Dun
Tea Sets of Ethnic Minorities

China is a multi-ethnic country. Various geographical conditions, history, and culture of different ethnic minorities generate varieties of tea sets, among which some gorgeous with golden and silver embossment, such as Tibetan tea sets. Yet some are rough and plain, such as baked-tea sets of the Hani nationality living in Yunnan.

Tea Sets of the Song, Liao, Jin and Yuan Dynasties

In the Song Dynasty, tea sets were produced by many porcelain kilns. The five famous kilns—Guan, Ge, Ru, Ding and Jun—had established themselves, and they also produced plenty of tea sets. Jian’ou Beiyuan tea was selected as tribute tea for the court. It was made into Dragon and phoenix Round Tea Cakes, the best of which was pure white. The popularity of “tea competition” made the black-glazed teacup and the ewer the most typical tea sets of the period. Tea sets with unique characteristics included the “rabbit fur” cup and the “partridge specks” cup made by Jian Kiln and the hawksbill cup, the cup with loaf design and that with paper-cut design produced by Jizhou Kiln. The bamboo hat-shaped bowl was a typical tea vessel of the dynasty. Besidees, I engqguan? Kiln in the south and Yaozhou Kiln in the north also produce a large number of celadon tea sets.

Customs concerning tea drinking and features of different nationalities are manifested in tea sets. Living in modern times, the ethnic minority areas are using more and more tea sets made of different materials and of different types.
In the Song Dynasty, tea bowls were called “zhan” (small cup), and black-glazed small teacups prevailed because the Song people preferred white infusion. “Rabbit fur” teacups from Jian Kiln, Fujian were the most famous. Later mottled teacups with patterns of oil drops or partridge feathers emerged. Those black-glazed teacups with bases engraved “Gongyufor imperial use” or “Jinzhan(having the honor to dedicate teacups)” were tribute to the Song imperial household. Under the influence of the black-glazed teacups produced in Jian kiln, such teacups were produced not only in Jizhou Kiln of Jiangxi and Guangyuan Kiln of Sichuan. But also in such northern provinces as Henan, Hebei Shandong and Shanxi.

In his old age, Song Shen’an wrote and essay on tea sets, in which he made a detailed classification of typical tea sets of the Song Dynasty. He also gave them official ranks and fancy names, adding to their special cultural connotations.

1. Wei Wending, bamboo cage for tea firing.
2. Mu Liji pestle for pounding tea cakes
3. Jin Yangu: metal roller for grinding tea cakes into powder
4. A????
5. Hu Weiyi: ladle for taking water
6. Luo Ruoyao: tool for shifting tea powder. Tea competition, which was popular in the Song Dynasty, was demanding for tea powder. A good sift was essential in tea competition
7. Zong Zifu: brush for sweeping tea powder into a box
8. Chengzhi: saucer for preventing the hot teacup form hurting fingers
9. Tao Qiyue: teacup (Jian-Kiln black-glazed teacup)
10. Tang Faxin: ewer for pouring water into teacups
11. Zhu Shantiao: bamboo brush for stirring the infusion, an essential step in the tea competition
12. Si Chengshi: Towel for wiping teacups
In the Ming Dynasty, cake tea, boiled in the Tang and infused in the Song, gradually gave way to loose tea, which was infused with hot water. Accordingly, tea sets of this period developed its own features. Since tea was no longer ground into powder and then infused, such tea sets as metal grinder, stong grinder, sleve with cover, brush, ewer used earlier were dicards. Celadon pots and purple clay teapots were prefered and gradually ganed popularity. Since the replacemnt of Black-glazed tea bowls admired in the Song Dynasty by white porcelain of Jingdezhern, tea sets consisting of pot and owl have been used until today.
1. Boiling Tea, Ding Yunpen, the Ming Dynasty
2. Discussing Paiting by a Vrook(partial), Qiu Ying, the Ming Dynasty
3. Hermitage, Chen Hongshou (partial), the Ming Dynasty
1. The tea basket (the fourth of the ten poems) by Wen Zhengming, the Ming Dynasty: Cutting bamboo into pieces, with Inventiveness/ the village craftsman made refined baskets/ The silk ribbon smells perfumed powder/ Indocalamus leaves look like clouds/ The rain was falling on creeping plants/ Returning home, those people who picked tea came down with wind bowing from pine trees/ The dots of blood / certainly are the royal madam hsiang's tears.

