

Basic Knowledge of Chinese Tea

Focus on the Topic



Pair Work: Discuss the following questions with your partner.

- 1. Do you know the common saying of seven things in Chinese house (开 门七件事)?
- 2. Have you ever drunk Chinese tea?
- 3. Who discovered tea first according to legend?
- 4. What is the first known monograph on tea in the world?
- 5. How many types of tea are there in China?

Fun Facts

Tea is an important part of Chinese tradition. As Chinese society developed and progressed, tea production has played a role in driving economic development while tea consumption has remained a practice of daily life.

http://en.wikipedia.org

Vocabulary Study

1. Match the words with the definitions in the right column.

Α	В
(1) beverage	a. making you feel less tired
(2) substitute	b. a medicine or therapy that cures disease or relieves pain
(3) brew (n.)	c. a particular kind of tea
(4) cure	d. a process in which a chemical change takes place so that alcohol is produced
(5) refreshing	e. to obtain it from something else by using industrial or chemical processes
(6) necessity	f. any type of drink except water
(7) extract	g. to enter a combination with oxygen or become converted into an oxide
(8) fermentation	h. a thing that you use or have instead of the one you normally use or have
(9) oxidize	i. a substance, produced by all living things, which helps a chemical change happen or happen more quickly, without being changed itself
(10) enzyme	j. something that you must have in order to live properly

2. Fill in the blanks with the words learned above. Change their forms if necessary.

- (1) Tea is a basic ______ for most Chinese people.
- (2) The key to tea's effects of ______ seems to lie in chemicals found in tea which prevent a process that leads to the growth of cancers.
- (3) The process, in which the tea develops its characteristic astringency, is known as
- (4) What can be more relaxing and ______ than returning home after a tiring day and having a cup of green tea?
- (5) Tea is a good ______ for cigarette to refresh yourself.
- (6) After that, the tea is fried again and re-wrapped to cool and ______ slightly.
- (7) Tea is a _____ of the remotest time in China.
- (8) This ______ would make tea oxidize quickly.
- (9) In order to relieve stress and tension, I suggest drinking a cup of strong ______.
- (10) Many skincare products designed for oily skin incorporate green tea ______.
- 3. Complete the following sentences based on the given Chinese.
 - (1) This change is considered to be due to denaturation of the _____(酶).
 - (2) Sunburn can make tea rapidly _____ (氧化) and produce some unpleasant chemicals.
 - (3) People keep the original colour of the tea leaves without _____ (发酵) during processing.
 - (4) People are taking green tea _____ (提取物) as an aid to weight loss.
 - (5) Tea is the _____ (必需品) when Chinese entertain friends and guests.
 - (6) Tea have been used for centuries to make _____ (提神) drinks.
 - (7) There is a legend that one Chinese emperor found tea 5,000 years ago and used it to _____(治疗) illnesses.
 - (8) She swallowed a mouthful of the hot strong _____ (浓茶), and wiped her eyes.
 - (9) Green tea is an excellent coffee _____ (替代品), and it's decaf.
 - (10) It was not taken tea as a _____(依品) until the third century CE.
 - (11) It's a simple tea technique used for _____(千年).
 - (12) You should consult a _____ (草药医生) before you try a herbal cure.
 - (13) This is the kind of tea which is _____ (压缩的) and hardened into a certain shape. It is good for transport and storage.
 - (14) The teapot should be made of china or _____(陶器).
 - (15) Only through the careful (咀嚼) can we taste the real flavour of a cup of oolong tea.

Reading 1

Chinese Tea

Chinese tea is a beverage made from the leaves of tea plants and boiled water. Tea leaves are processed using traditional Chinese methods. Chinese tea is consumed throughout the day, including during meals, as a substitute for plain water, for health, or for simple pleasure.

The practice of drinking tea has a long history in China. The history of tea in China is long and complex, for the Chinese have enjoyed tea for millennia. Scholars hailed the brew as a cure for a variety of ailments; the nobility considered the consumption of good tea as a mark of their status, and the common people simply enjoyed its flavour.

According to legend, tea was first discovered by the legendary Chinese emperor and herbalist, Shennong, in 2737 BCE. It is said that the emperor liked his drinking water boiled before he drank it so it would be clean. One day, on a trip to a distant region, he and his army stopped to rest. A servant began boiling water for him to drink, and a dead leaf from the wild tea bush fell into the water. It turned a brownish colour, but it was unnoticed and presented to the emperor anyway. The emperor drank it and found it very refreshing, and cha (tea) came into being. China is considered to have the earliest records of tea drinking, with recorded tea use in its history dating back to the first millennium BCE. The Han Dynasty (206 BCE–220 CE) used tea as medicine. The use of tea as a beverage drunk for pleasure on social occasions dates from the Tang Dynasty (618–907 CE) or earlier.

