

# JIANGSU

## *Glimpses*

A graphic of a blue tea cup with a green tea leaf sprig emerging from it, positioned to the right of the word 'Glimpses'.

TEA FOR HARMONY · KNOW JIANGSU FROM A TEA LEAF





### 出品單位

江蘇省文化和旅遊廳

### CHIEF PRODUCER

Jiangsu Provincial Department  
of Culture and Tourism

### 策劃單位

新華社新聞資訊中心江蘇中心

### CHIEF PLANNER:

Xinhua News Agency News  
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# 水韻江蘇

Jiangsu

茶和天下 · 一葉知蘇





Daxian Reservoir & Xugao Tea Mountain  
in Jiangning District, Nanjing



## Letter from the editor-in-chief

On Nov. 29, 2022, the item "traditional tea processing techniques and associated social practices in China" was added to the UNESCO Representative List of Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity, which includes the processing techniques of Yuhua tea, Biluochun tea and Fuchun pastries from Jiangsu.

The three techniques are respectively from Nanjing, Suzhou and Yangzhou, cities along the Yangtze River and the Grand Canal. Through the fragrance of Chinese tea and the unique charm of Jiangsu tea, people can feel the profound history and culture as well as the unique urban character.

In 758 AD, a young man named Lu Yu came to Nanjing and stayed at the Qixia Temple at the foot of Mount Qixia, where he studied tea. Two years later, with a wealth of insights from tea picking and tea testing, he began the writing of the world's first treatise on tea culture, "Tea Classic." And Lu Yu is now known as the "sage of tea." Yuhua tea, which looks like pine needles, is another name card of Nanjing, awarded as a UNESCO Creative City of Literature.

After taking a one-hour train journey eastward from Nanjing, we'll arrive in Suzhou, a UNESCO Creative City of Crafts and Folk Arts. During the tea-picking season in early spring, Taihu Lake is shrouded in mist, and the humid air is filled with bursts of fragrance. Biluochun is a finished green tea produced in Dongting mountain region. After being made into tea, Biluochun is beautiful in shape, bright in color, rich in fragrance and mellow in taste.

Going north along the Grand Canal and crossing the Yangtze River, we'll arrive in Yangzhou. Yangzhou, City of Gastronomy, is famous for its slow-paced life and morning tea. Fuchun is a well-known restaurant in China. What makes diners flock to it is Fuchun pastries. There are cuisines such as dried beancurd threads in consommé, fried shrimp meat, three-nested duck, braised chub head, three-diced buns, thousand-layer oil cake, shaomai stuffed with green vegetables and crab roe buns. All of them need to be served with a cup of Kuilongzhu tea. People in Yangzhou are very good at tea matching. The tea leaves are blended with famous teas from Jiangsu, Zhejiang, and Anhui provinces, and boiled with Yangtze River water.

A cup of tea embodies the commonality of aesthetic sentiments and the integration of history and culture between different areas. Let's feel the "Charm of Jiangsu" with a piece of tea leaf in this issue.

Charm of Jiangsu, More Beautiful with you.



# Charm of Jiangsu

# JIANGSU

## *Glimpses*

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On the cover: Qingshan Tea Farm in Gaochun, Nanjing



# 01

Know Jiangsu from A Tea Leaf

Feel the  
"Charm of Jiangsu"  
from a Tea Leaf

Jiangsu, a major tea-producing province in China, boasts unique geographical conditions and a rich history of tea culture, which has laid an important foundation for the development of Jiangsu tea, and also bred rich intangible cultural heritage resources of Jiangsu tea.

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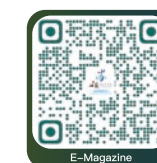
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E-Magazine



# Feel the "Charm of Jiangsu" from a Tea Leaf

By Jin Yangyang

Jiangsu, a major tea-producing province in China, boasts unique geographical conditions and a rich history of tea culture, which has laid an important foundation for the development of Jiangsu tea, and also bred rich intangible cultural heritage resources of Jiangsu tea.

On the evening of Nov. 29, 2022, the item "traditional tea processing techniques and associated social practices in China" passed the examination at the 17th session of the UNESCO Intergovernmental Committee for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage in Moroccan capital Rabat, and was added to the intangible cultural heritage list of the UNESCO. China now has 43 items on the intangible cultural heritage list, ranking first in the world.

The traditional tea processing techniques and associated social practices in China consist of knowledge, skills and practices concerning the management of tea plantations, picking of tea leaves, manual processing, drinking,

and sharing of tea. The application work involved 44 national-level intangible cultural heritage projects in 15 provinces, autonomous regions and municipalities. Tea planting, tea making, tea drinking and associated social practices are widely spread throughout China and enjoyed by ethnic groups in various regions. Chinese people at home and abroad are the inheritors of tea culture. Through economic and trade contact and people-to-people exchanges, Chinese tea culture is also widely spread around the world.

The three national intangible cultural heritage projects that Jiangsu participated in the joint application are the processing techniques of Biluochun tea, Yuhua tea and Fuchun pastries.



↑ Qianhong Tea Garden in Yixing, Wuxi





 **Yan Jielong**  
Representative inheritors of intangible cultural heritage  
Suzhou Biluochun tea processing techniques

### Biluochun Tea Processing Techniques

Biluochun tea processing techniques in Suzhou were included in China's third batch of national intangible cultural heritage list.

"Where to taste spring tea? Where to enjoy spring stream?" Wuzhong District of Suzhou is located on the shore of Taihu Lake. With lucid waters, lush mountains, beautiful scenery, and abundant natural resources, it is the place of origin of the historically famous tea Dongting Mountain Biluochun tea.

"Who picked the blue sky to make tea balls? The vast expanse of Taihu Lake lasts for several years." Dongting Mountain Biluochun tea is picked early. The leaves are tender and clean. There are more than 70,000 buds for every 500 grams of super tea, with the most buds among the famous tea in China.

"By the time Biluochun's new tea is made, its fame has spread abroad, and even to the capital." Dongting Mountain Biluochun tea adopts pure manual frying, "hands cling to the tea, tea cling to the pot, kneading with frying, frying with kneading, without stop, and finally the tea is finished." The main process includes fixation, rolling, rubbing, and drying, all completed in one pot. The whole process is about 40 minutes, depending on the leaf quality, pot temperature and other conditions.

### Yuhua Tea Processing Techniques

The processing techniques of Yuhua tea include picking, spreading, fixation, rolling, manual drying, refining, baking and other processes, which have been passed down for six generations. It features the unique skills of striping, screening, and baking.

The unique processing techniques offer Yuhua tea pine needle shapes, as well as fragrance and fine quality.

High-quality Yuhua tea also needs to be shown through exquisite brewing techniques. The combination of Yuhua tea brewing and drinking with daily tea customs and wedding and funeral customs form the Yuhua tea drinking customs, which becomes an indispensable part of Nanjing, a gentle and inclusive city.

### Fuchun Pastry Processing Techniques

Yangzhou, a UNESCO Creative City of Gastronomy and the hometown of Huaiyang Cuisine, has bred the unique skills of making Fuchun pastries.

Fuchun Teahouse is famous for its self-made Kuilongzhu tea—a blend of Kuizhen tea from Anhui Province, Longjing tea from Zhejiang Province, and Zhulan tea planted in the garden of Fuchun Teahouse. Longjing tea makes good taste, Kuizhen tea composes a cool feel, and Zhulan tea a delicate fragrance. Soaking in the Yangtze River water, "the most spectacular water unparalleled elsewhere in the world," Kuilongzhu tea is known as "a pot of water boils teas from three provinces." The color is clear, the fragrance overflows, and the taste is

pure and durable. Nobel Laureate in Literature Mo Yan once wrote, "Two generations of famous chefs present seasonal dishes, along with tea from three provinces brewed with spring water from the local river."

Good teas match with good pastries. Fuchun pastries are a fine example of Huaiyang Xidian (delicate pastries). Selecting exquisite materials of four seasons and undergoing delicate production, Fuchun pastries have beautiful shapes and diverse fillings. They are neither too sweet nor too salty. For example, steamed vegetable buns, fresh meat buns, bean paste buns, dried cabbage buns, three-diced buns, tofu skin buns, shao-mai stuffed with green vegetables and so on. Pastries for banquets include double sesame cakes, Xuanhua cakes, animal-shaped pastries, melon and fruit pastries, and many kinds of cakes. In addition, there are seasonal pastries like crab roe buns, wild duck vegetable buns, shepherd's purse buns, pickled cabbage buns, and white gourd shaomai. All these pastries are delicious and fresh.



 **Nanjing Yuhua Tea**



 **Yangzhou Fuchun Pastries**

Yuhua tea, Biluochun tea and Kuilongzhu tea consisting of teas from Jiangsu, Zhejiang and Anhui provinces, and various pastries are closely related to the Grand Canal, witnessing the cultural exchange and integration brought by this "beautiful central axis." They have become important links, promoting the exchange and mutual learning among world civilizations and telling the stories of Chinese excellent traditional culture.