2. The teacup (the ninth of the ten poems) by Wen Zhengmin: Soil can be refined into jade stone/ Brighter than the moon is the round teacup / its cleanness suits those who love snow / Elegance satisfies thos who chant the wind/ On the Grain Rain, a contest with other precious things/ foams of tea are white as milk / Not late in the secluded place, someone was late.

3. Leisurely Mood (The second of the six poems) by Wen Zhengming Ina cottage among mossy trees / I enjoy myself reading by a stove/ Anyone who comes to visit me / Will be served a cup of Yangxian tea.

The traditional Chinese literati often fit up a room in their dweling as a study, where they read books, carried out discussions, and realxed themselves. Although there wer no establish rules for the furnishings of a study, the literati mostly thought that a study should be tranquil, elegant, clean and comfotable. Such studies were ideal for tea drinking Accompanied with books, writing brushes, ink claigraphic works, and several good friends, drining tea in a study was interesting and meaningful.
The Qing people followed the “infusing method” of tea in the Ming Dynasty without making much breakthrough. Pottery and porcelain teaware were the mainstronm in the Qing, of which porcelain of Jingdezehn and pottery of Yixing enjoyed great fame, and the porcelain tea sets were flourishing the most during the domination periods of Emperor Kangzi Yongzhong and Qianlong. Based on the blue-and-white, colorful glazed and monochrome-glazed porcelain tea sets, the Qing people created enamel painted procellaintea sets and famille rose porcelain tea sets. In the dynasty the purple clay ton ware not only carried on the traditon, but also developed itself. Besides the pottery and porcelain tea ware, there were ten sets made of other materials and of various shapes in the Qing Dynnasty.

According to Cha Jie (Elaboration on Tea) by Luo Lin of the Ming Dynasty, hand-made teapots made of coarse soil produced by Shi Dabin were the best; the second best were those made of tin. In the Ming Dynasty, both tin teapots and purple clay teapots were praised highly by the literati. Masters of tin teapot producding came forward in large numbrs. They tend to spare neither labor nor money on tin teapots, thus many wonderful scholar tin teapots emerged. In the Qing Dynasty, such teapots were still very popular, bring forth lots of experts on tin teapot with good taste in art.
Yixing is located Jiangsu Province. During the mid to late Ming Dynasty, a special kind of clay was found there, which is fine, rich in iron, and highly permeable and absorbent. The brewing of loose tea in a buccaro pot helps to bring out its natural aroma. As Wen Zhenheng wrote in Chang Wu Zhi, “The best teapots are made of buccaro, for the lid does not absorb any aroma or produce any unpleasant smell.” So the buccaro pot has been in the mainstream since the Ming Dynasty.
Boat-shaped stand, so called because it is like a boat, also named tea saucer, is used to hold teacups to prevent hands from being burned. As mentioned in Tao Ya (Book of Pottery) by Jiyuansou, “Tea saucer is also addressed ‘tea boat’. In the Ming Dynasty, it is a boat-shaped. However, those produce in the Song kilns were hallow, somewhat like the present ones and were simple and plain.” Boat-shaped stands were quite popular in the Qing. They were in the forms of gold or silver ingots, Malus spectabilis, cruciate flower as well as the traditional forms of round and boat.

Buttered Tea

Called “Kyamir” in Tibetan, it is popular in Tibetan areas (e.g. Tibet, Qinghai, Gansu, Sichuan and Yunnan) As a tradtional daily beverage of Tibetans. First cook a tea brick into deep – red juice and then pour it into a buttered – tea barrel. Add some butter and salt into ait and mix them by a “Kyaluo” (a wooden blender in the barrel). This is one of the main everyday foods of Tibetans, and is also an indispensable beverage to receive guests. There are formalities of drinking the butter tea. Eg. The host will usually add tea while drinkgin; never finish drinking in one sup; if the guest doesn’t want any more the an another half cup, he may empty the cup at one gulp after the host adds tea and before leaving. These are typical Tibetan customs and traditions.
Preface

China Boasts of a vast territory, a long history and various ethnic minorities. Traditions and customs about tea in every historical period and every region are part of Chinese culture. The tea culture came into being at pace with the development of economy and culture of all these nationalities, and has great impact on them in many aspects.

