

issuezero.2018
masterstalk 



masterstalk
masterstalk.online





Contents

Issue Zero. 2018



Tea in Vietnam

Brief
Basics of Tea Culture
History and Tea in Huế
Tea Snacks

4



Buzz Tea from a Tea Nerd

Cheryl Teo's Artwork

18

Practice, Practice, Practice...

Sharyn Johnston's
Principles

22



The Craft of Connoisseurship

Ruben Luyten's
Stratagems

27



masterstalk
issuezero.2018

Pilot issue

Founder and publisher:
Tea Masters Cup Ltd.

Editor-in-Chief:
Olya Buhtz

Editorial Address:
Rooms 05-15, 13A/F, South Tower, World Finance Centre,
Harbour City, 17 Canton Road, Tsim Sha Tsui, Kowloon,
Hong Kong

+85281928853
e-mail: editor@masterstalk.online
www.masterstalk.online

Tea Master Cup, MastersTalk are registered trademarks
of Tea Masters Cup Ltd.

Reprinting of materials is allowed only by
permission of the magazine. The reference to
MastersTalk magazine is obligatory. The
editors don't bear any responsibility for
reliability of data placed in advertising blocks
or announcements. The editor's point of view
may not coincide with the author's point of
view. All provided materials will not be returned or reviewed.



Contents

Issue Zero. 2018



Tea Masters Cup International 2018

Participants, categories, agenda, etc.

31



Tea Masters Cup Chronicles

France
Kazakhstan

62



Turning Hobby into Profession

Dmitriy Filimonov's Method

66

Tea Pilgrimage

Aliona Velichko's Adventures

70



Pairing Ideas. Tea and Sherry Wine

Olga Nikandrova
& Denis Shumakov's Experiments

78



Masters Talk: Going Green

Green tea habits of tea masters

85



Editor's Word

Olya Buhtz



MastersTalk magazine and related information projects are a platform for professional communication of people working with tea, coffee, wine, chocolate and other tasty things. All these people talk about different subjects — but in the same context.

This context is consumer culture and ways of productive interaction with it to everyone's (people as well as culture) delight. Most likely, tea will be given more attention in our magazine due to the close connection of MastersTalk with the Tea Masters Cup system of tea championships. We will write about TMC tournaments, their participants

and winners, how they use the experience of competitions and, naturally, about tea and tea culture.

Work with tastes is universal and eclectic. Barista, bartenders, sommeliers, chocolatiers, tea masters and other F&B professions never fix on one product or one culture. The exchange of tastes and information is absolutely necessary for professionals and appreciated by amateurs. These cross-cultural interactions are another key topic for MastersTalk.

But the most important cross-cultural exchange is the exchange of ideas — productive ideas that are interesting to develop independently. That is why we appreciate interviews so much. Because people know and can what neither books nor Internet can know or can do.

We will seek inspiration. And when we find it, we'll pass it on to our readers. And here again our authors (whom, in fact, we do not separate from our readers) will help us. After all, specialists are valued not only for recipes, tricks and regalia. Behind them there is a sincere and inspiring interest in their job.

We plan to publish the magazine twice a year. And in order to while away the time in the intervals between the issues, we will do masterstalk.online — a channel with professional and interesting tea (and not only tea) information.

Let's get together and talk!



Vietnamese Tea in Brief

Data and Figures

Vietnam is one of top 10 tea producing countries in the world. Annual tea production comprises 185,000 tons (2017), tea export volume is 145,000 tons (50% green and 50% black tea). Vietnamese tea are sold in 90 countries, leading buyers are Afghanistan, Taiwan and Indonesia.

Tea plantations area in Vietnam is around 130,000 ha. There are 7 tea regions in the country:

- The North Upland and Mountainous Region;
- The Red River Delta Region;
- The North Central Coast Region;
- The South Central Coast Region;
- The Central Highland Region;
- The South East Region;
- The Mekong River Delta Region.

There is also a wide range of suitable soil for tea cultivation including:

- Red brown soil on limestone (in northern mountainous areas) best for special tea;
- Yellow soil in clay schist (in the midland) best for commodity tea;
- Yellow brown soil on basalt (in the Central Highlands) best for Oolong tea.

34 tea planting provinces mostly situated in the North Upland and Mountainous Region. For example Thái Nguyên, Hà Giang, Yên Bái, etc. Mostly Vietnamese tea is named after provinces and villages they are grown in. 80% of Vietnamese tea is produced by small tea farmers (500,000 households).

Vietnam produces all types of tea: from green to post-fermented, from commodity to specialty level, pure and flavored. Famous local Vietnamese tea: Suối Giàng Ancient green and white tea;

- Trà Xà Ancient green tea (smoky old tea tree leaves);
- Thái Nguyên green tea (the most popular tea in Vietnam);
- Trà
- Trà
- Hà Giang red and white tea;
- Phú Thọ and Yên Bái black tea;
- Shu and Sheng puerh-style tea from Hà Giang and Dien Bien;
- Lotus tea.

The most popular tea within Vietnam is Thái Nguyên green tea.



VITAS

Vietnam Tea Association

Since 1988

112 members, 4 centers, newspaper.

Pushing forward the development of tea farmers, enterprises, businessmen, coordination between enterprises, promoting and supporting trading cooperation.

Running sustainable program for tea industry and work on WTO support, PPP projects between Government and local private sector.

Providing technical assistance for tea farmers and tea companies for developing standard (Organic, GAP, VietGap, RFA), tea safety, sustainable tea industry.

Organizing domestic and international tea promotion programs.

92 Vo Thi Sau street, Hanoi, Vietnam
tel: 844 625 0908, fax: 844 625 1801
vitas@fpt.vn, www.vitas.org.vn





Oolong Lam Dong

Vietnamese Oolong Tea
The Red River Delta Region



Basics of Vietnamese Tea Culture

Tea credit: Tran Thi Mong Kieu. Photo credit: Dinh Ngoc Dung

Indigenous way of making and drinking tea

The oldest way of preparing tea that exists in Vietnam till today is “nước chè tươi” (“nuoc che tuoi”, brewing fresh tea leaves). Families living in rural areas still have their very own tea trees in the garden. They pick fresh tea leaves, wash them, softly crinkle, stuff in a pot and boil. Such a “spontaneous tea” is very refreshing and invigorating.

Of course, this method of making tea tied down to tea trees and has no industrial prospects. And the fact that it has survived to the present day and now in Vietnamese villages you can easily try “nuoc che tuoi” is a true miracle.

Cultural influence

In the course of contacts with the Chinese for several years, Vietnamese people learned and



Basics of Vietnamese Tea Culture

practiced Chinese tea ceremony among people of ranks, status and alike.

Interactions with the European industrial approach created prerequisites for the development of Vietnam's own tea industry.

Creative development

Along with absorbing the Chinese art of tea, the Vietnamese also created their own way of enjoying the drink. Instead of using fragrant tea they used plain tea and fresh flowers on a tea session. They use heat to scent flower's fragrance into tea cups then pour green tea into it. Each participant has to

guess which flower has scented his cup. Five flowers used are Cuc (*Chrysanthemum*), Soi (*Chloranthus erectus*), Nhai (*Jasmine*), Sen (*Lotus*), Ngau (*Aglaia odorata*). Each session are limited to five people and each would have chance to taste all flavour though in different orders.

A Local Specialty

Vietnam has created a unique lotus tea, chè sen, a classic piece of gastronomic luxury. Difficult to produce, it requires a large amount of time and resources. In order to make a kilogram of high quality lotus tea, you need about 1000 lotus flowers.



Basics of Vietnamese Tea Culture

The most beautiful technology of lotus tea production is to place tea leaves directly in the lotus flowers for the night. But there are other technologies, such as mixing tea with lotus stamens and leaving them like that overnight or joint roasting of tea with stamens. All these procedures are repeated many times and determine the rarity and unique taste of Vietnamese lotus tea.

Festive and everyday life

No tea culture can be only expensive and rare. The basis of tea culture is its mass character, accessibility and integration into the daily and festive life of people. In Vietnam, tea is said to

appear in almost every social activities: from wedding, to anniversary and ritual ceremonies. Of course, tea in Vietnam is drunk at home, every day and for no specific reason, for example at breakfast. And each family may have their own tea secrets.

But the most striking part of the modern tea culture of Vietnam is public tea drinking. On the street tea is commonly sold in “quán cóc” (street vendors) which can easily be found near bus or train stations, schools, offices or even in some corners in quiet alleys. “Quán cóc” with hot or iced green tea is the key to understanding and developing Vietnamese consumer tea culture. In these small, simple and



Basics of Vietnamese Tea Culture

affordable tea vendors, you can have tea on the go or spend a few hours. It is here that centuries-old traditions, situational comfort and sprouts of future tea trends are combined.

Modern trends

The most interesting of these trends is the “quán cóc” called “trà chanh” (“tea with fresh lemon”). This is a new type of traditional “quán cóc” aimed at young people and having its own specialty — tea with lemon. This nuance peeps the traditional tea room up and instantly makes it fashionable, stylish and youthful, at the same time keeping it inexpensive and very loyal — there you can sit for

hours, without haste and hints that “a chair must produce a profit”.

Only a short time ago, Vietnam experienced a boom in milk tea. This drink is very popular now, but the milk tea market is not growing as rapidly as a couple of years ago. Back in 2017, one milk tea shop opened every four days in Vietnam with an annual growth rate of milk tea market being 20%.

Milk tea is a product of global drink-shop franchise projects, actively working with young people, with simple and easy-to-grasp tastes and bright advertising. And each such project brings its version of the drink to Vietnam. Taiwanese networks offer



Basics of Vietnamese Tea Culture

variations of Bubble Tea, networks from other regions have their own options.