# TEA IN JIANGSU

## A DEEP CONNECTION WITH ART, LITERATURE AND AESTHETICS

### JIANGSU IN THE GLOBAL VIEW

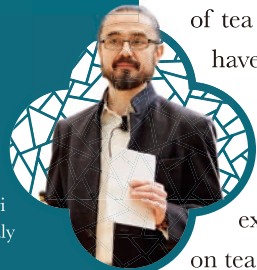
#### Livio Zanini

Assistant professor  
of the Department  
of Asian and North  
African Studies, Ca' Foscari  
University of Venice in Italy

Livio Zanini became interested in tea while studying Chinese at the Ca' Foscari University of Venice in the 1980s.

In the 1990s, Zanini came to Nanjing University for further study, devoting himself to the Ming Dynasty literati culture and tea history, and published a number of academic articles and doctoral dissertation around these topics.

In 2005, Zanini founded the Italian Association for Tea Culture and has been serving as its president till today. He also serves as the honorary director of the China International Tea Culture Institute.



**T**ea, a healthy beverage shared worldwide, is a Chinese icon carrying history and culture, and a bridge promoting exchanges and mutual learning among world civilizations.

Tea in Jiangsu has a deep connection with art, literature and aesthetics. I start my work with a cup of tea every day. In my study, I have a collection of Yixing purple clay teapots and various other utensils for preparing tea, accompanied by an extensive assortment of books on tea. I choose what kind of tea to drink according to the season and mood. In general, I have a preference for green tea during the spring and summer seasons. Oolong tea, black tea, and dark tea match autumn and winter.

Tea, as an important commodity along the ancient Silk Road, left a lasting impact on various civilizations and traditional cultures. Nowadays, the habit of drinking

tea has spread from China to all around the world, blooming a variety of colorful tea cultures in many countries and becoming an important link to promote cultural exchanges.

Not many people know that in the process that turned tea into a globally beloved beverage, a significant role was played by the city of Venice. Besides its beautiful bridges, gondolas, and canals, which attract millions of tourists every year, Venice is also renowned as the birthplace of Marco Polo, the merchant and traveler who visited China and provide a detailed description of the country in the late 13th century.

One would expect Marco Polo

to have been the first to report on the use of tea as well, considering that during his travels, this beverage was already widespread throughout China. Nonetheless, the renowned Venetian merchant surprisingly omits any mention of tea in his travelogue. It was not until almost two hundred years after Marco Polo that another Venetian, the geographer and diplomat Giovanni Battista Ramusio, first recorded a description of Chinese tea. This account was published in Venice in 1559, marking an important milestone in the dissemination of knowledge about Chinese tea.

Thanks to this, Venice holds the title of being the place where tea was first spoken and written about in Europe. However, despite boasting this distinction, Venice itself did not engage in the importation of tea through its traditional trade routes, and Italy never developed a significant tea-drinking culture. It was the Dutch who first introduced tea to Europe at the beginning of the 17th century, and the English who later played a prominent role in its importation and widespread consumption across the globe. On the other hand, Italy became famous for its espresso coffee, which today is also appreciated all around the world. Nevertheless, Venice can claim another

unique connection to the diffusion of tea culture in the West.

In 1990, Marco Ceresa, who would later become a professor at Ca' Foscari University of Venice, published his Italian translation of Lu Yu's "Tea Classic." This ground-breaking achievement marked the first time this revered ancient text of the Tang Dynasty (AD 618-907) had been fully translated into a European language. At that time, I was a student of Chinese language and literature at Ca' Foscari University and had already been introduced to the practice of tea drinking during a previous stay in Beijing. Ceresa's translation of the "Tea Classic" transformed my passion for tea into a serious determination to explore further the rich history and cultural background of this beverage.

In 1992, I was granted a scholarship to study at Nanjing University in China for one year and had the opportunity to immerse myself in the world of tea culture. Nanjing has a long history related to tea, and in the Tang dynasty Lu Yu visited and picked tea at the

Qixia temple. After my arrival, I immediately began purchasing the limited books available on tea and making regular visits to the tea house in Fuzimiao.

In Nanjing, I devoted myself to the study of the literati and tea culture of the Ming Dynasty (AD 1368-1644). During this period, there was a great production of books on tea, which paralleled the brilliant artistic achievements of architecture, painting, furniture, and other fields.

In the following spring, I embarked on a journey to Suzhou, where I had the opportunity to explore tea plantations and witness the fascinating process of tea production. It was in Dongshan, the small peninsula southwest of Suzhou renowned for its exquisite Biluochun tea, that I had the chance to see and touch tea plants for the first time. Later, I also visited the tea plantation at Yuhuatai in Nanjing, where I was privileged to witness skilled artisans meticulously roasting the leaves of Yuhua tea.

Armed with these first-hand experiences and growing enthusiasm, I returned to Italy to complete my







studies at Ca' Foscari University, where I wrote a dissertation on tea culture during the Ming Dynasty under the supervision of Marco Ceresa. However, my thirst for tea and knowledge was not yet quenched. In 1997, I travelled to Taiwan, China, where I spent a year immersing myself in the art of tea and conducting in-depth historical research on this beverage under the guidance of the Ming historian Professor Wu Zhihe.

Upon returning to Italy, I also began to work at Ca' Foscari University and found myself organising various events and activities aimed at introducing and promoting tea culture in Italy.

In 2005, another significant milestone was achieved as Marco Ceresa and I co-founded the Italian

Association for Tea Culture. This pioneering organisation became a platform for tea enthusiasts and experts to come together, exchange knowledge, and embrace the rich traditions and artistry of tea.

A special mention goes to the logo of the association, which is comprised of half a teapot and half a teacup, coming together to form the shape of a tea leaf, on a background that resembles the Yin and Yang of the Taiji diagram and implies the integration of water and fire. The emblem takes inspiration from Xu Cishu's "Cha Shu" of the Ming Dynasty, which says: "Tea releases its flavor into the water, the water is contained in the vessels, and boiling occurs thanks to the fire. These four elements are essential to each other. If any one of them is absent, the preparation

of tea becomes impossible."

Through the association, we organised numerous activities to disseminate tea culture across the country, ranging from workshops, tastings, lectures, forums, tea art exhibitions and so on. In particular, worth mentioning are our participation in the Italian national television programme "Geo&geo" and the organisation of two courses on Chinese tea culture and art in collaboration with the Confucius Institute at Ca' Foscari University.

Besides engaging in these dissemination activities, I continued to merge my academic pursuits with my passion for tea. I published several articles on the history of Chinese tea culture, one of which discusses the bamboo stove literary gatherings at Huishan Monastery in Wuxi during the Ming Dynasty. In 2012, I authored a book on the introduction of tea in Europe and the tea trade of the English East India Company. Additionally, two years later, Professor Aldo Tollini, another colleague from our university, published the first comprehensive book in Italian on the history of tea culture in Japan.

In 2015, Ca' Foscari University took a remarkable leap by organising a series of international colloquia on tea culture. Esteemed

scholars from around the world joined these gatherings, sharing their expertise and enriching our understanding of tea's global significance. In my opinion, thanks to all these efforts, in addition to being the place where tea was first spoken about in the West, Venice has gained another title: it is the place where there has been the most discussion and written work on tea in Europe over the past 30 years.

Today, Italy boasts a small but vibrant community of tea enthusiasts who have embraced the art of tea. In addition to flavoured teas for mass consumption, today there are many new specialized shops where one can find high-quality Chinese teas. Clubs have been established in various cities, where tea lovers gather to share their experiences, deepen their knowledge, and indulge in the delicate flavours and aromas of fine teas. I'm pleased that more and more Italians are taking an interest in Chinese tea and its health benefits, and more and more tea-related shops and enthusiast clubs have sprung up.

Regrettably, Professor Marco Ceresa has recently passed away, leaving behind an irreplaceable void that resonates throughout our community. However, his legacy lives on in all those touched by his inspiring dedication to academic research and love for tea culture.

My colleagues and I, along with many other tea scholars and enthusiasts, are committed to carrying on the torch ignited by Marco. We will strive to further research and disseminate tea culture in Italy and the West, with the hope of encouraging more people to embrace the beauty and serenity that tea brings. Through this shared appreciation, our aim is to foster connections across cultures and honour the timeless legacy of tea.

In this regard, I am very happy that the processing techniques of Biluochun tea, Yuhua tea and Fuchun pastries of Jiangsu have been included in the UNESCO Representative List of Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity. I think this is an important step in affirming and promoting Jiangsu

tea culture, and it will also help promote tea culture worldwide.

While adhering to tradition, Chinese tea art also innovates with the development of the times. Modern Chinese tea art incorporates different styles and patterns from different places, and there has also been a significant enrichment of tea varieties. Many kinds of tea leaves that were popular only in certain areas 30 years ago are now popular in a broader region. I believe this reflects China's rapid economic growth and growing national confidence. In the future, I will continue to follow the development of tea culture in China and its evolving significance on the global stage, with the aspiration of cultivating a love for tea among more people.



↑ Livio Zanini came to Jiangsu and he visited the "Second Spring in the World" in Huishan, Wuxi and Yuhuatai in Nanjing.





