

# TPOT Newsletter

TPOT

## The Pleasures of Tea

Bringing together family & friends with a cup of tea

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In this issue of the TPOT Newsletter, we focus on the white tea category and tea's effect on iron absorption. Please feel free to e-mail any topics you would like included in future newsletters or submit short articles on tea that you would like to share with other newsletter subscribers. Wishing you and your family a safe, happy, and healthy holiday season and new year!

Yours in tea....Kristine

### Spotlight on...

White tea is perhaps the most controversial of all the tea categories to define and it is the fourth category covered in the six-part "Tea Categories" series. White teas originated in the Fujian province in China in the 18th century, but other countries are also producing them, including: Taiwan; India; and Sri Lanka. While the tea categories we've covered so far (black, green, and oolong) have been defined by the level of oxidation of the tea leaves and the manufacturing process, defining white teas in this manner is not so simple. There is much debate about what is considered white tea and some of the issues include: 1) whether the tea originates from the Fujian province in China or elsewhere; 2) whether the buds and leaves are from the first plucking of the season or from later pluckings; 3) whether the tea leaves are un-oxidized or semi-oxidized; 4) whether the tea leaves are allowed to dry naturally or if heat is applied to speed up the process. Manufacturers of white tea in the Fujian province claim that their tea is the only authentic white tea and that it is comprised of the first plucking of leaves and buds from the Da Bai Hao varietal of the tea plant, *Camellia sinensis*, that have been allowed to dry naturally. Other manufacturers disagree that white tea can only be produced under such strict requirements. Contributing to the controversy is the fact that there are several styles of white tea, each having characteristics that are different from the other styles. The purest style of white tea is Yin Zhen (Silver Needle), which is manufactured from only the buds of the tea plant.



Silver Needle

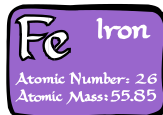
These buds are covered with fine, silver, downy hairs and create a tea liquor that is delicate, smooth, sweet, and clean. Another style is Bai Mu Dan (White Peony), which is made from leaves and buds. The dry leaf of White Peony is multi-colored with shades of green and brown and the silver buds. The tea liquor created from the dry leaf is smooth and sweet, with a richness and more body than the Silver Needle. The last style of white tea is Shou Mei (Longevity Eyebrow), which is made from more mature, coarser tea leaves. These tea leaves undergo an oxidation step, resulting in an infusion that has oolong-like flavors and complexity. While the latter style undergoes a formal oxidation step, the tea leaves of the other two styles may also oxidize slightly as a natural part of the manufacturing process. Because each manufacturer may vary the processing steps and the length of each step, there are countless variations in leaf oxidation and the resulting levels of caffeine in the particular tea. It is generally believed that white teas have the lowest caffeine levels of all the teas; however, some recent studies have contradicted this belief. As with green tea, it is important to use water that is around 180° when preparing white tea. White teas are good for multiple infusions.



White Peony

### Tea & Health

It is true that drinking tea affects the body's ability to absorb iron. But there is some good news — that the composition of your meal and source of the iron will determine whether or not your body will have trouble absorbing this essential mineral. It turns out that iron derived from animal protein is not affected; only iron from plant sources is, with absorption being reduced by as much as 40%. So it is important to ensure meals are balanced and contain iron from both sources. According to one study, those most at risk of developing iron deficiencies are those prone to this condition and those who follow vegetarian or vegan diets. Even still, it's a good idea to wait an hour after a meal before drinking tea to ensure that your body will absorb the iron that it requires.



### TPOT Specials

- ◆ Take 5% off carved candles and candles of tea-inspired fragrances by using coupon code **December0801**.
  - ◆ Take 10% off your order of \$50 or more by using coupon code **December0802**.
- Coupon codes can be used for orders placed:
- On our website [www.pleasuresoftea.com](http://www.pleasuresoftea.com), input one of the above codes at checkout.
  - By phone **631-278-5755**, mention one of the above codes when placing your order.  
Coupon codes expire **December 31, 2008**.  
Only one coupon code can be used per order.