Now this fashion is gradually fading out.

Well-developed consumer culture

Thus, even a quick glance at the Vietnamese tea culture is enough to notice its main features. Preserved traditions, eclecticism and flexibility, presence expensive and rare as well as mass and affordable tea products, and the constant emergence of new tea trends.

Acquaintance with such a tea culture is a real and very pleasant adventure.





Yen Bai Suoi Giang Snow Shan Tea

Vietnamese Green Tea
The North Upland
and Mountainous
Region





History and Tea in Huế

Ancient Capital

The exact date of the appearance of settlements on the site of modern Huế is unknown, but it can be said with confidence that as early as the 1st and 2nd centuries BC there existed a fairly large inhabited place. The city was constantly developing and finally, in 1802, Nguyễn Thế Tổ, the first emperor of the Nguyen dynasty, made Phú Xuân (the name of

Hue at that time) the capital of the state, which in 1804 became known as Vietnam.

Huế was the official capital of Vietnam until 1945. And forever became one of the cultural centers of the country.

Huế was the official capital of Vietnam until 1945. And forever became one of the cultural centers of the country.



Cultural Capital

In order to be impressed by the cultural significance of Huế, it is sufficient to have a look at the impressive list of its attractions, cultural phenomena and natural amenities.

Huong River (the Perfume River). The Complex of Hue Monuments (UNESCO World Heritage Site). The Citadel. Ao dài Vietnamese national costumes (by the way, Hue's signature purple color is the traditional color of Ao dài). Famous Vietnamese

conical hats. Court and folk music. Court dances for all occasions. Tuong Theater. Artistic craftwork and sculpture. Holidays and festivals. Martial arts. And even its own tradition of vegetarianism.

Speaking of the kitchen. In Huế more than 1000 recipes of local dishes have been preserved or restored — from folk to royal. Fresh food, careful preparation, attention to decorative appearance, small portions, exquisite table manners — all these make Hue the real gastronomic capital of Vietnam.



Tea Capital

A Vietnamese court tea ceremony originated and developed in Huế. A small tea table, set against the wall or carried out in the garden and set in accordance with the weather. A “tumbler-toy” kind of teapots and cups with weighted rounded bottom. Aromatic woods, flowers and herbs used in tea making and serving.

Not far from the Citadel of Huế there is a pond whose lotuses were used to prepare lotus tea

served to the emperor. From the lotus leaves from the same pond, it is still possible to collect rainwater for brewing a particularly exquisite tea.

The tea tradition of Huế is alive, accessible, evolving, and has retained complete authenticity. Tea-ware, tea, lotuses, the palace, taste and pleasure are all real in it. And in November 2018 the real world tea championship will be held in Huế.

See you at Tea Masters Cup International!

Tea Snacks in Vietnam

Light or sweet

The Vietnamese tea culture is also the culture of tea snacks. In Vietnam, they rarely use rich and savoury food with tea, preferring to serve tea together with light snacks and sweetmeats. It's best to begin acquaintance with these delicacies from learning four Vietnamese words, each of them will help you to attribute a particular tea snack to one of the three main types:

1. Kẹo (candy). If the name of the delicacy contains this word, then its main ingredient is sugar in any form (for example, in the form of caramel). Such delicacies are often quite hard and crunchy. And, of course, they are very sweet.

2. Bánh (pie). This word in the name of the delicacies means that they are made from rice, bean or cereal. They could be of two basic types: one of them is moist, fresh and chewy while the other one can have nutty sandy texture or else be quite hard. Such delicacies are usually less sweet than Kẹo.

3. Mứt (preserved goods). If you see this word in the name of the snack, it means that the delicacy is based on nuts and candied fruit and vegetables. They can also be sweet, but, as a rule, the emphasis is on the natural flavors of the products.

Hạt. This word denotes a special kind of Mứt — seed. Simply seed — sunflower, pumpkin or lotus seed, for example. It is an excellent and quite traditional tea snack.

Of course, nowadays almost all traditional Vietnamese delicacies are available at any time and in any quantity. However, in the past, some of these delicacies were prepared and consumed only special occasions. And the tradition to associate certain delicacies with certain holidays and events is carefully preserved in Vietnam.

For Middle-Moon Festival they serve several kinds of Bánh (mooncake, sticky rice mooncake, Bánh chả) and Mứt Sen. For Tet (Vietnamese New Year), Mứt Bí, Mứt Quất, Mứt Gừng, Mứt Cà Rốt, Hạt Bí, and Hạt Dưa are served. For Pre-Wedding Ceremony — Bánh Cốm, Bánh Phu Thê.

In Hue — which, as you might remember, is the gastronomic capital of Vietnam — has its own special tea snacks. They are: Mứt Sen, Mứt Gừng, Bánh Phu Thê, Kẹo Gừng, Mứt Bí, and many more goodies you better find out directly in the city, and not from the article.

Good hunting for us all!

Tea Snacks in Vietnam: light and sweet



Bánh Nướng
Mooncake



Kẹo Dồi. White candy tube,
tucked with sweeten roasted nut



Bánh Phu Thê
Husband & Wife cake



Kẹo Lạc
Peanut brittle



Mứt gừng
Dry candied ginger



Chè Lam. Rice powder,
cane juice, peanut and ginger sweet



Cốm
Young green sticky rice flake



Bánh Pía
Durian cake



Kẹo Cau
Areca nut sweet



Bánh Cốm
Young green sticky rice cake



Bánh Chả
Rolled pastry with mooncake filling



Bánh Gai
Gai leaf cake



© Tap de do



Hạt Hướng Dương
Sunflower seed



© Vankitchen

Kẹo Mè Xứng. Chewy jelly
with peanut and sesame seed



Bánh Đậu Xanh
Green mung bean sweet



Bánh Khảo. Sticky rice powder
and green mung bean paste



Bánh Dẻo
Sticky rice mooncake



Kẹo gừng
Ginger flavour candy



Mứt Bí
Candied Vietnamese green squash



© Jamjavn

Mứt Hạt Sen
Candied Lotus Seed



Bánh Cu Đơ. Whole peanut brittle
between thin rice cakes



Buzz Tea from a Tea Nerd

Cheryl Teo's Artwork



Cheryl Teo (Melbourne, Australia)

Telecommunications engineer, tea enthusiast and educator. The founder of Flag & Spear (www.flagandspear.com.au), a small business specializing in tea consultancy and education. Certified Tea Sommelier (Certified Tea Master Course with Australian Tea Masters), winner of the 2017 Tea Masters Cup Australia & New Zealand in Tea Preparation category.

One of the most interesting things in modern tea culture is cross-cultural projects. Therefore, the appearance of Cheryl among MastersTalk guests is completely natural. Now you will learn why.

What are your functions, duties, responsibilities at your job? or what skills and knowledges are required for your job?

My engineering job is complicated to explain, so I usually just tell people that I “build cool stuff”.

With regards to my tea business, I am a sole trader so my responsibilities are broad. These include accounting, marketing, securing new clients, event management and writing course materials. My focus is in tea and food/beverage pairing, so I often

Buzz Tea from a Tea Nerd

work with chefs or food/beverage specialists to create pairings and design events. The key skills required are a keen attention to detail, meticulous note taking and a love of learning and experimenting! Regular cupping to keep my palate “in shape” is also a must.

Why tea? Was there any turning point in your life when you decided to start a tea career?

This is a difficult question to answer because I don't remember a time in my life when I didn't love tea. I started collecting tea sets as a child, visited Yunnan as a teenager, and began investing in a library of tea books. My ‘career’ in tea started when I ran a series of tea appreciation classes to raise funds for a local charity and the opportunities only grew from there.

What were you doing this past year after your participation in Tea Masters Cup? any interesting tea-related activities you were involved into?

This past year has been a year of whisky and tea! I have been collaborating with a local whisky distillery on a number of projects. The two key project have been creating a whisky barrel-aged tea, and running a series of tea and whisky pairing master classes.

And more particularly, we'd like to ask you about your participation in the Old Barrel Tea project. Could you tell us a few words about the project itself and your part in it?



Buzz Tea from a Tea Nerd

Old Barrel Tea Co. is a collaboration between myself and two very good tea friends Kym Cooper (The Steepery) and Tania Stacey (Cuppa Cha). We aged an award winning Jin Xuan Oolong from Alishan, Taiwan in an ex-apera cask from Melbourne's Starward Whisky Distillery. The project was born out of curiosity and experimentation. My key roles in the collaboration was securing the partnership with the distillery and facilitating the tea selection process.

What were your expectations when you started?

The major focus for this project was to draw attention to quality specialty tea and make it relevant and approachable to a wider audience. We wanted to challenge ourselves to craft a product that tasted incredible whilst still respecting the skill and traditions of the original tea. We managed to retain some of the initial characteristics of the Jin Xuan and allowed new charms to be imparted by the cask.

How much time did you have to wait for the outcome?

We aged the tea in the barrel for 67 days.

What was the result? were you satisfied? what were the qualities the tea got from the ageing? Describe the tea in a couple of words. What way of brewing (recipe) would you recommend for this tea? Any food match?

Utilising the barrel-ageing process has been entirely experimental but we are so pleased with the result. The tea has developed a boozy whisky aroma, tropical fruit flavour and a thick mouth feel. The finish is long, with lingeringly sweet whisky notes.



Do you plan to continue this project?

We have potential plans to age other styles of tea in different barrel types.

Would you be willing to share your tea aspirations with us?

My main goal is to help grow the market for specialty tea in Australia and to encourage local tea businesses. I aim to do this mainly through ongoing collaborations and events.