A tea garden in Pingshan Forest Park,  
Luhe District, Nanjing

# Jiangsu's Tea Fragrance, INVITING THE WORLD TO SAVOR TOGETHER

By Zhou Min

More than 600 years ago, Zheng He's fleets set sail at Taicang, Jiangsu where the Yangtze River merges with the sea. His vessels made by Baochuanchang Shipyard in Nanjing, visited Southeast Asia and the Atlantic Ocean and left many historical stories of friendly exchanges throughout the journey. During these voyages, Chinese tea became an important commodity and was quickly spread overseas.

**T**hrough Zheng He's voyages to the West, Chinese tea was exported to the Southeast Asian region and became one of the main beverages in many countries such as Indonesia, Malaysia, and the Philippines. The tea-drinking customs in these Southeast Asian countries were influenced by Chinese tea culture, forming

their own unique tea culture systems. In addition, Zheng He also brought China's tea planting techniques and tea processing techniques to East Africa, which led to the production and consumption of tea in that region. Tea drinking has become a part of people's lives in East Africa. People in East Africa prefer black tea, often boiled with milk and

sugar, and served with dried fruits and desserts.

Zheng He's voyages to the West expanded the export of Chinese tea and extended the geographical range of tea varieties. This played a significant role in promoting tea-drinking customs in Southeast Asia and East Africa. Throughout this process, Chinese tea became an important medium for cultural exchange and facilitated the worldwide dissemination and recognition of Chinese tea culture.

Seven hundred years ago, the Italian Venetian merchant Marco Polo traveled to the East. He came to Jiangsu via the land and maritime Silk Road routes and wrote the renowned "the Travels of Marco Polo." In his writing, Suzhou was compared to the "Venice of the East." Although Marco Polo wrote very little about Chinese tea in his book, it is not difficult to see from the historical records of the same era that tea has become one of the most representative symbols of Chinese culture.

While there is a controversy over whether Marco Polo had actually tasted Chinese tea, Jianzhen, a renowned Buddhist monk of the late Tang Dynasty (618-907), brought Chinese tea culture to Japan when he journeyed to Japan from Yangzhou to spread Buddhism 1,200 years ago. This had a crucial impact on the formation and development of Japanese tea culture.

According to historical records, after Jianzhen arrived in Japan, he began introducing Chinese tea to the locals. Not only did he bring tea tree planting methods and tea processing techniques to Japan, but he also taught the Japanese how to drink tea and the proper etiquette associated with it. He instructed the Japanese to place tea leaves into a tea bowl, rinse and stir them together with hot water until the water turns light yellow, and then slowly savor the tea.

The Japanese tea ceremony emphasizes the selection of tea sets, the method of tea making, and the tea-drinking ritual, all of which are closely related to the Chinese tea culture taught by Jianzhen.

Jianzhen not only brought tea culture to Japan but also various aspects of Chinese Buddhist culture and folk art, among other things. This had a significant impact on the cultural development of Japan. It also promoted cultural exchange and communication between China and Japan, enriching the historical and cultural heritage of both countries.







# TEA

in

## *"A Dream of Red Mansions"*

By Geng Chunxiao & Zhu Xiaojuan

↑ Tea fields in Wuxi

Nanjing, the capital city of six dynasties in ancient China, is also a City of Literature. It has both profound history and cultural legacies, as well as a rich tea culture.

In the novel "A Dream of Red Mansions," which tells the story of the twelve beauties of Jinling (the historical name of Nanjing), tea takes a lot of spaces. In addition to poems about tea, the author Cao Xueqin wrote about tea over 200 times in the novel. In the daily life of Family Jia, tea is indispensable at the occasions of welcoming and setting off guests, banquet, playing the instruments, playing chess, idle talk in the day, and surrounding the stove on cold nights. People are particular about tea, be it for gargling or drinking, wedding or funeral, for family drinking or welcoming guests, using as

medicine or accompanying fruit.

In addition to a wide variety of tea, "A Dream of Red Mansions" also mentioned a dazzling array of tea sets, carefully selected tea water, and much ink was spilled describing its related practices and customs.

As the Chinese saying goes, "Firewood, rice, cooking oil, salt, sauce, vinegar and tea are the seven necessities to begin a day." Drinking and tasting tea run through the daily life of the Chinese people. Welcoming guests with tea is one of the most important tea customs, and tea

has also become an crucial carrier of expressing etiquette, especially family etiquette. In Chapter 40, when Grandmother Jia visited Lin Daiyu in Xiaoxiang Pavilion, Lin expressed her love for Grandmother Jia by offering tea herself. In Chapter 35, Xue Baochai quarreled with her brother Xue Pan, after which Xue Pan apologized to her and broke the barrier between them by offering tea. Tea had become an important prop for harmonious family relations at that moment.

Chapter 41 mentioned that Grandmother Jia only drank Laojunmei tea instead of Lu'an tea because she thought Lu'an tea tasted bitter. Laojunmei tea originates from Yinye tea from Junshan Island in the Dongting

Lake area, which has a lighter and sweeter taste. From the description in the novel, it can be inferred that the elderly Grandmother Jia prefers sweet flavors, so she likes to drink sweet tea. In addition, green tea is rich in tea polyphenols, and people with poor gastrointestinal function are prone to suffer from diarrhea if drinking much green tea. As Grandmother Jia has just consumed wine and meat, it is easy to upset the stomach if drinking green tea such as Lu'an tea. In contrast, Laojunmei tea is warm and mellow. The choice of tea reflects Jia's way of keeping healthy.

In Chapter 41, Cao Xueqin wrote the Chinese tea ceremony thoroughly. Chinese tea ceremony values color, fragrance, taste, utensils and rites. Among them, water is an important element. Ancient Chinese love to use mountain spring water, river water, well water, rain water, snow water to make tea. The water for Miaoyu's tea comes from the snow water she collected from the plum blossom five years ago.

Fragrant tea is not completed until served in complementary utensils. The tea set described in "A Dream of Red Mansions" is also appealing. In Chapter 41, Miaoyu invited Baoyu, Daiyu and Baochai to drink tea, preparing precious utensils to match the tea. The book describes the teacup

Miaoyu handed to Daiyu. The ancient script engraved on the cup can now be seen on a monument in Nanjing's Presidential Palace.

The characters in the book are ardent tea drinkers, and show a lot of interesting customs. In Chapter 25, Wang Xifeng joked with Lin Daiyu about drinking tea, "Drink our family's tea, a daughter-in-law to be." In traditional folklore, the betrothal present is also called "tea present," engagement called "eating tea." Traditional weddings include ceremonies such as "serving tea" and drinking "cross-cupped tea."

The way people in the book drink tea can be particular and casual. In Chapter 49, Baoyu did not have enough time to eat, so he just grabbed a bowl of rice with tea, and then hurriedly swallowed them.

"A Dream of Red Mansions" introduces so many kinds of tea. Generally, Chinese tea can be divided into six major categories: green tea, black tea, oolong tea, yellow tea, dark tea, and white tea. There are more than 2,000 different tea products, taking into account scented tea, each with unique characteristics. Just like coffee beans produced in different regions, they have different flavors. I expect you to savor tea slowly like reading "A Dream of Red Mansions."



# BREATHABLE Purple Clay Teapots

By Xu Wuyou



China has a diverse range of tea ware with beautiful designs, combining practicality and aesthetics. A good pot embodies the ingenuity and inheritance spanning thousands of years. A pot of good tea presents natural essence and elegant sentiments.

In Jiangsu, Yixing purple clay in Wuxi enjoys a long reputation. After a series of processes such as clay panning, molding and kneading, the tradition is reborn. The cooperation between clay and fire began tens of thousands of years ago.

The "Dasheng Teapot" can be considered a classic type of Yixing purple clay teapot and enjoys the reputation of being a rare find. Fan Wei-qun is the fourth-generation inheritor of Dasheng Teapot craft and his teapots boast the beautiful colors of flowers and intricate branches.

Why is the purple clay teapot a perfect tea partner? Fan Wei-qun introduced that purple clay is different from other kinds of clay and porcelain clay. After the purple clay is baked, it becomes waterproof ceramic, but is porous, allowing air in. This helps to maintain the aroma of the tea, and it keeps its color and taste for a long time.

Xu Xiutang is the representative inheritor of Yixing purple clay teapot making techniques, a national intangible cultural heritage. He learned pottery carving decoration skills in 1954. Many of his works are collected by the Palace Museum and the Shanghai Museum. The teapots showcase a variety of realistic and abstract elements and an antique charm, bringing Yixing purple clay teapots from China to the global stage.

Yixing purple clay tea sets are made by using traditional handcrafted techniques. Each tea set requires the artisan's patience in polishing and careful carving. Its manufacturing process mainly includes the following steps:



**Xu Xiutang**

Representative inheritor of national intangible cultural heritage

Yixing purple clay teapot processing techniques



Xu Xiutang's Work

01

## SELECTING MATERIALS

The main raw material for Yixing purple clay pottery is local purple clay, which usually has a dark gray-brown or deep red-brown color and features dense texture, strong viscosity, and is not easy to break.