Diversified tea customs show the acceptance, understanding and rendition of tea culture, to different degrees, of all nationalities in China in terms of their continuity, variability, sociality and locality. The tea culture as spiritual wealth and cultural heritage of China, mirrors close relationship between Chinese people and tea.

Sichuan Tea House

Sichuan Tea House represents Chinese tea customs and tea-house culture. There were tea house and tea booths as early as in the Tang Dynasty in Sichuan. A typical Sichuan tea house is usually composed of copper teapots, tin cup supports, porcelain covered bowls. Bowl-shaped. Compressed tea or Jasmine Tea, and especially tea masters. As the Saying Goes, “Sunny days are not so many as tea houses in Sichuan.” It is not merely a place for people to relax, rest and chat, but also a place, in old times, for problem discussing and solving, and disputes clearing up. Political and social functions of Sichuan tea-houses outweigh their other respects.
Oolong Tea

Also called Kongfu Tea, Which prevails in local Guangdong, Fujian, Taiwan, etc. An ancient record in The Diary of Chaozhou area folkways reads. “The way that congou is prepared was originally from The Encyclopedia of Tea by Lu Yu in the Tang dynasty.” By exquisite tea sets, unique making and elaborate formalities, people drink tea as a spice to daily life and the first courtesy of social activities. To make tea, water form springs and wells is recommendable. As for such half-fermented and dried teas as Wolong and Iron Kwan-yin, the pot and cups should be scalded at first and then the pot is stuffed with 7/10 tea, with procedures of high scald low sprinkling, shaving foams pouring over the lid, cup, and canister.

Anhui Tea Firm

Anhui businessmen, in oldtimes, dealt in a wide range, and tea industry was one of their backbones. According to studies on Anhi Folk Customs, “beside salt, the largest and most lucrative enterprise. In Anhui is tea, which is sold as far as Peking to the north and Guangdong to the south.” Their nationwide business activities played an important role in social and economic fields of the Ming and Qing dynasties. The rise and decline of tea industry are closely related to contemporary social and economic conditions. The display here shows a general social and economic picture of that time.
Arts

In the long history of Chinese tea culture, there emerged a variety of tea-related intellectual products, such as poems, odes, couplets, essays, fictions, music, dances, operas, films, TV shows, painting, calligraphic works and seal-cutting. Since they appeared in the Tang Dynasty, pianists on tea have been developing and flourishing, reaching their heyday in the Ming and Qing Dynasties. In the realm of calligraphy, the Tang and Song scholars wrote many letters concerning tea, which have both historical and artistic values. In the Ming and Qing Dynasties, calligraphic works on tea culture became more and more popular and grew in size from short letters to long scrolls.

Tea as a Tie of Friendship

Tea can serve as a tie of friendship with peoples all over the world. Leaders on various levels are interested in the development of our museum and the spread of tea culture. Since it was opened, the museum has been visited by Party and state leaders, celebrities, foreign heads of states and many other international friends. Visitors from all over the world and different walks of life have left many inscriptions here.
Improvements of Tea in the Republic of China

Toward the end of the 19th century, Chinese tea production declined after the rise of tea industry in South Asia. After the founding of the Republic of China, insightful tea experts, notably Wu Juenog, introduced modern technology and management, and initiated measures for reform and improvements, contributing a lot for the reviving of modern Chinese tea industry.
Machine of Twisting Tea Leaves

Twisting tea is a working procedure of tea manufacturing process. It can break up tea leaves cell and shape tea leaves.

This machine was gleaned from mountain area in south Anhui province. It was made up of four wooden barrels and can be pushed by manpower. Welcome to participate.