Batch No.001 Jin Xuan recipe

- Find an ex-apera cask (a cask previously used for ageing Australian sherry-type wine), age Australian whisky in the cask and empty the cask.
- Take award winning Alishan Jin Xuan Oolong (Taiwan), put it into the cask. Wait 67 days.
- Release the tea from the cask. Brew the tea gongfu style (4 g, 100 ml, 95°C, three infusions).
- And in the end you'll receive a boozy whisky aroma, tropical fruit flavour, thick mouthfeel, and long finish with lingeringly sweet whisky notes. Enjoy!





Practice, Practice, Practice...

Sharyn Johnston's Principles

Sharyn Johnston (Geelong, Victoria, Australia)

CEO and Founder of Australian Tea Masters (www.australianteamasters.com.au) and CEO of Australian Tea Masters Wholesale and Blending company (with offices in Singapore, Indonesia and New Zealand). Member of the Tea Industry Committee of China. Current Head Judge of Tea Masters Cup International. Sheryn is one of the most sought-after and versatile specialists in modern tea culture. The story about her profession is a ready-made instruction for a tea novice.

What skills and knowledges are required for your job?

I was previously CEO of a large international company and worked in many different countries so these skills gave me the experience that I use today in my own business. My position meant that I had the opportunity to develop strong business management skills, human resource skills, training, marketing, sales skills, good market knowledge and patience and understanding of people and different cultures. I have to be a strong decision maker and often act quickly to solve problems and come up with solutions. It is important to have a good understanding of the business from the ground all



the way to the top and what is required for each position of the people who work with you. It is also important to have a strong knowledge of global tea trends, teas of the world and ingredients we use in blending such as herbs. Most of all, I think, patience and respect for others is paramount.

What tea education have you received?

Practice, Practice, Practice...

I have been lucky to receive my tea education from many types of Tea masters in their fields in different tea producing countries such as the tea farmers, tea manufacturers, leading tea judges, cultural tea masters, teas historians and many people associated with tea from the leaf to the cup. My international, cross-cultural training background gave me a great foundation to source and develop training material and whilst doing this it also became one of my best sources of education. We also wrote a book (the Course in Tea Sommelier handbook by Australian Tea Masters) which was nominated for one

of the top tea books and while researching for this book we developed so much additional knowledge. I love tea for the fact that you never stop learning.

We know that in your job you use a tea flavour wheel that is your own creation.

Yes, when I started in tea I realized that there was no flavour wheel for tea, there was one for wine, one for coffee but not one for tea. I decided that this was a necessity.

I love tea for the fact that you never stop learning

What is its application? The flavor wheel is used to help people associate and identify the flavours that are found in tea. Is it a professional tool or can regular tea drinkers also find the use of it?





Tea Flavour Wheel & Novice Guide

by Sharyn Johnston



EST. 2012

AUSTRALIAN TEA MASTERS
www.australianteamasters.com.au



For professional growth you will need: good skills in business management, human resources, training, marketing, sales; knowledge of the market and global tea trends; understanding business from the ground to the top, people and different culture; patience and respect.

To develop your flavour background: travel, try new foods and beverages, keep an open mind for the experience, be more conscious of what you are eating, practice, practice, practice every day.

Practice, Practice, Practice...

The tea wheel is designed to be used by professionals as well as by the tea novice. It is also designed to be used as a training tool to help people start to identify aromas and flavours across the six tea types. This tea wheel is now used by some major tea companies around the world and also has been translated into 7 different languages. It has been sent to over 15 different countries and

with the tea wheel to help train our brain and our senses. The aroma kit also took over two years of work

How did you select those flavors which are mentioned on the wheel? Are they common for all beverages and food?

The flavours on the tea wheel were identified as the most common across the six tea categories and it is mainly related to tea, although you could find



thousands of people globally. It has also been inserted into some leading tea books as a reference.

How much time were you working to create the wheel?

The tea wheel took two years of work and was sent out to many people for feedback before it was finalized.

We also developed an aroma training kit which contains 38 aromas and can be used in conjunction

these in other areas of beverages and food. We tried to make the tea wheel as universal as possible

Did you come across cross-cultural differences in flavour background in different people? Is it difficult to find equivalents in case of cross-cultural misunderstandings? For example, what would be an equivalent for lingonberry? ashberry? or cloudberry flavour?

For the amount of people in different countries that are now using the tea wheel we have not

Practice, Practice, Practice...

experienced many cross-cultural misunderstandings, as we tried to identify with the most common generalized flavours.

There are many types of different berries around the world and this can be difficult, so we can only suggest that people try the more common berries that are more universal to try and identify with the wheel, as it is impossible to insert all the berries available globally.

Could you please give a tip on how to start developing one's flavour background?

I always teach that we must see, smell, taste and say the flavour of a herb, fruit, spice vegetable, etc. and taste them individually. We must be more conscious of what we are eating and our surrounds and we must take time

“We should not be afraid to try flavours that are new to us and keep an open mind for the experience”

and practice, practice, practice every day, especially when we are starting out.

We must stop and think about the tea or food we are drinking or eating, and when we are sipping or chewing we should be mindful. We should smell

and taste many different types of foods and beverages and open our mind to the wonderful world of flavour. I am lucky that I travel so much and that I get to taste so many different flavours in food and in tea. Even though we may be serious tea drinkers we should also be mindful to experience things like specialty coffee, as there are many different flavour profiles in this beverage that can also be found in tea. We should not be afraid to try flavours that are new to us and keep an open mind for the experience. I try not to use

salt or sugar with my food and when judging always have a very clean palate, so I can ensure that I can experience the true characteristics of a tea.



The Craft of Connoisseurship

Ruben Luyten's Stratagems

Ruben Luyten (Mechelen, Belgium)

Author of sherrynotes.com and whiskynotes.be. Sherry.wine website guest blogger. Organizer of the first ever Sherry Twitter Tasting. Certified Sherry Educator. Ruben is an efficient connoisseur of whiskey and sherry. He turns his appreciation into successful information products and activities. We asked him a few questions about his work with drinks and, of course, we couldn't miss tea.

Ruben, what is your main occupation?

I have a degree in Art History / Musicology — it still interests me but it's a difficult area to work in. Now I'm in the applied arts, if you like: I have a small design business, mainly web-design.

How many years have you been working with sherry and whisky?

It has never been my job really. Ten years ago I became interested in Scotch whisky and since I was living in Spain at the time (away from my home country) I decided to start a blog with tasting notes, WhiskyNotes.be. It was a nice way of tracking my own explorations and getting in touch with the whisky scene at home. My love for sherry goes further back (almost twenty years now) and



obviously increased when living in Spain, especially since 2013 when I started my website SherryNotes.com. So that's at least 10-20 years of daily practice!

What education have you received in sherry and whisky?

All my whisky knowledge comes from reading books, visiting distilleries and trying lots of whisky (I

The Craft of Connoisseurship

have published tasting notes of around 3000 whiskies). The same goes for sherry, although I recently became a Certified Sherry Educator after entering the official training program in Jerez. I consider myself a dedicated aficionado rather than a professional. Keeping a certain distance to the industry allows me to be more critical as well.

Do you drink tea at all?



Yes, sure. I simply love to discover aromas and flavors, so I'm interested in anything from perfume to olive oil, cooking, herbs, spirits... Tea comes mostly through my wife who has a similar passion for tea as I have for spirits. She drinks tea all day long. I find it really interesting but I don't drink it every day.

How often do you drink tea?

Once a week or so. I will always try whatever is new in my wife's collection. Sadly we only have a handful

really good suppliers in Belgium.

When did you drink it last time?

A couple of days ago in a Michelin star restaurant, where they served a green tea paired to a dish with fish.

When do you drink tea, or in what surroundings?

Mostly at home.



What kind of tea do you prefer?

Different types really. I love old fermented Pu-Erh, but it's a complex drink and requires proper attention. I also like green Gyokuro or Taiping Houkui. And I love the subtle balance of a fine Pai Mu Tan. The last one I'd like to mention is a Hojicha Karigane which I really like as well.

Do you take tea with food or enjoy it on its own?

Normally I drink tea by itself, without food. It helps

The Craft of Connoisseurship

Sensory experiences
are information, apply IT to them.

A school is great for status, but self-
education is also an effective source
of knowledge.

Combine your knowledges and skills
(e.g. art history, web design
and whisky).

me appreciate it better. Last year though, I went to a tea tasting and each tea was accompanied with bits of food, so I know it certainly has the potential of being paired in an interesting way.

Are there any tea lovers around you (friends, relatives, etc.)?

My wife is certainly the biggest tea lover I know.

Is there a place for tea in your work? or are there any connections between tea and the beverages you work with?

There's often a hint of Pu-Erh in whisky, green tea, fruit teas, of course Lapsang Souchong in Islay whisky, etc. So if you read my whisky tasting notes, there will be a lot of references to tea. In sherry this is hardly the case.

How would you describe tea (any three epithets that first come to your mind)?

Aromatic, diverse and tradition.

What question about tea would you like to ask a tea expert?

I have once experimented with infusing tea into spirits. For instance the bergamot notes of Earl Grey work well with fruity Speyside whisky. In the end I found it hard to get the right balance. Do you have any tips or other interesting combinations to try?

*MastersTalk directed Ruben's question to **Cheryl Teo** (Flag & Spear and Old Barrel Tea projects), who has recently given a series of tea and whiskey pairing masterclasses in Australia.*

Cheryl Teo: I would recommend starting with a pure tea and adjusting leaf-to-spirit ratios and infusion times. It may be helpful to begin experimenting with a neutral base such as vodka to better understand the extraction behaviour of tea in spirits.

Some interesting combinations:

- Sencha + gin;
- High mountain Chinese black tea + Speyside whisky;
- Da Hong Pao + a whisky finished in a red wine cask;
- Jin Xuan Oolong + Starward Solera whisky.