In addition to pottery tea ware, porcelain tea ware once sparked a craze in Western countries. Porcelain tea ware includes white porcelain, celadon porcelain, black porcelain etc., among which white porcelain ware produced by Jingdezhen is the best-known. Porcelain produced in Gaocun, Nanjing is also well-known, showing up in the Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation, the APEC Beijing Summit, the Nanjing Youth Olympic Games and other events. In the mid-18th century, with the popularity of drinking tea, the British

02

## SHAPING

The purple clay is kneaded into a shape that meets the design requirements, then carved, polished, and other crafts are carried out to form tea utensils such as teapots, teacups, tea jars, etc.

03

## FIRING

After the shaping process, the purple clay pottery needs to be fired. Generally, high-temperature firing method is used, the completed purple clay items are put into the kiln for firing, and the firing time usually varies from 12 to 24 hours. After firing, the pottery will have a more lustrous color and become sturdier.



East India Company imported a large amount of tea sets every year, making Chinese porcelain tea sets popular in Europe. Whether it is tableware or tea ware, people like to display them in high places to decorate their homes. European nobles even purchased blue-and-white porcelain to embed on walls and roofs as decorations. Chinese porcelain tea ware and tableware can be seen in many oil paintings of that time.

In addition to the tea ware mentioned above, with the develop-

ment of the times, there are also lacquerware tea ware, glass tea ware, metal tea ware, etc. Tea ware can be chosen according to the type of tea. Usually, tea brewed in a high-density tea ware will have a clearer and lighter taste, while tea brewed in a low-density tea ware will have a heavier taste. One can also choose tea ware based on different aesthetic requirements. Thanks to the ingenious design, it is increasingly convenient to carry a set of portable teapots or cups to start a journey, and you can go and drink whenever you want.



# TEA TASTING IS AN ART,

## Like the Art of Playing Guqin, Burning Incense and Arranging Flowers

By Geng Chunxiao



When a friend comes from afar, it is customary for the host to personally serve a cup of green tea. To entertain guests with tea, to socialize with tea, and to exchange gifts with tea—these are customs of the Chinese people. The Chinese people focus on artistic conception of drinking tea as tea can purify the heart, uplift the spirit, and nourish the body. Tea embodies the philosophy and art of Chinese culture.

Some are enamored with flower arrangements, while others have a taste for incense appreciation. Still, others are captivated by the world of tea. Some even use tea as a common thread interweaving flower arrangements, incense enjoyment, and the appreciation of curios, pursuing a refined aesthetic. In recent times, many elegant gatherings have been held worldwide, offering such activities as tea tasting, antique appreciation, painting viewing, incense smelling, music listening, and flower arrangements, which

"transport" people to the living scenes of ancient Chinese literati instantly. Through these activities, one can experience up close the inexhaustible charm and rich connotations of Chinese tea culture.

On brewing tea, purple clay is the preferred "partner," while for tea tasting, Guqin (Chinese zither) is an indispensable "companion." Chinese tea and Chinese Guqin, both intangible cultural heritage projects, share many artistic connections. Gui Shimin, a national inheritor of the Guqin

art (Jinling Qin School), explains that in traditional Chinese scholar gatherings, tea drinking is always accompanied by the melodious sound of the Guqin, creating an elegant and refined atmosphere. Tea and Guqin, both embody the "warm and gentle" temperament of traditional Chinese culture. Their combination is an excellent way to cultivate one's taste and character, which is evident in Zhao Ji, Emperor Huizong of the Song Dynasty's painting "Listening to a Zither," depicting ancient scholars playing the Guqin during a tea gathering.

In Jiangsu, one can find many old tea houses in museums such as the Nanjing Museum and Nanjing Folk Museum. Visitors can enjoy a cup of tea while savoring such famous tea-related literary works as Su Shi's "Chuo Cha Tie," Huang Tingjian's "Feng Tong Gong Ze Shang Shu

Yong Cha Nian Jian Chuo San Shou," and Tang Bohu's "Shi Ming Tu." They can also appreciate performances of Pingtan, Pingshu, and Baiju. If lucky, they may even catch performances like Lao She's "Tea House," Kunqu Opera "Fengzheng Wu: Tea Garden," and "Feng Ming Ji: Drinking Tea."

The tea-themed creative products at the Suzhou Museum are brimming with ingenious ideas. "Tang Bohu Pao" blooming tea bags is one of these products. It is fun and creative to "immerse" the four great literati of Jiangnan (south area of the Yangtze River) in a teacup. The tea tray, drawing inspiration from the Taohuawu Woodblock New Year Painting, and the teacup and matcha cookies, modeled after the Suzhou Museum's collection of the 5th Generation Yue Kiln Celadon Lotus Bowl, are excellent gifts for



↑ Suzhou Museum's creative tea gift packages with the four gifted literati from Jiangnan

tea lovers.

Tea lovers are also recommended to visit the Suzhou True Color Museum, a community with cafes, teahouses, markets and exhibitions. The Suzhou True Color Museum's Suzhou-style tea ceremony features several tea rooms that utilize different views to present various aesthetics.

The ancient market of Shuangta Fair Trade Market in Suzhou is also highly recommended. The market is home to the famous ancient architecture of the Shuangta (twin towers), built during the Ming Dynasty, and is considered the soul of ancient marketplaces in East China. While the Suzhou True Color Museum emphasizes the preservation and promotion of traditional cultural arts, the Shuangta market is primarily focused on commerce and cultural exchange. It is a place where visitors can find a diverse range of shops, teahouses, traditional handicrafts stores, cafes, and a snack street etc.



↑ Suzhou Museum's creative gifts: lotus teacup and matcha cookies



↑ "Listening to a Zither" Attributed to Zhao Ji, Song Dynasty



## City of Gastronomy & Pastries:

# A MATCH MADE IN HEAVEN

By Xu Yinghong

Vice President  
of Jiangsu Cuisine Association  
General Manager of Fuchun Group



Since the processing techniques of Fuchun pastries were included in the UNESCO Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity on Nov. 29, 2022, pastries in Yangzhou have attracted special attention. "Fuchun pastries, the best in the world," Chinese contemporary writer Wang Zengqi wrote in 1986. It seems like an overstatement, but in fact, it shows Wang's foresight.



People know that there are many teahouses in Yangzhou, but many people do not have much knowledge about Yangzhou tea, and some even think that Yangzhou is not a major tea-production base and does not have famous teas.

In fact, as early as in the Tang and Song dynasties, Yangzhou had its own "tribute tea," which was produced on Shugang Mountain with a good reputation for its high quality. When Ouyang Xiu served as the governor of Yangzhou, he built the Shihui Hall on Shugang Mountain as a production base for tribute tea, and then built the Chungong Pavilion to record it, with the verse "The snow still covers the trees on the Mengshan mountain top, while the spring of Jianxi has not yet been awakened by the thunder. In the warm Central Plains, plants are already sprouting early. When it comes to the tribute, the new things should be given priority." With the change of climate, China's tea-production areas have moved southward, resulting in the weakening of Yangzhou's tea-production advantage over the centuries. Fortunately, the people of Yangzhou have been good at exploring new paths. They took advantage of flower and plant cultivation and began to produce pogonia and jasmine flower-scented teas, which raised the fame of Yangzhou tea.

In the mid-20th century, tea gardens were gradually established in the northern suburbs and western areas of Yangzhou, such as Pingshan, Nashan, and Shanhe Forest Farm, with varying sizes and production levels, mainly for local consumption. At the end of the last century, local tea experts and related

tea enterprises worked together and developed a new green tea variety named "Lvyangchun" on the hills of Yizheng on a large scale. In the new century, Lvyangchun tea has become more vibrant, winning acclaim for its emerald green appearance, bright color, and elegant taste, and is deeply loved by consumers.

Drinking tea can cleanse the mind and help people calm down to the extent that the true taste of tea and the true realm of Zen blend together, highlighting its charm even more. In Yangzhou, for over a hundred years, there is a good tea that has not only helped promote the reputation of Yangzhou's morning tea at home and abroad, but also proudly stood out in the tea industry with its diverse "three-in-one" characteristics, becoming a unique flavor of human intangible cultural heritage. That is Kuilongzhu tea created by Fuchun Teahouse.

Kuilongzhu tea was a creative idea of the ancestors of Fuchun Teahouse. It's a blend of Longjing tea from Zhejiang Province, Kuizhen tea from Anhui Province, and Zhulan tea from Yangzhou according to a specific proportion. After appearing on the market, Kuilongzhu tea was widely welcomed by tea enthusiasts. With constant fine-tuning of the proportion, it gets better and better. This tea brings together the taste of Kuizhen tea, the color of Longjing tea, and the fragrance of Zhulan tea. Its clear color, rich fragrance, soft taste, and longer steeping time make it a popular choice among tea enthusiasts. It can also help relieve grease from meals. Therefore, it is widely praised by tea drinkers and is full of vitality.







Kuilongzhu tea is favored by many people, popularized by celebrities, described in the literature, and recorded in history, adding brilliance to its present splendor. I have received many famous guests in Fuchun Teahouse. They came to enjoy Kuilongzhu tea because of its reputation, from which they gained a sense of insight and expressed their admiration and appreciation with eloquent words.