The *Classic of Tea* by the Tang Dynasty writer Lu Yu (733–804) is an early work on the subject. According to *Cha Jing* writing, around CE 760, tea drinking was widespread. The book describes how tea plants were grown, the leaves processed, and tea prepared as a beverage. It also describes how tea was evaluated. The book also discusses where the best tea leaves were produced.

At this time in tea's history, the nature of the beverage and style of tea preparation were quite



different from the way we experience tea today. Tea leaves were processed into compressed cakes form, generally called dried teacake or brick tea. Hot water was added to the powdered teacake, or the powdered teacake was boiled in earthenware kettles then consumed as a hot beverage.

The beverage is considered one of the seven necessities of Chinese life, along with firewood, rice, oil, salt, soy sauce and

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vinegar. Around 771 BCE–476 BCE the Chinese tea was used for medicinal purposes. This period, also known as the "Spring and Autumn Period", is when Chinese people first enjoyed the juice extracted from the tea leaves that they chewed.

Chinese tea can be classified into six distinctive categories: green, black, oolong, white, yellow and dark. Green tea is the most popular type of tea consumed in China. The largest factor in the wide variations comes from differences in tea processing after the tea leaves are harvested. White and green teas are heat-treated soon after picking to prevent oxidization, often called fermentation, caused by natural enzymes in the leaves. Oolong teas are partially oxidized. Black teas are fully oxidized. Other differences come from variations in the processing steps.

(552 words)

Reading for Main Ideas

1. Choose the best answer to the following questions.

(1) Which beverage is a substitute for plain water to Chinese?

	A. Beer.	B. Juice.	C. Tea	D. Wine.	
(2)	How long is the histor	ow long is the history of Chinese tea?			
	A. 2, 000 years.	B. 3, 000 years.	C. 4, 000 years.	D. 5, 000 years.	

Reading for Details

2. Complete the sentences with the words you get from the reading.

- (1) It is the first time Chinese people enjoyed the juice ______ from the tea leaves during Spring and Autumn Period.
- (2) Around 600 CE in Tang Dynasty, Chinese people began to use tea as a ______ for pleasure.
- (3) Chinese tea can be divided into green, black, oolong, white, yellow and dark tea. Each of them is one of the six distinctive
- (4) The process of ______ is to heat-treat white and green tea very soon after picking.
- (5) The difference between oolong and black tea is the degree of ______

Making References

3. Work with a partner. Read each sentence. Write T (true) or F (false). Then share your answer with the class.

(1) Different people drink tea for different purposes in ancient China.

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- (2) According to historical research, Chinese emperor and herbalist, Shennong was the first one who discovered tea.

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- (3) *Cha Jing* is the first known monograph on tea in the world.
- (4) Chinese tea can be classified into six distinctive categories: green, black, oolong, white, yellow and dark.
- (5) The standard of classifying Chinese tea is because of the colour of the tea.

Expressing Opinions

- 4. Check (✓) your answer. Then choose a reason or add your ideas. Share your answers with your partner.
 - (1) It is like difficult to distinguish the tea's category. _____, which is quite comprehensive.
 - A. Chinese tea are divided into six categories because of its colour.
 - B. Chinese tea are divided into six categories because of the degree of fermentation.
 - C. Chinese tea are divided into six categories because of the degree of oxidization.
 - D. The reasons of classifying Chinese tea are based on tea processing technology, methods and steps.
 - (2) I have an idea that the different fermentation degree cause to different colour between oolong tea and black tea. _____ It is also the main cause to distinguish oolong tea from black tea.
 - A. Oolong teas are totally oxidized.
 - B. Black teas are partially oxidized.
 - C. Both oolong teas and black teas are completely oxidized.
 - D. Oolong teas are partially oxidized while black teas are fully oxidized.

Task-Driven Practice

🕡 Listening

Task 1 Fill in the blanks with the words you hear from the clip.

- **Miss Li:** Hi, Michael. I haven't seen you for such a long time. Where've you been hiding yourself?
- Michael: Oh, I've been busy. I've been studying Chinese.
- Miss Li: Have you? Good for you! To learn a foreign language is to learn its culture.
- Michael: You bet. That's why I'm here to ask you something about the history of Chinese tea.
- **Miss Li:** The history of Chinese tea is a long and gradual story of ______. Generations

of growers and producers have perfected the Chinese way of _____ tea, and its many unique regional variations.