Thai Nguyen

Vietnamese Green Tea

The North Upland and Mountainous Region





Tea Masters Cup Tea International 2018

Brew the future!



CUỘC THI NGHỆ NHÂN TRÀ THẾ GIỚI 2018

PHONG VỊ TƯỞNG LAI

Nov. 23–25. Thanh Noi Hotel, 57 Dang Dung, Huế City



Mr. Ramaz Chanturiya

Chairman of Tea Masters Cup

Dear Tea Professionals!

I cordially greet all the participants of the main tea event of this year — Tea Masters Cup International 2018!

Hospitable Vietnam and the most beautiful its part, the heart of the country — the city of Hue, meets the strongest tea masters from all over the world who came to create a real tea festival — full of creativity, energy and the fresh ideas. The celebration, which is able to enrich the world tea culture with a modern interpretation, pointing out the guidelines to which the global tea market will undoubtedly strive for.

In the coming days, the attention of the entire tea world will be riveted on the performances of the strongest tea masters. The championship should name the new world champions in such nominations as Tea Preparation, Tea Pairing, Tea Mixology and Tea Tasting. Obviously, all those who take part in competitions are worthy of victory, so the struggle for these titles will be tense. Masters should show their best skills and judges must be attentive and impartial. But doesn't matter who directly wins the final, everyone will still win, because Tea Masters Cup is not just a competition,



this is the place where the future for tea is created, where exactly this drink is always in the center, always in a win!

I wish everyone to take this opportunity and to share experiences between each other, to learn from different tea cultures and practices, and enjoy good tea!

Let's brew the future!



Mr. Trần Thanh Nam

Deputy Minister. Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development
of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam



On the occasion of Tea Masters Cup 2018 which will be held in Vietnam, on behalf of the Leader of Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, I would like to congratulate delegates, tea professionals and masters from all over the world coming to Vietnam.

Vietnam is one of the major tea producing countries with a long history of tea culture, tea products, tea varieties ranging from commodities to specialties

that can meet the demand of domestic as well as international markets. In recent years, pursuing of sustainable agriculture, Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development has especially focused on development of trademarks and promotion of Vietnam agricultural products, including tea.

The Tea Masters Cup International 2018 in Huế is a significant event which is not only contributing to the preservation of tea culture and traditions, enhancing the reputation and position of the Vietnamese tea industry but also an opportunity for international friends to understand more about Vietnam's history, culture and people.

Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development highly appreciate People Committee of Thua Thien Hue province and Vietnam Tea Association for their efforts to host the competition, and also expect them would continue to cooperate with tea businesses, local and central government agencies and Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development to actively promote trade and sustainable development of Vietnam Tea Industry.

Wish you all the best, and the great success of Tea Masters Cup International 2018!



Mr. Nguyen Huu Tai

Chairman of Vietnam Tea Association,
Main Sponsor of Tea Masters Cup International 2018,
Chairman of National Organizing Committee

Vietnam is one of very few countries in this world blessed with favorable agriculture condition for planting tea. Vietnamese people have been planting, producing, and consuming tea for ages. However, not everyone could prepare properly a cup of tea which could be served to the taste of themselves and others.

Tea Preparation is not only science but also art, to combine tea, water, tea preparing equipment and other kind of food to create both physical and mental value of tea drinking.

Tea preparation is the last stage of tea industry value chain which includes: planting, processing, contributing and consuming. It is elevated into an art in some countries, e.g. Japan, China and Korea.

In Vietnam, recently tea preparation has been becoming a formalized art and considered as a demand of tea consumers all over the country

Being aware that, the importance of tea preparation has greatly impacted on demand — supply relationship in tea market, Vietnam Tea Association has been hosting Tea Masters Cup national championship and sending the champion to take part in the Tea Masters Cup International for the last 3 years.



This year, we have taken a bold step — hosting Tea Masters Cup International in Vietnam, hoping that we can provide the platform for tea masters in the worlds to perform their talents, and the opportunity for tea lovers within this countries and outside the borders to unite in the thousands year-old Hue Imperial city to learn more about tea industry as well as the people and our beautiful country, via “Developing Agricultural and Culinary Tourism, Building Vietnam Tea Branding” Conference, the



Mr. Nguyen Huu Tai

Chairman of Vietnam Tea Association,
Main Sponsor of Tea Masters Cup International 2018,
Chairman of National Organizing Committee

Cup and the meeting among tea producers and contributor. Especially, we would love to provide the opportunity for domestic and international customers to enjoy the most famous type of Vietnam tea.

On behalf of Vietnam Tea Association, I would like to send our deepest thanks to Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, Ministry of Industry and Trade, The People Committee of Thua Thien Hue, local authorities as well as departments of tea-planting provinces for their support and attendance for Tea Masters Cup International 2018 to take place in our beloved Hue Imperial City.

I would like to thank our international guests, tea experts in Judges Panel and especially the tea masters of Vietnam and all over the world for your participation in the Cup.

I wish you all health, success in your career and happiness in life.

And I wish that Tea Masters Cup International 2018 in Vietnam will be hosted with success.

Thank you!





Ms. Nguyen Thi Anh Hong

Vice Chairwoman of Vietnam tea Association,
Director of Tea Master Cup Vietnam Organizing Board



Dear Distinguished Guests and Tea friends! I warmly welcome you all to Vietnam!

As the country accompanying with TMC since the very beginning, TMC Vietnam is happy to bring Tea Masters Cup International 2018 to Huế, Vietnam.

In the romantic atmosphere of the dreamy Huế, tea masters would have plenty of opportunities to make new tea friends, brew tea at the magnificent palace, and get to know the locals.

In this competition, many dessert specialties and premium tea of Vietnam would also be introduced which, I believe, would take you by surprised when tasting, trying and pairing them with your tea.

TMC Vietnam hopes that with such atmosphere, tea and people, TMC international 2018 will make an unforgettable impression with everybody and connecting Vietnam Tea to global tea Market.

And to me — a familiar person with many Tea Masters Cup championships, I am still very excited and cannot wait for your unique and creative performance, harmonizing Vietnam Tea with Huế special deserts.

Huế love you, Vietnam Tea love you and you will also love us.





TMCI 2018 Agenda

Huế, Vietnam, November 23–25, 2018

Nov. 22. Arrival Day

20:00. First meeting with all participants. Orientation meeting for Tea Preparation participants. Thanh Noi Hotel.

Nov. 23. Opening and Tea Preparation Day

8:00 – 9:00. Opening ceremony. Performance by Royal Dancing Crew, and Royal Court band. Huế Imperial City.

9:00 – 12:00. Forum “Development of Agriculture-Cuisine Tourism and Brand — building for Vietnam Tea Culture”.

9:00 – 12:00. Preparation time for Tea Preparation participants. Thanh Noi Hotel.

12:00 – 13:30. Lunch.

13:30 – 18:00. Tea Preparation Competition. Thanh Noi Hotel.

19:00 – 20:00. Dinner.

20:00. Orientation meeting for Tea Tasting and Tea Mixology participants. Thanh Noi Hotel.

Nov. 24. Tea Tasting and Tea Mixology Day

9:00 – 12:00. Tea Tasting Competition. Thanh Noi Hotel.

12:00 – 13:30. Lunch.

13:30 – 17:00. Tea Mixology Competition. Thanh Noi Hotel.

18:00 – 19:00. Dinner.

19:00 – 20:00. White Tea Party in Duyệt Thị Đường.

20:00. Orientation meeting for Tea Pairing participants. Thanh Noi Hotel.

Nov. 25. Tea Pairing and Awarding Day

9:00 – 13:00. Tea Pairing Competition.

13:00 – 14:30. Lunch.

17:00 – 20:00. Gala dinner, Award Ceremony.

Nov. 26. Tour Day

8:00 – 17:00. Huế Imperial City Tour, Lunch In Thien Mu Pagoda. Tea Tour in Tuan Bridge.

18:00 – 19:00. Dinner.

Nov. 27. Departure Day



Sponsor information

Đại Nam Ngự Trà

Finest Teas by Dai Nam Thai Y Vien

Vietnamese tea leaf, extracted from the oldest hundred- year-old tea trees in the world, has a unique flavor, which is the flavor of the origin, the flow of time and the proud of nation. Dai Nam Thai Y Vien's tea collection, selected from the most elite tea buds of Vietnam brings harmonized integration of traditional royal flavors, and also respected by tea lovers.

Dai Nam Imperial Medicine Institute

Dai Nam Imperial Medicine Institute offers a relaxed, tranquil environment, brings people back to their roots, turn back time and feel the traditional values of culture, rustic but delicate.



Medical Essential Oils by Dai Nam Thai Y Vien

Three types of essential oils by Dai Nam Thai Y Vien are completely refined from natural ingredients, with effective usages in daily life such as pain relief, bone joint, flu and cold treatment.

Đại Nam Royal Medicine Institute

Based on the context of the reconstruction of the Thai Y Vien (Royal Medicine Institute), Nguyen dynasty with royal traditional phytotherapy, medicine and therapies, Dai Nam Thai Y Vien brings the traditional culture values to modern life.



+84 909558355, www.dainamthaiyvien.vn, www.facebook.com/dainamthaiyvien/
23 Ke Trai, Phu Binh Ward, Hue, Vietnam



Tea Masters Cup Tea Preparation

Pure tea competition. Category concept

15 minutes

for the performance. Master brews, serves to each judge and presents two teas: Organizers' Tea and Master's Tea.

Organizers' Tea

The Organizer gives the same set of teas to each Master before competition. The Organizer can set additional requirements for brewing and serving Organizers' Tea. It may be style of brewing or serving, type of tea ware etc.