Lin Qingxuan, a famous writer from Taiwan, China, once visited Fuchun Teahouse with his wife and two children. He believed that Fuchun's Kuilongzhu tea, with its elegant and mellow flavor that relieves greasiness and generates fluid, has a consistent taste no matter how many times it was steeped. It was not prone to losing its flavor or being too strong or bitter, and paired perfectly with Fuchun's cold meat dishes, dry bean curd shreds, and buns with three sorts of diced fillings. The combination was so charming that he felt the taste "seemed like it should only exist in heaven."



Mo Yan, a Nobel Laureate in Literature walked into Fuchun Teahouse on a rainy day in spring. After savoring Kuilongzhu tea, he wrote, "Two generations of famous chefs present seasonal dishes, along with tea from three provinces brewed with spring water from the local river," which highly summarized the unique characteristics of Fuchun. It was amazing.

Taking a sip of Kuilongzhu tea will unlock the chatterbox. People talk about all kinds of topics, from ancient times to the present, and enjoy themselves in it. The curious ones will ask about the secrets of Kuilongzhu tea, and feel even more fulfilled after gaining the knowledge. The raw materials of Kuilongzhu tea are sourced from the Yangtze River Delta region. It's a blend of three kinds of tea from the provinces of Jiangsu, Zhejiang, and Anhui created a hundred years ago, marking a breakthrough in leverages innovation and



reflecting the concept of "mutual appreciation and inspiration." The steeping time for these three kinds of tea is different, and their taste comes out in different order. After the first few brews, Longjing tea becomes lighter, then Kuizhen tea takes over, and finally, Zhulan tea releases its fragrance without missing the opportunity. The quality of interaction and mutual prosperity can be seen in their relay performance. Kuilongzhu tea consistently showcases the cultural concept of "harmony," which is also the cultural core of Yangzhou.

The dine-in effect brought by Kuilongzhu tea has remained for a hundred years, and its tea packaging has kept up with the times. With its rich connotation, fascinating stories, high quality, and loyal fans, there are various versions of packaging such as treasure boxes, distinguished boxes, travel boxes, and gift boxes that stand out in the market. In recent years, Kuilongzhu tea art has continued to improve and it made a stunning appearance at the China International Import Expo (CIIE). It has also become a member of the "Silk Road Tea Banquet."

After Kuilongzhu tea was recognized as an intangible cultural heritage, personalized postage stamps of the tea were released. Like the famous buns with three sorts of diced fillings and beautifully crafted mini dumplings, the mellow Kuilongzhu tea was also created by Fuchun Teahouse, embodying the characteristics of inclusiveness and openness of Fuchun staff, who embrace different ideas and cultures from all over the world.



# Tea Cuisine

The practice of cooking with tea leaves has existed since ancient times worldwide. Tea can be directly consumed, boiled into soup, or served cold with ingredients, creating fresh and elegant delicacies. The aroma of tea doesn't overpower the natural flavors of the ingredients but enhances the appeal of the dishes through taste and fragrance.

## Stewed Local Chicken Soup with Clear Tea

The local chicken has tender and fresh meat. During the cooking process, Biluochun tea is added, which infuses the tea aroma into the chicken soup, creating a refreshing taste. Only a small amount of salt is added to season the soup without overpowering the main ingredient's flavor.



## Nutritious Mushroom Soup with Green Tea

The mushrooms are stewed in yellow tea soup, making them soft and tender, and the mushrooms' deliciousness is also infused into the soup. The tea leaves not only decorate the mushroom soup, enriching its color, but also provide an additional flavor to enhance the taste.



## Eel Balls with Green Tea and Plum Sauce

The eel balls are seasoned with plum source, creating a unique sweet and sour taste that is rich in flavor. The green tea boiled in clear water balances the taste of the eel balls, providing a refreshing experience without feeling greasy.



## Tea-scented Beef

The pan-fried beef has a strong aroma that goes better with the flavor of fried tea leaves. The crispy texture of the fried tea leaves and the toughness of the beef are combined to provide a rich taste experience.

## Italian Chef: BILUOCHUN TEA FLAVORS ITALIAN DISHES

Jiangsu's green tea is very famous all over the world. Italians are used to drinking coffee and rarely drink tea. After coming to China, I have grown fond of drinking tea, especially Biluochun tea. The taste of green tea is sweet, mellow, and refreshing, and the tea soup is clear and bright. It is also beneficial to health.

Because of the unique taste of Jiangsu's green tea, I have combined Biluochun tea with Italian cuisine to create some creative dishes. Biluochun has a slightly bitter taste when it enters the mouth, and a refreshing aftertaste when swallowed. It is very refreshing and less strong in flavor, making it suitable to pair with fish. Therefore, I used Biluochun to create a sauce to pair with tuna, where its fragrant flavor would neutralize the fishy smell of the meat and enhance its freshness. I also used a mixture of green tea and chicken broth to make soup to pair with tortellini, the Italian-style dumplings. The combination of two countries' characteristic foods creates a unique taste.



## Nino

the Italian chef at the Pacific Western Restaurant of Jinling Hotel



# KEY TO PAIRING TEA WITH SNACKS

By Geng Chunxiao & Li Chunhui



People in Jiangnan (the south area of the Yangtze River) like referring to drinking as "eating tea," which highlights the importance of snacks paired with tea.

Currently, there are varied kinds of tea snacks, among which some natural fruits, preserved fruits, and nuts are the preferred options. In addition, steamed or boiled snacks with light flavors such as cakes and pastries, and steamed dumplings are also highly recommended. The tea table is adorned with a beautifully woven table-runner, the tea sets are carefully arranged, tea snacks are served in exquisite bowls and plates to create a visual feast. Tea, strong or light, can be paired with different snacks, includ-

ing the savory, sweet, crispy, and soft ones. The combination of drinking and eating is what makes a great experience of enjoying tea.

The key to coordinating tea with snacks can be summarized as the Chinese saying goes, "Sweet with green, sour with black, sunflower seeds with oolong." "Sweet with green" means it is recommended to pair green tea with sweets, such as various sweet cakes and pineapple pastries. "Sour with black" suggests pairing black tea with sour foods like fruits, lemon slices, and preserved fruits. "Sunflower seeds with oolong" recommends having oolong tea with salty foods, such as sunflower seeds and peanuts.

## To pair green tea and snacks

- The first rule is to use less sugar in the sweets.
- The second rule is to avoid overly salty pastries.
- The third rule is that pastries made with beans are the most suitable.

Common tea delicacies include tea eggs, dried bean curd, tea cakes, and matcha ice cream. In addition, tea can be mixed with flour, rolled into strips, and made into cold noodles, which taste refreshing. It can also be added to yeast dough to make steamed buns with a light and pleasant color.

Pastries must harmonize with the nature of tea. In order to add a sense of ritual to tea drinking, attention should also be paid to the visual appeal and pairing of tea and pastries. Interestingly, just like latte art in coffee, China also has the ancient art of "tea painting" called "Chabaixi" (literally, hundred tea show). Also known as sorting tea and water painting, it is a unique technique that uses powdered tea as raw material and creates changing patterns in the tea soup with clear water.

A complete set of Chabaixi includes more than ten processes. In the Song Dynasty (960-1279), the prevalent way of having tea was through diancha, which creates foam in tea. The process begins with hot water being poured over fine powdered tea to make a paste, then more hot water is slowly added as the tea is constantly whisked by hand with a bamboo stick. Chabaixi is the art of using clear water as the object to inject into the tea and "draw" patterns before the foam disappears. It uses a teaspoon as a brush, clear water as ink, and the tea soup as paper, thus drawing auspicious patterns.

Tea actually has many companions, in both common people's seven daily necessities, namely firewood, rice, oil, salt, soy sauce, vinegar and tea, and the Chinese scholars' seven ones, namely music, chess, calligraphy, painting, poetry, wine and tea. The ingenuity of a "Doctor Tea" is reflected in pastries, paintings, and tea itself. Within a single leaf lies the clarity of heaven and earth, as well as the subtle warmth at your fingertips. From leaf to tea, it undergoes a wondrous journey. Through the repeated interplay of palms and high temperatures, the tea leaves emit their fragrant and rich essence. From beverages to cuisine, teas reflect both the otherworldly and the mundane aspects of life. Within the span of a tea session, people in Jiangsu can encounter a more beautiful life.





# Explore the fragrance of tea in Jiangnan Embrace the Jiangsu-style way of life

By Geng Chunxiao

**T**he spring in charming Jiangsu features blooming flowers and fragrant tea. Walking in the fragrance of flowers and tea is like traveling in paintings. When it comes to residence, tea trees are more particular than people. Jiangsu is home to Suzhou Biluochun tea, Nanjing Yuhua tea, Yangzhou Lvyangchun tea, Lianyungang Yunwu tea, Liyang White tea, Wuxi Yangxian tea, Maoshan Changqing tea and Jintan Queshe tea, Nanshan Shoumei and Shuixi Cuibai. The tea with beautiful names, is native to Jiangsu with beautiful mountains and waters. When spring comes, every mountain range in Jiangsu is covered with green shoots, turning into picturesque scenery.