- Michael: When did it originate?
- Miss Li: The original idea is credited to the ____(3) Emperor Shennong, who is said to have lived 5, 000 years ago. A story goes that, one summer day, while visiting a distant part of his realm, he and the court stopped to rest. ____(4) ____ his ruling, the servants began to boil water for the court to drink. Dried leaves from a nearby bush fell into the ____(5) _____ water, and a brown substance was infused into the water. As a scientist, the Emperor was interested in the new liquid, drank some, and found it very refreshing. And so, according to legend, tea was created in 2737 BCE.
- **Michael:** Wow, that's very interesting. And could you also tell me something about the tea culture?
- **Miss Li:** The <u>(6)</u> of tea culture can bring the spirit and wisdom of human beings to a higher orbit. Tea has an extremely close relationship to Chinese culture, and its study covers a wide field and has very rich content.
- Michael: That's true. It not only embodies the spirit of ______, but also the spirit of ideological form. There can be no doubt that it has been beneficial in enhancing people's social accomplishments and ______ (8) of art.
- Miss Li: That's a very thoughtful opinion about Chinese tea culture. But sometimes, tasting tea is a kind of art. It includes not only the tea itself, but also environment,
 (9) , music, infusing techniques and interpersonal relationships.
- Michael: I heard it from a book about Chinese tea culture. It says that philosophy, ethics and morality are blended into tea activity. People cultivate their morality and mind, and ______ life through tasting tea, thereby attaining joy of spirit.
- Miss Li: Exactly. Chinese tea lore has thousands of years history. It places an emphasis on spirit and makes light of form. Tea lore has different _______ at different historical periods. Teas are also various, but all embody the tea spirit of "clearness, respect, joy and ______".
- Michael: There are so many things waiting for me to learn and explore.

Task 2Listen to the clip for the second time and answer the following questions based
on the information you get.

- (1) How did the Emperor Shennong discover tea?
- (2) What are the benefits of drinking tea?
- (3) Why do people always say that tasting tea is a kind of art?

- (4) What kind of mental activities make up tea activity?
- (5) What is the spirit of tea?

Task 3 Decide whether the statements are ture (T) or false (F) according to the information.

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	1) All Chinese teas have same features.		
	2) There is a very close relationship between Chinese tea and Chinese culture.		
	3) Tasting tea is not just drinking, but appreciating environment and music, as well		
	as thinking about life.		
	4) You may get the joy of spirit while tasting tea.		
	5) Chinese tea lore has long history, so it has common prototypes.		
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Speaking It Out

Task 1 You work as a tea master in the tea house. Many foreign friends have been invited to visit and study Chinese tea culture. You are going to introduce Chinese tea to them and tell them the main types of Chinese tea.

Tea is the national drink in China. In addition to its prominence in Chinese culture, tea also claims many health benefits, making it a popular drink worldwide. There are several types of Chinese tea, which vary in degree of fermentation and processing.

The main classes of Chinese tea discussed below are green tea, yellow tea, white tea, oolong tea, black tea, dark tea or fermented tea and Pu'er tea.

Green Tea

Chinese green tea is the oldest and most popular type of tea; it has been enjoyed in China for several thousand years. Green tea is made from the new shoots of the tea plant, and the tea leaves are dried and processed according to the type of tea desired.

The techniques for processing green tea are sub-divided into three categories: water removing, rolling and drying. Traditional green tea has a pale colour and a sharp, astringent flavour. It is produced primarily in the provinces of Jiangxi, Anhui, and Zhejiang. The most famous green tea is West Lake Dragon Well Tea, which is produced in Hangzhou.

Yellow Tea

Yellow tea is produced by allowing damp tea leaves to dry naturally. It has a distinctive aroma, similar to red tea, but its flavour is closer to green and white teas. Yellow tea is also used to describe the high-quality tea that was served to the emperors, as yellow was the traditional imperial colour.

Junshan Yinzhen is produced in China's Hunan Province and is the country's most popular yellow tea.

White Tea

White tea is unfermented, uncured green tea that has been quickly dried. It is indigenous to Fujian Province, and is lighter in colour than other types of tea with a subtle, delicate flavour.

White tea got its name from the tradition of poor Chinese people offering plain boiled water to guests, if they had no tea, and calling it "white tea". Popular brands of white tea are White Peony and Silver Needle.

Oolong Tea

Oolong tea, also known as blue tea, is unfermented tea with unique characteristics. Made from a blend of green and red teas, oolong tea boasts the best flavours and aromatic qualities of both. Sometimes called "green leaves with a red edge", oolong tea is thought to aid in fat decomposition and is widely regarded as a weight loss aid and a beauty enhancer.

Wenshan Baozhong Tea and Dongding Oolong Tea are two exemplary brands of this popular tea.

Black Tea

Black tea is the second largest category of Chinese tea. It is made from the new shoots of tea leaves, which are wilted, rolled, fermented, and dried. The resulting infusion yields a lovely red colour and a subtle aromatic fragrance. Keemun is the most popular brand of black tea.

Dark Tea

Dark tea is a kind of post-fermented tea, which undergoes an actual fermentation process aided by bacteria. The whole process comprises six steps: water removing, first-time rolling, heaping, second rolling, baking and drying.