Each Master chooses one tea, which he or she brews, serves and presents during performance in compliance with additional requirements (if there are any).

This part of performance allows judges to appreciate how well the Master can improvise with any tea in any conditions.

Master's Tea

Each Master brews, serves and presents during performance his or her own tea. It may be any tea from any source and this tea may be brewed and served in any style and technique.

This part of performance allows judges to appreciate how well the Master make tasty tea and interesting performance with well known tea and tea-ware.

Scoring Criteria

Brewing and serving technique, presentation, aroma, taste, aftertaste.

Only pure tea. Only *Caméllia sinénsis*.

No additives! Tea, water, tea-ware and skills only.





Tea Preparation 2017 Winners

Enshi, China, September 25, 2017



First place

Dmitriy Filimonov

Ukraine

Organizers' Tea: Yuntoushan He Black Tea (Hubei, China). Glass teapot, porcelain cups, traditional brewing.

Master's Tea: Darjeeling Goomtee Muscatel Valley FF 2017 (India). Cascade brewing in 3-level glass drip system, porcelain cups.



Second place

Andrei Ivanov

Latvia

Organizers' Tea: Yuntoushan He Black Tea (Hubei, China). Glass teapot, porcelain cups, traditional brewing.

Master's Tea: Dayulin Oolong and Lishan Oolong (Taiwan) self made blend. Handmade ceramic teapot, handmade ceramic cups, traditional brewing.



Third place

Alissiiia Daineko

Russia

Organizers' Tea: Enshi Jade Dew Green Tea (Hubei, China). Glass teapot, porcelain cups, traditional brewing.

Master's Tea: Shinchu Green Tea (Uji, Japan). Porcelain teapot, small porcelain bowls, traditional brewing.



Huế, Vietnam
November 23, 2018

Tea Preparation Participants



 Turkey
**Gülhanım
Delihasan**



 South Korea
**Hakyung
Lee**



 Australia
**Mary Jane
Hua**



 UAE
**Ricardo Brian
Dekker**



 Vietnam
**Linh
Nguyen**



 China
**Shili
Chen**




 Latvia
**Viviana
Petrovskā**



 France
**Léonard
Ploton**



 Russia
**Polina
Sagara**



 Ukraine
**Anton
Kvitka**



Tea Masters Cup Tea Pairing

Gastronomic tea competition. Category concept

15 minutes

for the performance. Master presents and serves to each judge two tea and food pairings: Organizers' Composition and Master's Composition.

Organizers' Composition

The Organizer gives the same set of teas, food and tea-ware to each Master as well as sets requirements for serving Organizers' Composition before the competition.

Each Master prepares their composition based on tea and food from the Organizer's set and serves it during their performance.

This part of performance allows judges to appreciate how well the Master can improvise with any tea and any foods.

Master's Composition

Each Master prepares, serves and presents their own tea and food composition. It may be any composition served in any style.

This part of performance allows judges to appreciate how well the Master makes tea and food pairing with known ingredients.

Scoring Criteria

Neatness and Cleanliness, Appeal, Presentation, Taste, Potential.

The beverages must contain tea (*Caméllia sinénsis*). Additives to tea are allowed. The food part of the composition can't be added into the beverage.





Tea Pairing 2017 Winners

Enshi, China, September 26, 2017



First place

Andrei Ivanov

Latvia

Organizers' Composition: Black Needle Tea Special Grade (Hubei, China) + skinless red grape in light sugar syrup, filled with pineapple-simmered almond and served with shelled macadamia (as a decoration).

Master's Composition: Meng Hai Sheng Puerh Tea (China, 2008) + mandarin, chili-pepper, ginger and honey dainty and pine-oiled stone as an aromatic element.



Second place

Dorothy Chan

Australia

Organizers' Composition: Cold brewed Black Needle Tea Special Grade (Hubei, China) + pineapple in black tea and red sugar caramel, macadamia 'sand' and red grape slivers, served in macadamia shell.

Master's Composition: Sheng Puerh Tea (2 y.o., Yunnan, China) + peach, honey and white pepper ball with black sesame, atop chestnut cream, garnished with fresh thin apple cone, tea-soaked lotus root and pomegranate.



Third place

Dave Lim

Singapore

Organizers' Composition: Tangya White and Fragrant Green Tea (Hubei, China) + rice and poppy bonbon.

Master's Composition: siphonized Anxi Tieguanyin (China) + dark chocolate bonbon with Tieguanyin ganache and pineapple-passion fruit jam + white chocolate bonbon with matcha and salted duck egg ganache.



Huế, Vietnam
November 25, 2018

Tea Pairing 2018 Participants



Vietnam

**Linh
Nguyen**



China

**Liang
Xu**



Belarus

**Elena
Homich**



Kazakhstan

**Nurken
Akhanov**



France

**Florian
Aumaire**



Sri Lanka

**Panchali
Mandakini**



Latvia

**Viviana
Petrovsk**



Czech Republic

**Jakub
Ryšavy**



Russia

**Ekaterina
Sokolova**



South Korea

**Minhee
Kang**



Tea Masters Cup Tea Mixology

Tea-based mix competition. Category concept

15 minutes

for the performance. Master mixes, presents and serves to each judge two tea-based mixes: Organizers' Mix and Master's Mix.

Organizers' Mix

The Organizer gives the same set of teas and any other ingredients to each Master as well as sets requirements for serving Organizers' Mix before the competition.

Each Master prepares their tea-based mix from the Organizer's set and serves it during their performance.

This part of performance allows judges to appreciate how well the Master can improvise with any tea and any components.

Master's Mix

Each Master prepares, serves and presents their own tea-based mix. It may be any mix made with any legal components.

This part of performance allows judges to appreciate how well the Master mixes known ingredients.

Scoring Criteria

Technique, Appeal, Organoleptic Qualities, Presentation, Tea Synergy, Potential.

**The mixes must contain tea (*Caméllia sinénsis*).
Flavored tea is allowed. No ingredient can be served
outside of a glass/cup/bowl.**





Tea Mixology 2017 Winners

Enshi, China, September 27, 2017



First place

Katerina Vymazalova

Czech Republic

Organizers' Mix: Luxury Green Needle Tea (Hubei, China) + mango juice + orange and lemon juice + egg white.

Master's Mix: Sencha Kirishima Asanoka Green Tea + banana juice + lemon juice + honey water.



Second place

Valerio Vitiello

Italy

Organizers' Mix: Tangya White Tea + Luxury Green Needle Tea (Hubei, China) sipfonized in pineapple water + honey + lemon juice.

Master's Mix (Throwing): Earl Grey Tea + rooibos + Bombay gin + Saint Germain liqueur + cardamom bitter + lime juice + Oleo saccharum of chinese oak.



Third place

Tatyana Filimonova

Russia

Organizers' Mix: Tangya White Tea (Hubei, China) and sugar syrup + strong Tangya White Tea + watermelon and pineapple fresh + ice + caramelized pineapple.


Master's Mix: milk-brewed broken Da Hong Pao with Bergenia + cedar nut milk + white chocolate + cedar cone.



Tea Mixology 2018 Participants

Huế, Vietnam, November 24, 2018



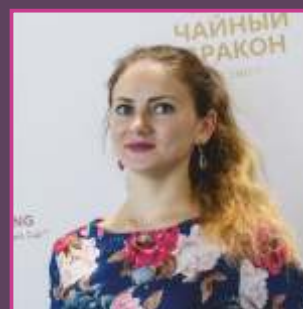
 Italy
**Luca
Roatta**




 Singapore
**Clarkson
Lew**




 Latvia
**Mingaile
Kola**



 Russia
**Natalia
Prokhorenko**



 Vietnam
**Dai
Nguyen**



 Sri Lanka
**Yasarathna
Bandara**



 Belarus
**Evgeniy
Rogov**



Tea Masters Cup Tea Tasting

Gustatory memory competition. Category concept

Two 10+5-minute sub-categories

Masters strive to recognize pure teas and additives to teas in two sub-categories:

Pure Tea

Masters taste and memorize 10 samples of pure tea in the first 10-minute round and try to recognize 5 of them in the second 5-minute round.

Multi-Ingredient Beverage

Masters taste and memorize one tea and 9 additives (herbs, spices, etc.) brewed separately in the first 10-minute round and try to recognize 3 of them brewed together with the tea in the second 5-minute round.

Formula One System

The rank of each Master in each sub-category is determined according to the number of tea samples (in Pure Tea) and additives (in Multi-Ingredient Beverage) identified correctly by the Master. If two or more Masters have correctly identified the same number of tea samples or additives, Masters who have completed their tasting earlier receive a higher rank. Masters are assigned points for their ranks in sub-categories according to the following schema.

Rank	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	...
Points	25	18	15	12	10	8	6	4	2	1	0

Final Score = points for the Pure Tea category + points for the Multi-Ingredient Beverage category + the number of correctly identified tea samples + the number of correctly identified ingredients.





Tea Tasting 2017 Winners

Enshi, China, September 27, 2017



First place

Jakub Ryšavy

Czech Republic

In Pure Tea tasting: 4 out of 5 correct answers, 1st position.

In Multi-component tasting: 1 out of 3 correct answers, 6th position.



Second place

Andrei Ivanov

Latvia

In Pure Tea tasting: 1 out of 5 correct answers, 7th position.

In Multi-component tasting: 2 out of 3 correct answers, 1st position.



Third place

Dmitriy Filimonov

Ukraine

In Pure Tea tasting: 3 out of 5 correct answers, 2nd position.

In Multi-component tasting: 1 out of 3 correct answers, 4th position.