When tea trees sprouted tender buds around the Qingming Festival every year, it is a good time for tea picking in Jiangsu. Around Guyu, or Grain Rain, the sixth of the 24 traditional Chinese

solar terms, tea fields in Jiangsu yielded high-quality tea leaves and became a good place for spring outings. In spring, "Charm of Jiangsu" Global Communication Center organized the "Tea for Harmony" themed photography tour. It invited French photographer Nicolas de Rougé, Italian photographer Raul Arianio, Hika Kiyota from Japan's Yomiuri Shimbun, reporter Do Huu Hung and photographer Nguyen Ho Quan from Vietnam's Nhan Dan Newspaper, and other foreign photographers and journalists. More than 10 well-known Chinese and foreign photographers formed a group to conduct a four-day photography tour, visiting Nanjing, Wuxi, Suzhou and Yangzhou cities in Jiangsu to explore the traditional Chinese tea-making skills and practices of Jiangsu-style life in the province.

In Jiangsu, you can catch a whiff of tea fragrance, take a sip of tea and have the "first bite of freshness" in spring. The photography group visited the International Horticultural Exposition in Yangzhou, Jiangsu Tea Expo Garden, Huanglongxian Jinling Tea Culture Tourist Village, and Dongshan Town in Suzhou to pick tea leaves. The photographers learned stir fixation with master Yan Jielong, a representative inheritor of Suzhou Biluochun tea processing techniques; they went to Gu'nian Street in Wuxi and Xu Xiutang Purple Clay Studio in Yixing to feel the charm of purple clay; they tasted Huaiyang Cuisine such as bean paste buns, tofu skin buns, and shaomai stuffed with green vegetables. They visited Slender West Lake, Zaolin Bay, Huishan Ancient Town, Humble Administrator's Garden and recorded scenes of April composed by camellias, Chinese snowball viburnum, azaleas, peony, wisteria, etc. with light and shadow in charming Jiangsu.

← Tea fields in Jiangning District, Nanjing



# MINGQIAN TEA VS MILK TEA

By Geng Chunxiao

After enjoying Yangzhou's morning tea leisurely, it is natural to visit the city. Slender West Lake, China Grand Canal Museum, Geyuan Garden, etc. are all good choices. This time, we are going to find a new place with the fragrance of tea.



Yangzhou has a long history of tea production. As early as in the Tang and Song Dynasties, Yangzhou became one of the famous tea producing areas. The suburb of Shugang was also named for tea, and the tea produced in the Song Dynasty was listed as tribute. The prosperity of

the Grand Canal has also brought opportunities for the development of Yangzhou tea.

With its fresh smell and slightly sweet taste, the locally planted and produced green tea, Lvyangchun tea, is gaining popularity. For visitors who would like to experience the charm of traditional Chinese gardens and taste some spring green tea, Juyuanchun Tea Professional Cooperative is a good choice.

Yangzhou Juyuanchun Tea Professional Cooperative is a provincial horticultural crop (tea) standard garden. Among them, Qingfeng Tea Park is its core base tea garden, located in the Yizheng Zaolinwan tourist resort.

Another 10-minute drive, we will arrive at our destination International Horticultural Expo in Yangzhou. The miniature horticultural world woven with flowers and green plants on 3,500 mu (233.33 hectares) of natural countryside, is the venue for the opening ceremony of a grand festival themed with Lvyangchun tea, combining tea, culture, trade and tourism in Yizheng.

Famous mountains and ancient temples produce high-quality tea. Yangzhou Pingshan Tea Farm is located by the Slender West Lake, not far from Daming Temple.

Good tea is naturally inseparable from good water. According to legend, Lu Yu, the "sage of tea," once ranked the list of water for boiling tea after visiting various famous springs. The famous springs in Jiangsu added on the list include water from Hui Mountain Temple Spring in Wuxi, Tiger Hill Temple Spring in Suzhou, Nanling of Yangtze River and Daming Temple in Yangzhou.

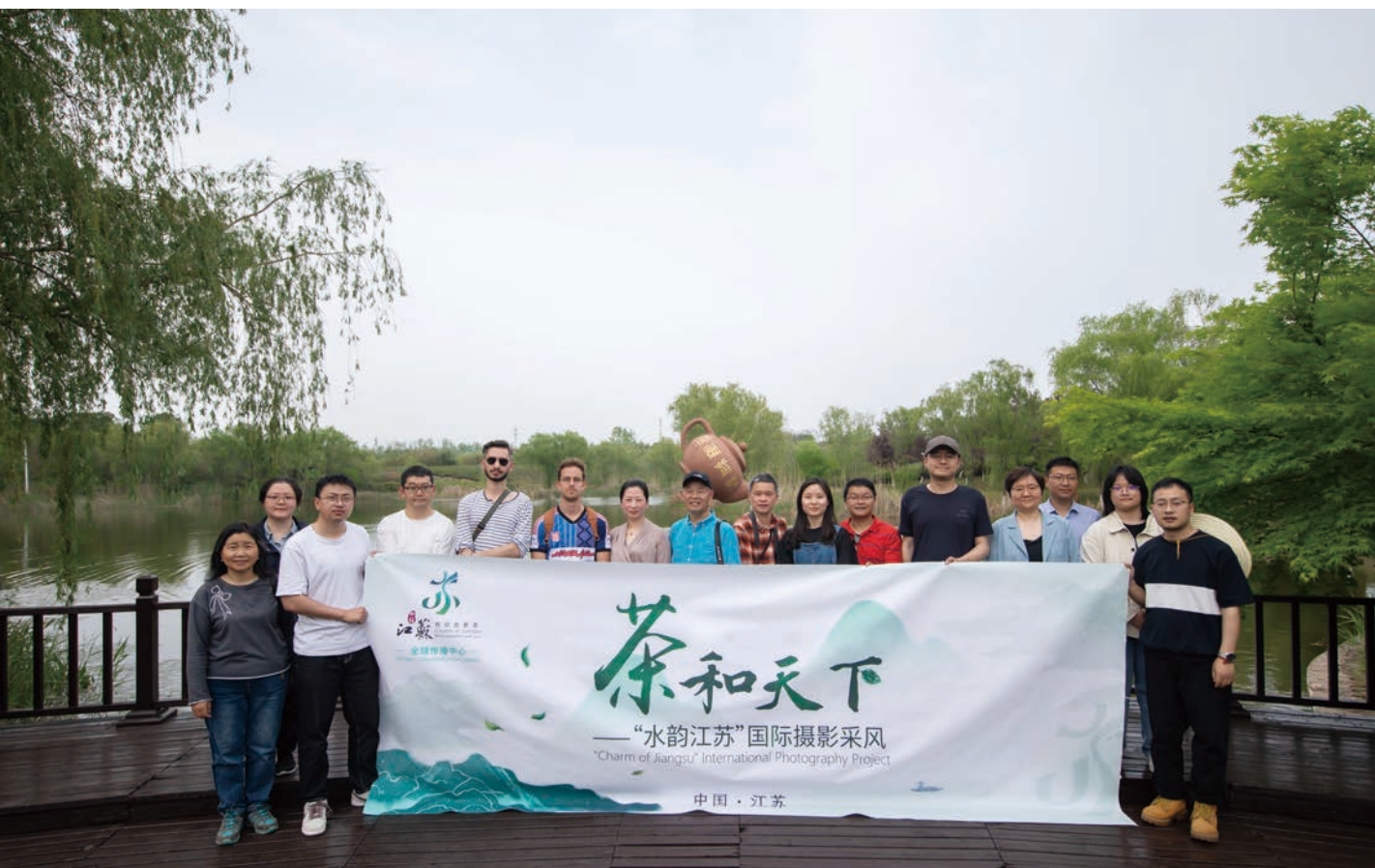
The first poem to mention "tea name" was written by Li Bai during his residence in Qixia Temple, Nanjing, titled "To My Nephew Zhongfu for His Sending Yuquan Shenxianzhang Tea to Me as a Present." Lu Yu also lived in Qixia Temple where he concentrated on research into tea. On the back mountain of Qixia Temple, there is still the site of Tea-tasting Pavilion. The vicinity of the temple is now the plantation area of Yuhua tea. In recent years, milk tea launched by Jiming Temple in Nanjing has attracted numerous fans. The tea brewed with the spring in Jinshan Temple, Zhenjiang is full of aroma. It is poetic to drink tea here.

In Jiangsu, there are many teahouses. In 2022, Jiangsu Tea Association, Jiangsu Tea Science Society and Jiangsu Agricultural Technology Extension Station jointly organized "Good Teahouses in Jiangsu" Selection & Jiangsu Tea Space Creative Competition. The selected

teahouses include the followings: Yunji, Yunlinxiaoyin, Laocui Teahouse in Nanjing, Daming Temple Fuhui House Zen Tea and Seclusion Tea Garden in Yangzhou, Chayihu Teahouse and Junpintang in Suzhou, Yangxian Tribute Teahouse, Yueranyousheng in Wuxi and Xufu Teahouse in Taizhou, Yinxiang Tianmu Teahouse in Changzhou, Nanshanli Tea Space in Xuzhou, etc. Some of the teahouses are located near tea gardens; some are quaintly decorated; others frequently hold elegant gatherings and share tea art. All of them are worth exploring.

