

TPOT Newsletter

TPOT

The Pleasures of Tea

Bringing together family & friends with a cup of tea

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This issue of the TPOT Newsletter introduces another type of tea that may be unfamiliar to you - Pu'erh. Also included are tips on proper tea storage. Do you have a tea question that you need answered? If so, e-mail it to customerservice@pleasuresoftea.com and it will be covered in a future newsletter. Looking forward to hearing from you!

Yours in tea...Kristine

Spotlight on...

Pu'erh, known as black tea in China, is still relatively unknown in the US and it is the last category covered in the six-part "Tea Categories" series. It originates from the town of Pu'erh, located in the southwestern part of China in the Yunnan province. As with yellow tea the manufacturers of Pu'erh keep the processing steps a well-guarded secret, so it is not entirely known how this tea is produced. It is known that microorganisms are present during the aging stage of this tea, which results in it being considered the only truly fermented tea. There are two types of Pu'erh: sheng cha (raw, green) and shou cha (cooked). Sheng cha undergoes a natural aging process usually lasting about ten years before the tea leaves have ripened; shou cha undergoes a process that simulates the aging process, but which allows the tea leaves to ripen in as little as three months. Pu'erh may also be blended with chrysanthemum or jasmine blossoms or may be packed in tangerine rinds that impart a subtle tangerine aroma to the tea leaves. Pu'erh is available in cake form, other shapes (nests, stars, etc.), or loose leaf. The nest shape, or tuo cha, is a popular shape and is readily available along with Pu'erh in loose leaf. A few years ago there was much demand for sheng cha cakes, some of which were selling for several thousand dollars!



Pu'erh Mini Tuo Cha

Pu'erh may be the healthiest tea and current research is being done to determine the healthful properties and their effects on the human body. Preliminary research shows that it may have the highest levels of polyphenols, statins (cholesterol-lowering compounds), and GABA (an amino acid essential for brain metabolism and other functions in the central nervous system). The tea liquor created from the dry leaf is rich and dark with earthy-floral aromas and flavor. They range from medium- to full-bodied. Unfortunately, the approximate caffeine level of Pu'erh is not known. Boiling water is used to prepare Pu'erhs and they are good for multiple infusions.



Chrysanthemum
Pu'erh Mini Tuo Cha

Pu'erh continues to be produced solely in China in the province of Yunnan. Pu'erh teas are generally not named; they may be labeled with the type (sheng or shou), blending agents (ex. chrysanthemum, jasmine, tangerine, etc.), shape (ex. tuo cha, star, cake, etc.), and/or number of years aged (for sheng only). Most Pu'erhs are shou cha, so assume it is shou cha if the tea is not labeled as sheng cha.

Tea & Health

Tea is extremely sensitive to light, heat, air, moisture, and odors, so it is necessary to protect it from these "spoilors" in order to keep it fresh and retain as many of the beneficial compounds as possible. Follow these suggestions for proper tea storage:

- Store in a tightly sealed, dark, opaque container. Re-sealable pouches and tins are a good option; **never** store in glass containers or tins with clear windows.
- Make sure the storage container is size-appropriate for speed of consumption; i.e. tea stored in large tins that is consumed slowly will be exposed to more air.
- Store away from a direct heat source and sunlight—in a cabinet is best. Even if the container is opaque, direct sunlight may heat up the container and the tea inside.
- Store away from foods and other teas with strong aromas.
- Never store your tea in the refrigerator or freezer.
- Buy from a retailer who stores their teas properly. Properly storing tea that has been stored improperly before you bought it will not reverse any decrease in quality that has occurred.



TPOT Specials

- Use coupon code **February09** to take 5% off your order subtotal of \$50 or more.
 - Use coupon code **FreeShip** to get free shipping on order subtotals of \$100 or more.
- Coupon codes can be used for orders placed:
- On our website 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 code expires **February 28, 2009**.
Only one coupon code can be used per order.