Teas for Pure tea tasting. Teas and components used in the control tasting are in bold

Enshi Jade Dew Green Tea
Chunqiao Fuzz Tip Green Tea
Huazhi Fragrant Green Tea
Zhenmei 41022 Green Tea
Zhenmei 9371 Green Tea

Luxury Green Needle Green Tea
Precious Green Needle Green Tea
Organic Gunpowder Green Tea
Organic Wulv Green Tea
Yuntoushan He Black Tea

Components for Multi-component tasting

Chrysanthemum	Jujuba
Honeysuckle	Peach Blossom
Rose Petals	Lycium
Burdock Root	Verbena
Longan Pulp	Tie Guanyin Tea



Tea Tasting 2018 Participants

Huế, Vietnam, November 24, 2018



 Latvia
**Elina
Lotko**



 Russia
**Nikolay
Dolgiy**



 Vietnam
**Xuan
Tong**



 Kazakhstan
**Nurken
Akhanov**



 Ukraine
**Yurii
Zhyveha**



 South Korea
**Kyungrak
Lee**



TMCI 2018 Judges

Huế, Vietnam
November 23–25, 2018



Australia

Sharyn Johnston
Head Judge



Vietnam

**Nguyen Thi
Anh Hong**



Vietnam

**Phan
Thanh Hai**



South Korea

**William R.
Lee**



Russia

**David
Chanturiya**



Italy

**Gabriella
Lombardi**



Sri Lanka

**Anil
Cooke**



Italy

**Nicoletta
Tul**



Latvia

**Andrei
Ivanov**



Russia

**Denis
Shumakov**

Scoring Form. Tea Preparation

Judge for yourself!

Competitor #	Organizers' Tea		Master's Tea	
Competitor Name	Notes to remember		Notes to remember	
	Notes and scores (1 to 10 in 1-pt. increments)			
Brewing Technique and Serving Manner Suitability of the technique to the chosen tea, rationality and confidence during performance, neatness of service, convenience of degustation	+		+	
	—		—	
Presentation Reasons behind choosing the sample, knowledge of tea, description of the brewing process, accuracy of predicting taste, aroma and aftertaste of tea, artistry and visual appeal of performance	+		+	
	—		—	
Aroma Purity, conformance of aroma to predictions and expectations, subjective evaluation of aroma	+		+	
	—		—	
Taste Complexity, balance, conformance of taste to predictions and expectations, subjective evaluation of taste	+		+	
	—		—	
Aftertaste Definability of aftertaste, conformance of aftertaste to predictions and expectations, subjective evaluation of aftertaste	+		+	
	—		—	

Scoring Form. Tea Pairing

Judge for yourself!

Competitor #	Organizers' Composition		Master's Composition	
Competitor Name	Notes to remember		Notes to remember	
	Notes and scores (1 to 10 in 1-pt. increments)			
Neatness and Cleanliness Neatness and cleanliness during performance, neatness in presentation, convenience and safety of composition for degustation	+		+	
	-		-	
Appeal Conceptual and visual appeal of composition, gastronomical intrigue of composition, overall attractiveness of composition	+		+	
	-		-	
Presentation Knowledge of components, accuracy of predicting taste, grasp of potential uses and variants of composition, artistry and appeal of performance	+		+	
	-		-	
Taste Evolution of taste and/or emergence of new taste, conformance of taste to predictions and expectations, subjective evaluation of taste	+	Doubled in total score	+	Doubled in total score
	-		-	
Potential Reproducibility of composition, conceptual development potential, commercial development potential	+		+	
	-		-	

Scoring Form. Tea Mixology

Judge for yourself!

Competitor #	Organizers' Mix		Master's Mix	
Competitor Name	Notes to remember		Notes to remember	
	Notes and scores (1 to 10 in 1-pt. increments)			
Technique Preparation and presentation technique, rationality and confidence during performance, cleanliness, neatness of service, convenience of degustation	+		+	
	—		—	
Appeal Conceptual and visual appeal of beverage, intrigue of beverage, overall attractiveness of beverage	+		+	
	—		—	
Presentation Knowledge of components and accuracy of predicting taste of beverage, grasp of potential uses and variants of beverage, artistry and visual appeal of performance	+		+	
	—		—	
Organoleptic Qualities Distinctness of each component in the final taste of the beverage, conformance of taste and aroma to predictions and expectations, subjective evaluation of taste and aroma	+	Doubled in total score	+	Doubled in total score
	—		—	
Tea Synergy Prominence of tea in the beverage, degree of synergy between tea and other components	+		+	
	—		—	
Potential Reproducibility of beverage, conceptual development potential, commercial development potential	+		+	
	—		—	



Tea Masters Cup Tea International 2018

Brew the future!



CUỘC THI NGHỆ NHÂN TRÀ THẾ GIỚI 2018

PHONG VỊ TƯỞNG LAI

Nov. 23–25. Thanh Noi Hotel, 57 Dang Dung, Huế City





Tea Masters Cup Kazakhstan

August 23, Almaty. Tea Pairing and Tea Tasting

This year, Kazakhstan has joined Tea Masters Cup International. On August 23, the first Kazakhstan tournament in two categories, Tea Pairing and Tea Tasting, was held at the Ramada Hotel in Almaty. The national qualifying round was held under the working title *“Indian tea and Kazakh gastronomic specialties”*.

The work of the judges was not easy, each of the participants amazed them by high proficiency in the work with tea. Nevertheless, the winner was determined — *Nurken Akhanov* was recognized as the best. The slogan of his participation was *“Taking the risk you can lose, but without taking the risk you will never win”*. He took the risk and won — in both categories at once.

The general sponsor of the championship was the Tea Board of India. Representatives of 20 tea companies from India took part in the events accompanying the tournament.







Tea Masters Cup France

September 23–24, Paris. Tea Preparation and Tea Pairing

First Tea Masters Cup France was held on 23–24 September 2018 at one of the most gastronomic event of the year — *Salon Gourmet Sélection*. The theme of two categories, Tea Preparation and Tea Pairing, was “*Terroir et Saison*”, which means the union of regional products and culture together with wealth of the season.

All first participants of the championship brilliantly managed the subject and presented their creative ideas to the judges. The best were *Léonard Ploton* in Tea Preparation and *Florian Aumaire* in Tea Pairing who will represent France at TMCI 2018. The championship in France had a great positive feedback and attracted a lot of interest to the project. And of course this first edition wouldn't have been possible without support of two leaders of tea market: *Riviera & Bar* and *Brita* who provided excellent equipment and perfect water for brewing best tea in France.





Turning Hobby into Profession

Dmitriy Filimonov's Method

Dmitriy Filimonov (Kyiv, Ukraine)

Head of tea department in Goodwine company (www.goodwine.ua). Winner of Tea Masters Cup International 2017 in Enshi, China (First in Tea Preparation, Third in Tea Tasting).

We were eager to hear Dmitriy's story for two reasons. First, he is engaged in tea in a non-tea company. Secondly, he has a very interesting and instructive professional tea experience.

How many years are you in tea business?

2 years ago I started to work in tea industry as a head of tea department in Goodwine company. Before that I was a fanatic tea lover for almost 10 years.

Have you received any tea education?

Initially all my knowledge was obtained from different tea articles and forums. Then I started to travel to tea regions visiting tea estates, speaking with different people of tea industry, reading books. So I can say my tea education was obtained piece by piece and it's still ongoing process that I hope will never end.



You can give up everything and take a tea job, and not necessarily it will be a tea company.

Classic teas have a high innovative capacity.

Turning Hobby into Profession

Why tea?

It's very difficult to find any other product which can be so different, which can give this large spectrum of aroma, tastes and forms. It's a never ending story.



Was there any turning point in your life when you decided to start a tea career?

One late night I was checking my Instagram after some long working day. And I found that Goodwine company was looking for a man to head a tea direction, and I thought — this should be me! I already had a vision of what I am going to do and I

had no doubts. So I left my IT work and started a complete new type of business.

You are working at a wine company, what are you doing there?

Goodwine started as a wine importer but now we are mostly about organic, healthy products and delicatessen all over the world. My goal here is to bring good teas from all over the world to Ukrainian people, talk about teas and help people discover and enjoy teas.

What are your functions, duties, responsibilities?

I have a very wide range of duties. I am searching for suppliers, choosing the assortment, controlling the quality, doing tea marketing, searching for new sales channels, organizing tea tastings events and sometimes even packing the tea for our customers.

What skill and knowledge are required for your job?

I think you need to be passionate in what you do, you need to be a little bit of a nerd, a little bit of a revolutionary, and of course a little bit of an entrepreneur.

With the multi-facet profile of your company, what do you drink besides tea? Do you have any favourite alcoholic beverages?

It's strange, but when I have started to work in Goodwine, I almost stopped drinking wine. It was



Turning Hobby into Profession



hard for me to pair tea with dry wine. But instead I opened for myself a whole new world of sweet and fortified wines, which were perfect with different teas. I like Italian sweet Passito wine, French Sauternes and dry Sherry from Spain — the last one I find extremely gastronomic. And of course whisky, its perfect for the Ukrainian autumn. I like oily and waxy textures of whisky, which is mostly about Highland. Clynelish is my favourite distillery.

Have there been any changes in your work since 2017 when you won Tea Masters Cup International competition in Enshi?

I guess the most important benefit is that it gave more weight and importance for things I do. I went almost to all TV channels in Ukraine, got lot of interviews, this all let me bring my tea ideas to a very large auditory. And also made my Mom happy.

What were you doing this past year?

I did lot of public tea tastings, gave lots of interviews to different medias, have visited different tea regions (Vietnam, Kangra Valley, Georgia) and brought beautiful Vietnam specialty tea to Ukraine. I was invited to participate in Tea Masters Cup as an international judge in Hanoi (Vietnam) and Riga (Latvia) and had a wonderful time there with my friends.