With the development of time and fast-paced lifestyles, tea culture has given birth to new forms and expanded its drinking scenes. Milk tea is consumed for leisure. The traditional way of "boiling tea around a stove" is becoming popular again among young people in China. An increasing number of up-to-date tea beverage shops are using high-quality tea leaves as their competitive advantage. Among them, "Mingqian Tea," which literally means tea leaves picked before the Qingming Festival, is the most precious. Due to the excellent quality and low yield, the tea is scarce and thus expensive. It can be inferred that people in Jiangsu may be more delighted to get Mingqian Tea than milk tea.





## Jiangsu Tea Expo Park: An Encyclopedia of Tea Trees All Around China

By Zhang Jiajie

If you want to have an overall understanding of Jiangsu tea, it is recommended to visit the Jiangsu Tea Expo Park as your first stop. After walking into the park, one comes into an encyclopedia of teas. Even people who know nothing about tea can talk about tea eloquently afterward.



The park is located in Jiangsu's Jurong City. The most noticeable part of the park is the giant purple clay pot pouring water from the spout, transforming the whole park into a vivid scene.

The Jiangsu Tea Exposition Park is one of the major production areas of Maoshan's Changqing tea. It also produces quality green teas such as white teas. It is possible to drink self-produced teas at every tea bar at the park.

The park has another function. It is the teaching base for the Jiangsu Vocational College of Agriculture and Forestry. Nowadays, many tea industry talents in Jiangsu have graduated from this college.

In spring, there are also many international students from Jiangsu University here to experience tea picking in the tea field, stir-fry tea in the tea-making room, and watch tea ceremony in the tea training room. International students learn the movements of tea farmers and consult the teachers and students of Jiangsu Vocational College of Agriculture and Forestry. The bamboo baskets on their waist are gradually filled with tender new shoots.

Azizi from Afghanistan, an international student at Jiangsu University, said she was very happy to taste tea picked by her own hands for the first time. Learning to fry tea in a hot iron pot with students from Jiangsu Vocational College of Agriculture and Forestry was a magical experience. "I learned that the relationship between different tea-making techniques and solar terms, and different water sources have great impacts on the taste of tea. I feel that tea drinking in Jiangsu pays attention to the taste of tea soup after the first sip and tea artists teach us to distinguish the subtle differences in the growth process of tea in a calm mood. I found that the raw materials of Jiangsu tea are simple while there are many details in making and drinking tea that encompass a profound heritage." A lot of Chinese tea's "kung fu" lies in the processes before brewing, from planting to picking, frying, and so on, there are many clever ideas in every step.

Modern people always look forward to having a trip that can start whenever they want, but traveling far away and visiting scenic parks are more like an illusion in life. However, this Tea Expo Park can become a part of life. The tea garden there shows the cultural character of nature, giving you a chance to relax.



# Yuhua Tea:

## Like the Impression of the City of Literature

By *Chen Shengfeng*

Inheritor of Yuhua Tea Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH)

**Y**uhua tea, born in Nanjing, perfectly harmonizes with the city's unique history and atmosphere. Once brewed, the tea exudes a delicate and refreshing aroma, bringing a sense of tranquility and serenity, reminiscent of the peaceful ambiance of a moonlit forest. This tea has a rich and substantial character, much like the ancient city of Nanjing, worth savoring slowly. Enjoying a cup of Yuhua tea while admiring the breathtaking scenery of Nanjing is an experience like no other.

→ Chunqing Tea Garden  
in Gaochun District, Nanjing



→ Tea fields in Gaochun District, Nanjing

Nanjing has been renowned for its production of high-quality tea since ancient times. Tianque tea, Sheshan tea, and Zhongshan Yunwu tea are all famous teas from Nanjing. Yuhua tea was developed by Dr. Sun Yat-sen's Mausoleum Tea Factory in the spring of 1959.

The secret to the fragrant and mellow taste of Yuhua tea lies in the fact that it is only harvested during the ten days leading up to Qingming Festival. When the tea is harvested, only the bud and one leaf are picked from the tea plant when it has grown one bud and three leaves. The picked leaves are then processed through such techniques as rolling, drying, and hand-frying to form the final tea. On "hand-frying" the tea leaves, it requires the expertise of a master with over a decade of experience to ensure that Yuhua tea is delicate and fragrant.

The quality characteristics of Yuhua tea are demonstrated through its tight, fine, round and straight shape, sharp and elegant tips, vibrant green color, fresh fragrance, and mellow taste. The tea is a unique blend of the "tight and fine" producing craftsmanship of Dongting Biluochun tea and the "straight and glossy" craftsmanship of Longjing tea.

Generally speaking, good tea is produced in high mountains. This is because when tea plants are grown in environments with



favorable growing and cultivation conditions, as well as proper water and nutrient management, they accumulate high levels of polyphenols, amino acids, water-soluble sugars, pectin, and other compounds. The high content of pectin explains why drinking Yuhua tea leaves a sweet and refreshing aftertaste in the throat. High-quality Yuhua tea is always in vibrant green with a glossy appearance.

Yuhua tea boasts an innate beauty and elegance, surpassing its role as a mere carrier of Nanjing's tea culture. More importantly, with its taste and aroma, the tea embodies a philosophy of life, creating a sense of leisurely beauty.



# TEAHOUSE, PERMEATED WITH THE FRAGRANCE OF TEA AND BAMBOO

By Fang Fei

If you want to taste local Yuhua tea, it is recommended to visit Pingshan Forest Park Tea Plantation in Luhe, Qingshan Tea Plantation in Gaochun, Cedar Tea Garden in Lishui, Dr. Sun Yat-sen's Mausoleum Tea Factory, Yuhua Tea Museum, Huanglongxian Jinling Tea Culture Tourist Village.

"Yes, that's it! It's the afternoon tea time again." The great British writer Lewis Carroll demonstrated British enthusiasm for afternoon tea in his classic "Alice in Wonderland." Thousands of miles away, Chinese people also displayed their love for tea with this inherited habit of tasting early spring tea. And these beautiful tea plantations are no doubt wonderland-like destinations for spring outings. When green tea harvest season arrives, Huanglongxian Jinling Tea Culture Tourist Village becomes a perfect place to escape from the hustle and bustle of cities. Located in Nanjing's Jiangning District, this tea village, covering an area of more than 2,600 hectares, has emerged as a popular tourist attraction driven by China's rural revitalization plan. In 2019, it was selected into the list of the first batch of national key rural tourism villages. Enjoying tea and scenery in this quaint Huanglong Tea House is strongly recommended.

Pingshan Tea Co. Ltd., located in Nanjing's Pingshan Forest Park, owns an area of over 2,500 mu (167 hectares) of tea garden. Situated on the mountain top and being adjacent to four reservoirs, this tea garden surrounded by over 85 percent of forests is suitable for the growth of tea plants.

The Huaping Yuhua tea shaped like pine needles has the color of jade-like green. Professor Cheng Qikun, former director of the Tea Research Institute of the Chinese Science Academy, once wrote the inscription "A treasure in tea—Yuhua tea in Pingshan."



To brew green teas with tender features like Yuhua tea takes fastidious steps. The first step is to put five to six grams of tea into the cup and then fill it with one-third of boiled water at about 80 degrees Celsius. Two to three minutes later, when the tea buds and leaves are released, fill the cup with boiled water until it is 80 percent full, and then the tea is ready to be drunk.

Before drinking a cup of Mingqian tea, a lot of tea aroma has been smelt in Yuhua Tea Garden. The turquoise tea fields, hidden in the green forest, are beautiful with the rolling mountains. Such a mountain road, with tea fields around you, the breeze singing for you, and negative oxygen ions surrounding you, is simply enjoyable.



## Liyang Meijieshanye Hotspring Resort

**Address:** 258, Zhuhai Avenue,  
Daibu Township



The resort is located on Zhuhai Avenue, a 20-minute drive from Nanshan Bamboo Sea Scenic Spot. It integrates four ecological elements including forest, tree house, hot spring and mountain. There are multiple venues for leisure in the resort, including 31 eco-treehouses designed by a team from the Netherlands, a hot spring which was found by digging 1,788 meters under the ground, Wuwen Teahouse, music square, spa in mountains, boundless swimming pool, Banshan handicraft workshop.

## Liyang Qingfeng Xianju

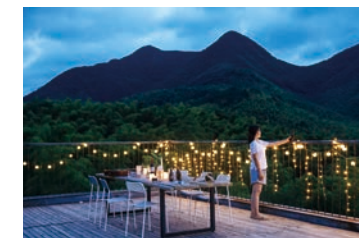
**Address:** 68 Wangjiacun,  
Songling Village, Daibu Township



At the foot of the Qingfeng Mountain at an altitude of 450 meters are two independent mansions with traditional Suzhou-Hangzhou style, which occupy 500 mu (33 hectares). The two buildings have blue tiles and white walls and were built near the river, surrounded by bamboo. There are mountains and a water dam from afar. The hotel has 11 guest rooms, and every one of them has a marvelous scenic view. There is a barbecue place by a swimming pool and an open lawn outside of the house. In the house, there are tea gardens, orchards and ponds.