Would you be willing to share with us your tea aspirations, plans for the future?

Turning Hobby into Profession



I want to bring more different specialty teas into Ukraine at a fair price and also some new tea projects are coming, I hope soon you will hear about it.

Getting back to your winning performance in Enshi, could you please, describe your novel method of tea brewing?

This is the method that I am really proud of. It gives the possibility to control the extraction profile for each tea. Sometimes you want the tea to be more intense and heavy, sometimes you want the tea to be more light and aromatic, but what if you want the tea to be heavy and light at the same time? I think this is the point where this method works fine.

Basically you put the same tea at 3 different glass bulbs and brew each tea consecutively with the same water. Each time you pour the water to the next bulb it cools down for 8-10 degrees. So at the end you have same tea brewed with 3 different temperatures.

Has your idea gain widespread adoption?

There are a few tea stores that used it in their tastings.

What tea would you recommend your system for?

The method was initially created for Darjeeling first flush teas, but it works good with light oolongs and even with some tender teas like Sencha.



Tea Pilgrimage

Aliona Velichko's Adventures

Aliona Velichko (Minsk, Belarus)

Aliona has been studying tea culture for 14 years. Tea ceremonies, tea education and also tea travel. She calls herself a tea pilgrim — a person who travels across tea countries to study tea culture there. And she doesn't do this alone — always taking a company with her. Five years of travelling with groups to different tea countries. What wind of inspiration is she driven with and what ground is she standing on? Let's investigate together.

Aliona, what tea countries have you visited in a recent couple of years?

Starting with 2012 when I had my first tea trip, I have been to many tea countries, but I guess embracing only a little part of the whole tea world that exists. Let me count: China, India, Turkey, Korea, Georgia, Sri-Lanka. Seems like 6, but some of them I have visited several times, so it seems like a long never-ending journey.

Tell us more about how you got to the countries and were you alone or with the groups? Have you been a guide or a participant?

My very first trip started for me as a co-organiser of a trip with a woman who wanted to make a tea trip



and had a contact person in China but she knew nothing about tea and didn't know how to find the right people for the trip. So we organised it together, and this very step gave me confidence that such things are possible. Then I organised myself small tea groups to China to different provinces 4 times, once a year, every autumn.

Tea Pilgrimage

Every spring, for 4 years already, I have also organised tea trips to tea regions of India. It all started with my studying tea tasting in Bangalore, where I made friends and wanted to see them again when my studies were over. So that gave me an impulse to start making trips to India, arranging the programme and learning more about Indian tea. We covered Assam and Darjeeling areas as well as very historical places and cities. And this year, I made the first trial of Georgia and Turkey tea trip which was amazing.

Being in a team of international tea masters, I take part in annual Tea Masters Cup International events

which happen in different tea producing countries. Local organisers make terrific cultural tea programmes. This is how I discovered Turkey tea world and Korean one.

What were the most impressive things you saw there?

There are so many of them — big and small butterflies of memories. First of all the tea plantations you drink tea at and all the tea people you meet. Waking up in a small hut of tea workers at a Darjeeling plantation and when you go out you see beautiful a sunrise over tea fields which are more than hundred years old and you sit, brew tea that was just made and try to absorb, as clear as possible, this precious moment — the sounds of



Tea Pilgrimage

awakening village, the beauty of sky and mountains, the taste of tea... Or sitting with a cup of tea somewhere in the mountains of Arunachal Pradesh and talking about life philosophy with a local sage who used to be a criminal but then changed his way of life completely. And he says: “Aliona-ma, you travellers are like water — you go to every single little place because water can reach anywhere and you collect stories and then should bring them somewhere further”. Once we arrived to a wild, wild mountain place of Darjeeling where I

*Travelling
is always a bit
about hunting
for your
experience...*


had never been before but my friend booked this place for us and I trusted her a lot. When we landed at a small camp with three houses with not a single soul around at a long distance, only mountains, the owner of the place shakes my hand, looks in my eyes and says that he has just been released from jail, so we were lucky to find him there. You can imagine the situation — our small group, mountains and the owner who has just come from prison. But then he explained that it was due to political reasons and he turned to be an extraordinary big soul and heart who told us many stories of his region that he passionately loved and



Tea Pilgrimage

walked with us in the mountains even though he had a fever. And then wrote us a beautiful poem in the end in the style of Robert Burns... People, people I can talk about them endlessly).

I remember we were in Guangdong province making tea, going through the whole process of making Dan Cong tea with a very famous master of that place. The process took us all evening, half night and then first half of the day and at each single step the master took sample of the leaves and brew it to check how the process

*...Tea journeys
are always
meeting with
the culture of
the country* 

goes and we had to try it with him and then go and shuffle leaves every 1,5 hours — oh, we understood how much efforts are put into making good tea!

And then they gave us as present the tea we made

and this was the most precious tea I have ever drunk. These are the most valuable moments when on a tea journey you are allowed and honoured to join the process and go through it with tea people and they explain you every single step.

Memorable moments can be different. Once we were driving in the mountains a bit off the schedule and were late for the scheduled place so decided to make a turn and find



Tea Pilgrimage

a hotel somewhere on the way. It was raining heavily in the mountains and it was very late but we had a very good driver so I was very confident about him but one lady wasn't — she had panic attack and asked to stop the car and leave her in the mountains. Of course we couldn't stop and leave her so we had to manage the situation, tried to calm her down and be firm in decision for the sake of the group to continue moving otherwise we all would not find place to sleep. It turned out she had the phobia — height phobia and we didn't know about it. These are the things people should tell before. But everything ended up well — we reached the city, found a hotel after some time and she was fine.

Or, in Batumi, I remember we tried to find a good local Russian speaking guide the whole day and we found Turkish speaking and Georgian speaking guides, but none could speak good Russian. One girl began her guiding tour with a piece of paper from which she started reading: “Batumi has Black sea...” We turned her down, but finally we found the best guide of the city in the street by chance and fell in love with her and spent 3 hours following her like puppies. Travelling is always a bit about hunting for your experience, making choices.

Tea journeys are always meeting with the culture of the country and so many beautiful stories about meeting monks in buddhist monasteries or celebrating new year in Assam or wedding in

Kerala... Sometimes, when I look back, I am surprised at how it was possible to embrace all this and I am grateful to my heart and hearts of my groups to join me in these journeys.

How much time is required to prepare your tea journey?

It depends. Usually we start preparing 2-3 months before, making small steps from both sides — I give an announcement and start collecting the group, think over the frames, make the plan and then negotiate with my partner — the person on the other side who guides us and is a local expert, my connection to the place. I always have the partner



Tea Pilgrimage

— the local person I trust who accompanies us all the way or half of the way and this is very important to have a local guide friend. This gives more reliability for the journey. We negotiate many things — the detailed programme, the price, how to make it most effective and interesting. It is not that I hire the person but we make a common project. And I am very grateful to all people who guided us on trips. And what makes us special — we are very

I find it most comfortable to travel in a group of four people — good to share the car and rooms

flexible both in planning and also during the trip if something doesn't work and we have no time we adapt, we listen, we improvise.

What is an optimal number of people participating in such a journey?

I find it most comfortable to travel in a group of 4 people — good to share the car and rooms). Usually the number of people in my groups is 4-7 people. Maximum was in India — around 14. Most of these people are the people I know beforehand, half of them was after my tea classes. I realise, it is much better to travel with those people who you know, as

personal contact is important and trust also. Once, one tea company whose owner I know asked me what if I can take some of their best employees with me on a trip — it was like a bonus trip for them and it was an unforgettable experience with many interesting stories and I liked this experience. Of course, it is about trust from both sides and sometimes I wonder how people can be so risky) But am I not like this myself? All trips are always adventures and leaving safe places in search for something more important.

Could you describe “post-productiveness” of tea trips, their practical benefits, like new tea events you can organise afterwards, new tea assortment of tea shops, etc.



Tea Pilgrimage

Actually I didn't analyse it much. As people go on such trips for pleasure and they are not aimed at buying a lot of tea and developing tea business so people just enjoy, learn about country and tea, and themselves, spread the story of tea leaves, stop drinking tea bags and get rid of many stereotypes connected with tea and countries they travel.

What do tea travels give you?

They give me joy, inspiration and the main thing — stories about people, tea, and country. Afterwards, I can spread them, share more tea and knowledge about tea. I also can bring tea that people have never tried before. For example, the very rare Syngpho Phalap tea that is made by a small village in Assam — smoked pressed Indian tea, the most ancient one ever made in India, even before the British — you can find it only when you go there. After being there, we made several workshops about this tea in different tea events to spread the knowledge and the story of Indian tea. I also write articles about some trips and places in such way sharing the experience. These trips fill me with inspiration, widens my horizons about the world, tea, people, this is the experience I find the most precious.

Could you share with us your tea traveling plans?

I have just come from China, Hubei province and now getting ready for TMC International in Vietnam

and what will new year bring we will see — I always observe how the circumstances are shaped. So far, I have some plans for April, but don't know whether it will be China or India.







Pairing Ideas. Tea and Sherry Wine

Olga Nikandrova & Denis Shumakov's Experiments

In case of sherry, food-and-drink pairing can be transformed into drink-and-drink pairing and extended to food-and-drink-and-drink pairing.

Let's start with drink-and-drink version. Combining black tea with sweet sherry is a rather obvious idea which may be applied not only to sherry. Many other sweet wines can match black tea on the same principle as jams, confitures, dried fruit and other

traditional tea snacks do. This principle — “wash down something sweet with something warm” — is simple and good; varying teas and sherries you can get a rich range of combinations, from common to exquisite ones.

But a simple combination of “sherry + tea” did not reveal the potential of gourmet tea and sherry compositions in full, even when using the choicest







Pairing Ideas. Tea and Sherry Wine

teas and best sherries. The composition should be more complicated (attention! here we start moving to food-and-drink-and-drink pairing). For starters, an obvious way may be used — adding a snack which would match both tea and sweet sherry.

Nuts may be a simple variant of such snacks — almonds, hazelnuts, pecans and others. We settled on macadamia added to the composition of Pedro Ximénez and Taiwanese Ruby Black Tea. It was light, dainty, neat, smooth and cozy — a good composition for quiet evening reflections.

If you want to make the tea-sherry-nut theme more festive, it is enough to turn to the side rarely addressed to in food-and-wine pairing — Turkey.

Very strong Turkish black tea in a traditional bardak-glass, Lebanese sweets (mainly with honey and pistachios) and any rich sweet sherry will make a composition with outstanding visual properties and fantastic taste, which reveals all nuances of sweetness. For this composition to work perfectly, you need to first taste some snacks, then make an immediate sip of sherry, and after a short while chase it with a bit of tea. Turkish tea with its uncompromising roughness and dryish bitterness will work as a drink, fostering subtlety of perception — after making a sip of it you can repeat everything on a new level of pleasure. Until you run out of sweets.

Another type of snacks working well with both tea and sweet sherry is various chocolate cakes and pastries. Let's try it!

Take a piece of chocolate cake interspersed with flakes of dark chocolate. Serve it with a glass of Moscatel and brew a pot of black Ceylon (Sri Lankan) tea, adding a few dried peels of bergamot orange (no Earl Grey or other bergamot oil — just peels). Pour the tea into cups, let it cool a little, take a sip, then a bite of the cake, then Moscatel... A short pause — and repeat! It's delicious from the very start, but the idea of the composition on the whole becomes clear on the fourth round.

This composition reveals different facets of bitterness. Astringent bitterness of Ceylon tea, citrus bitterness of bergamot orange, austere bitterness of chocolate and alcohol bitterness of sherry compensate for one another — and the focus shifts from the bitterness to its shades. Sweetness in Moscatel and chocolate cake is mitigated the same way — and citrus notes are fully triggered in the wine being supported by bergamot. In this composition, Moscatel acts as a refreshing drink — which is great, as fresh notes are often present there, but rarely allowed to reveal themselves.

The “sweet sherry + black tea + snacks” theme may be endless. There is a pretty lot of wonderful snacks which would either harmonize with or contrast



Pairing Ideas. Tea and Sherry Wine

against tea and sherry. Picking at different teas one can get an almost infinite number of compositions. But infinity appeared too tough for us, so we decided to get away from the basic idea and work with dry sherry.

In terms of tea pairing, Fino and Manzanilla are, of course, the most difficult cases — there is a huge gastronomic gap between them and hot black tea, for example. But, luckily, there is more than hot and black tea. Thus, for example, white tea may be infused in room-temperature water. In 20-30 minutes of “cold brewing” you can get a nice refreshing drink with a subtle taste — evident but light notes of fruit and dry freshness. This gives an opportunity to rhyme it with dry biologically aged sherries. We liked this variant a lot.

Needle-type white tea infused for 30 minutes in cool water, room-temperature Fino and classic pure-apple Belyovskaya pastila (apple paste layered pie). All parts of this set combine well with one another in pairs — including the pair of cool white tea and non-refrigerated sherry. But all together they create a perfect and self-sufficient composition, where, speaking poetically, all autumn themes are played upon: cool freshness, muted fruitiness, soft fading and enlightened quietude. Such a composition can work as an apéritif as well as a digestif or a separate service for an arty show-off. We want to stress once again that the wine does not need to be refrigerated

in this case, and that it is best to use Fino en Rama, Manzanilla will also do very nicely, of course.

It was a bit easier to find a good match for Amontillado — the key for the pairing was its mushroom theme. Shu-puerh aged in Taiwan and cooked in the siphon together with one shiitake mushroom crisp and rye-wheat dried breads made a rough but very warm and homey composition with Amontillado. Dried breads reveal light bread notes of Amontillado, compensate them and bring to the fore an otherwise neglected fresh note of spices. Which (tea-people will understand us here) is just the thing to wash with velvety shu-puerh and its light mushroom note.

The siphon having been brought into action, it was very difficult to refrain from outright “perversions” — so in no time we concocted a non-alcoholic tea composition with no sherry but sherry brandy. It is as easy as this. Taiwanese Ruby tea should be siphoned with half a vanilla pod. The drink is then poured into a glass tea-bowl and put next to a glass of old Brandy de Jerez. Let the tea cool down slightly, smell the brandy, trying to catch the notes of vanilla which gives the barrel (an almost unsolvable task) — then take a sip of tea, where, in taste and flavor, a vanilla note is subtle but well perceptible. Then smell the brandy again — and take another sip of tea. And so on... This way of consumption — when tea is for drinking and brandy



Pairing Ideas. Tea and Sherry Wine

is only for smelling — would perfectly fit small tea and sherry shows as a beautiful final chord.

Speaking about shows. Tea and sherry compositions are a good idea for northern sherry consumers, especially for Russia and Great Britain with their rich and comprehensive tea cultures. In Spain, a non-tea country, they can become an interesting asset for winter tastings.

After quite an austere composition with Amontillado we wanted something absolutely reckless — and we called to mind our experiments with Oloroso, Palo Cortado and Russian cuisine. In those our experiments, Oloroso and Palo Cortado revealed their unexpected “dressing” side and proved to be practically all-purpose drinks with rich

and hearty dishes. So what is the richest and heartiest food to serve with tea? Right! Thin wheat pancakes with different fillings.

Write it down. Pancakes, ground beef, vegetable marrow spread, red caviar, golden raspberry jam, black tea and minimum two sherries: a dry one (Oloroso, Palo Cortado, maybe even Medium) and a sweet one (Cream, Pedro Ximénez, or Moscatel). Put all these items in large amounts onto the table with a small company of aware people around it and, filling pancakes with different ingredients, taste all possible combinations of the mentioned things as long as you can.

It is the best breakfast you can think of.



A white ceramic bowl is filled with a mound of dried green tea leaves. The leaves are tightly curled and have a dark green, slightly silvery appearance. The bowl is placed on a vibrant red, textured surface. The background is a solid, deep red color. Overlaid on the image is the text "Going Green" in a large, white, rounded font with a thick green outline.

Going Green



Masters Talk: Going Green

Green tea habits of tea masters

The super idea of green tea is to bring the tea leaf to the teapot in the condition as close to the fresh one as possible. This can be done through different processing techniques and with a completely different result, which eventually determines a huge variety of green teas. They can be very light and sweet, rich and astringent, thick and velvety - in short, almost any. We asked different tea experts three simple questions in order to demonstrate at least a small portion of this variety.

Sheryl Teo

Flag & Spear, TMCI 2017 Finalist
www.flagandspear.com.au

- Korean **Woojeon**.
- I usually brew according to my mood using my well-loved kyusu. A little hotter if I want more astringency and nuttiness. A little cooler if I want silky body and sweet vegetal notes.
- Sweet — Red bean mochi. Savory — Lemongrass chicken with sesame, ginger and pickled cucumbers.



- **What is your favourite green tea?**
- **How would you prepare it?**
- **What snack would you recommend with this tea, if any?**

Nguyen Thi Anh Hong

Vietnam tea Association,
Tea Masters Cup
www.vitas.org.vn

- **La Bang**, Thai Nguyen green tea.
 - Hot brew.
 - Green Beem cake.
- or
- **Tay Con Linh**, Ha Giang green tea (or I named it “Green Shan”).
 - Cold brew.
 - Any sweet but I prefer nothing.



Masters Talk: Going Green

Sharyn Johnston

Australian Tea Masters,
Tea Masters Cup
australianteamasters.com.au



- **Woojeon** from Korea.
- I would brew the water to 90°C and steep the leaf for approx. 2–3 mins.
- I don't like to have a snack with this tea because it is so amazing.

Dmitriy Filimonov

Goodwine, TMCI 2017 Winner
www.goodwine.ua



- **Xinyang Maojian** from China and **Thai Nguen** from Vietnam.
- I would use 80 degree water for both of them, trying to put a bit more tea (1,5g per 100ml) but brew it for less time (2-3 min) so the cup will be intense but not strong.
- I highly recommend trying a chocolate Sachertorte cake with an intense cup of Thai Nguen green tea. The umami and the bitterness of the green tea is compensated with the dark chocolate taste and at the end you get an amazing fresh and grassy mouth with sweet fruity notes. This is, maybe, my most successful pairing of this year.

Tony Gebely

American Speciality Tea Alliance
www.specialityteaalliance.org



- **Lu Shan Yun Wu** made from the Meizhan cultivar.
- I would steep 5 g of it at 195°F (90°C) for 45 sec. in a medium sized gaiwan. And a second steeping for 90 sec.
- Lightly salted plantain chips.

Aliona Velichko

Aliona Velichko's Tea Studio,
Tea Masters Cup
www.teastudia.by



- **Wakro green tea** from Arunachal Pradesh.
- I would prepare it in a glass teapot to enjoy the movement of the tea leaves and colour.
- Rice with herbs.

Murat Kornaev

Café Manggha
TMCI 2016 Winner
www.cafemanggha.com.pl



- Hunan **Mao Jian**.
- 5 g, 300 ml, 80-85°C, 30 sec.
- Usually, I prefer it without any snacks, but sometimes I would take some nuts, dry fruits, or cherry and strawberry in summer.



Ha Giang Pai Hao

Vietnamese Black Tea
The North Upland
and Mountainous
Region



masterstalk
masterstalk.online



masterstalk
masterstalk.online