## Liyang Wanqiu Shanju Homestay

**Address:** 205-1 Shenxijiecun,  
Hengjian Village, Daibu Township



The homestay is located near the Jinniu Road, close to the bamboo forests and mountains, hidden among natural villages, and three sides of it are surrounded by mountains. The homestay also has fresh air, making it suitable for experiencing tranquil and leisure life in the mountain. There are open-air candle-light dinners on the top floor; afternoon teas in the yard with bamboo, fireplace movies, healing handicrafts, and picnics in gardens. There are a total of 10 guest rooms which are suitable for various gatherings, corporate meetings, team building and family leisure.



# Purple Clay Teapots

## RECOMMENDED BY SU DONGPO

By Geng Chunxiao & Wang Chao

Before setting out to find another famous Jiangsu tea, let's look for a purple clay pot.



**Y**angxian tea, Jinsha Spring and purple clay pot in Yixing are called "three wonders of tea drinking" by Su Dongpo. Yixing's purple clay craft, added in the first batch of national intangible cultural heritage, is another cultural label of Yixing. You might as well buy a purple clay pot as a travel souvenir, which is of both practical and decorative value.

Gu'nan Street is the largest distribution center for purple clay in history. It also gathers the largest number of purple clay teapot artists and masters in Yixing. It preserves the cultural space and cultural form of the purple clay teapot industry since the Ming and Qing Dynasties, and has become an important historical place for understanding and researching purple clay teapot culture. Gu'nan Street is more than 1,000 meters long. The buildings on both sides of the street are two-story brick-and-wood structure, which completely convey the style and features of the architectural complexes in the Ming and Qing Dynasties. Each purple clay making studio is antiques decorated with different flowers and trees in front of the door, reflecting the aesthetic taste and sentiment of the craftsmen.

"Every purple clay pot craftsman in Gu'nan Street in Wuxi has made their shop picturesque. The craftsman's workstation is lined with many different forms of tools, and the shelf next to it displays purple clay pots. Listening to the music while making pots, with flowers and plants as well as kittens and dogs accompanying you to work, what a wonderful life! I bought a pump-



kin-shaped purple clay teapot and a small lotus-patterned cup from an Aunt Qu at No. 55 Gu'nan Street. She said that she had worked in Yixing Zisha Second Factory for 40 years. With a small wooden knife, she can carve the handle of the pot vividly. I think it is craftsmen like her, who work with great care and precision every day, that make Yixing, Wuxi as the world capital of purple clay ceramics," said Ben Daochun, a member of the photography group, director of the Jiangsu Photographers Association and vice chairman of the Nanjing Photography Association.

Xue Xiaohong, a member of the China Photographers Association and director of the Nanjing Photographers Association, said "our photograph group also visited Huishan Ancient Town, a place brimming with cultural relics and historical sites. The landscape of mountains and rivers, forests and springs is picturesque, and the bright-colored azaleas are blooming. In Jichang Garden, I have seen young people in Hanfu sitting by the water and enjoying cold brew tea with pastries and fruits. It is such an elegant way to have afternoon tea with the light breeze by the lake. During the tour, I talked with foreign photographers about French black tea, Italian milk tea, Japanese matcha tea, etc. A small cup of tea reflects the commonality of Chinese and foreign aesthetic sentiments and the integration of history and culture."

If you want to have a taste of what even Su Dongpo has admired, you can visit Qianhong Tea Garden in Yixing, Wuxi. Yixing was called Yangxian in ancient times. The tea garden here is surrounded by mountains with a natural barrier of a vast expanse of bamboo forest, which makes it the "happiest" growing environment for tea. Various fruit trees are planted among the tea trees in the Qianhong Early Spring Tea Base, such as flowering plums. These plants not only enrich the ecological system of the tea garden but also connect with the roots of the tea trees, intertwining their branches, and creating the natural floral and fruity aroma of the tea leaves.

If you want to taste the pure spring flavor, you can visit the Qianhong Early Spring Tea Shop located at No. 62 Jiubin South Road in Yixing City, or stay at the Qianhong Early Spring Teahouse in Qianyuan Village, Taihua Town, Yixing City. After all, a sip of fresh spring tea is worth more than any experience in March.



# Biluoochun Tea:

## Take a Sip of Jiangnan's Spring

By Geng Chunxiao



In the March of Jiangnan (the south area of the Yangtze River), people's favorite is nothing but a cup of Biluoochun tea from the Dongting Mountain, which is produced on Dongshan and Xishan islands of Taihu Lake.

In addition to planting tea, Dongshan also abundantly produces loquat, green plum, chestnut, and peach. These tea and fruit trees are separated from each other while their roots are twisted together. The fruit aroma of Biluoochun tea from Dongting Mountain is related to its unique growth environment, the soil brought by Taihu Lake and the mists, which make it distinctive.

Half a kilo of high-quality Biluoochun tea is produced with 60,000 buds stir-fried by hand for 40

minutes. Biluoochun tea picking and tea-making process are very particular, at least through tea picking, sorting, rolling, stir fixation, rolling, drying and other processes. The top Biluoochun tea leaves are bound with each other like a spiral and the buds are fresh green with sliver tips. After brewed, tea leaves roll like white clouds in the boiled water with a refreshing aroma.

Dongshan tea expert Qin Weirong introduced that tea plants generally like cool places. If the tea trees are exposed to more light, the amino acids will be less while the tea polyphenols will be more. The secret of refreshing tea soup is hidden in amino acids, but also



inseparable from tea polyphenols. The relationship between tea polyphenols and amino acids is more like symbiosis, and the ratio of tea polyphenols and amino acids is a key index to measure the coordination of taste and the suitability for manufacture of tea varieties. The lower the ratio of the two, the more obvious the taste of the tea soup is. Therefore, tea picking should catch the brief moment when the amino acids and tea polyphenols are balanced. Nowadays, tea-picking technology is constantly improving with scientific and technological means, and more young people are devoted to the design, sales and promotion of tea.

fixation, rolling... These processes with interesting names make me feel that a small tea leaf seems to have infinite vitality. During this trip, the loquat, water shield and lard cake in Dongshan of Suzhou are also very delicious.

To have a taste of the March of Jiangnan, we recommend you to go to the Biluo Village of Suzhou's Dongshan Township. In the village, there is a cooperative focusing on making Biluoochun tea, where there are origin-protected tea gardens, organic tea gardens, tea frying facto-

ries, and leisure areas. Besides that, there are accommodations, with facilities, including dining rooms, teahouses and conference rooms.

Here, you can also learn how to boil Biluoochun tea, which is pouring hot water first and then dropping tea. Due to the lightweight of the tea, the tea leaves will sink gradually after being dropped into the water, releasing materials inside of the leaves and tea hairs attached to it. By doing this, the tea will have the taste of freshness, and the tea water will look very clear.



Italian photographer Raul Ariano, a member of the photography group, said, "if you take a sip of Biluoochun tea fried by master Yan Jielong, the fragrance will burst in your mouth. Under the lens, the master's tea-making gesture by the pot is like Chinese Kungfu, tai chi. The different moves create different tastes. After the master fries the tea with bare hands, there will be delicate smoke rising from the pot, like a dragon taking off."

French photographer Nicolas de Rougé, a member of the photography group, said that he could feel the extensive and profound tea culture of Jiangsu during the photography tour. From planting to picking, from tea making to brewing, every step of Jiangsu tea-making process is exquisite. Picking,





# *Tea for Harmony, Know Jiangsu from a Tea Leaf*

*By Geng Chunxiao*

The character "茶" (tea) in Chinese can be disassembled as a person between the grass and tree. All the mountains and waters, grass and trees in Jiangsu present poetry and charm.

Thanks to developing communications, the Internet can herald spring for tourists. However, they still need attention and

elegance to visit and explore the spring tea themselves. The essence of spring arrives and grows on the branches of tea trees in Jiangsu. Appreciating, picking, and brewing tea are equally important. Favorable weather conditions, geographic advantages, and the unity of the people all must be in place. Tea leaves may present completely

different postures and tastes at slightly different timing.

Chinese tea culture is developed through inheritance and inherited through development. In the past, Chinese tea crossed national borders from the Silk Road, the ancient Tea Horse Road and the ancient tea-boat waterway, and became a pop-

ular drink in the world. Today, Chinese tea connects people and nature, history and reality, culture, tourism and a better life, China and the world, explaining the concept of "harmony without diversity" to the world and demonstrating the sincerity of "exchange and mutual learning." Tea is reshaping the lifestyle of Jiangsu, becoming

a fresh trend. People from all around the world are following the fragrance of tea, embarking on an extraordinary and leisurely journey to explore the essence of Jiangsu-style living. Jiangsu tea will continue to play its role in promoting a better life and dialogue among civilizations.

From high above, the tea plan-

tations stretch out, forming an ecological panorama of the countryside in Jiangnan (the south area of the Yangtze River). Tea fields captured by aerial photography are also like fingerprints of spring. They are guiding tourists who cherish the spring time to start the fragrant and romantic date with tea in charming Jiangsu.





航拍下的江蘇茶田，猶如春天的指紋  
Tea fields captured by aerial photography  
look like a fingerprint of spring.

南京·高淳  
Gaochun District, Nanjing