It is generally acknowledged that dark tea originated in the 16th century in Anhua City, Hunan Province. The most common dark tea brands are Anhua Dark Tea, Hubei Laobian Tea, Sichuan Tibetan tea, and Guangxi Liubao Tea. Dark tea is very popular in Hong Kong, Macao, Southeast Asia and Japan.

Pu'er Tea

Pu'er tea is actually a dark tea, but deserves a category on its own because of its distinguishing features. Pu'er tea, originating from Yunnan Province, has an ancient history over of 2, 000 years. According to Yunnan government's definition, Pu'er tea must be tea that is made from a large-leaf variety of a plant growing in a defined area, which is then processed into compressed tea or brick tea with a specified technology.

Pu'er tea was listed as a geographical indication product. The tea only produced in

Yunnan's 639 towns in 11 prefectures and cities, including Pu'er and Dali, can be called Pu'er tea. There are two distinct types of Pu'er tea: sheng Pu'er (the raw or green Pu'er) and shu Pu'er (the ripened or black Pu'er).

Suggested Expressions

- (1) degree of fermentation and processing
- (2) water removing, rolling, and drying
- 3 unfermented and uncured
- (4) aromatic qualities
- (5) an actual fermentation process aided by bacteria
- (6) compressed tea or brick tea

Task 2 You are going to use the suggested words to complete the above passage. After that, using your own words to describe some tips of effective drinking Chinese tea to foreign guests.

Drinking tea offers numerous benefits. It refreshes the mind, clears heat within the human body and helps people lose weight.

As you add a cup of tea to your daily routine, please check the following tips which help you reap the maximum health benefits.

(1) . Tea oxidizes quickly after brewing, and its nutrients diminish overtime. It is suggested that you *drink it hot to get the best out of tea*.

(2) It is likely to upset your stomach and cause insomnia if you make the tea too strong. Usually you can mix 4 grams (0.13 ounce) of tea leaves with 250 milliliters (0.44 pint) to make a cup of tea. An overall amount of 12-15 grams (0.4–0.5 ounces) of tea leaves is suitable for daily consumption.

(3) Do not drink tea soon after or before meals. Otherwise it may quench appetite when your stomach is empty, or cause indigestion when your stomach is full.

(4) . Tea contains large amount of Tannin, which will react with certain elements in the medicine, thus reduce medical effects. You can drink tea a couple of hours after you take medicine.

(5) Green tea contains catechins that help prevent computer radiation and supplement moisture content of the human body.

Suggested Expressions

① Do not drink too much strong tea.

- ② Green tea is the best option for office workers.
- ③ Do not drink with medication.
- ④ Drink it hot.
- (5) The best time to drink is between meals.

Reading 2

Chinese Tea Culture

China is the home country of tea. Before the Tang Dynasty, Chinese tea was exported by land and sea, first to Japan and Korea, then to India and Central Asia and, in the Ming and Qing dynasties, to the Arabian Peninsula.

In the early period of the 17th century, Chinese tea was exported to Europe, where the upper class adopted the fashion of drinking tea. Chinese tea—like Chinese silk and china—has become synonymous worldwide with refined culture. China traces the development of tea as an art form to Lu Yu, known as "the Saint of Tea" (茶圣) in Chinese history, who lived during the Tang Dynasty and who wrote *The Book of Tea*, the first ever treatise on tea and tea culture. The spirit of tea permeates Chinese culture, and throughout the country there are many kinds of teas, teahouses, tea legends, tea artifacts and tea customs. Better-known places to enjoy a good cup of tea in China include Beijing noted for its variety of teahouses; Fujian and Guangdong provinces and other places in the southeast of China that serve gongfu tea, a formal serving of tea in tiny cups; the West Lake in Hangzhou, also the home of the Tea Connoisseurs Association, noted for its excellent green tea; and provinces in southwest China like Yunnan where the ethnic groups less affected by foreign cultures retain tea ceremonies and customs in original tea-growing areas.

The Chinese people, in their drinking of tea, place much significance on the act of "savoring". "Savoring tea" (品茶) is not only a way to discern good tea from mediocre tea, but also how people take delight in their reverie and in tea-drinking itself. Snatching a bit of leisure from a busy schedule, making a kettle of strong tea, securing a serene space, and serving and drinking tea by yourself can help banish fatigue and frustration, improve your thinking and inspire you with enthusiasm. You may also imbibe it slowly in small sips to appreciate the subtle allure of tea-drinking, until your spirits soar up and up into a sublime aesthetic realm. Buildings, gardens, ornaments and tea sets are the elements that form the ambience for savoring tea. A tranquil, refreshing, comfortable and neat locale is certainly desirable for drinking tea. Chinese gardens are well known in the world and beautiful Chinese

landscapes are too numerous to count. Teahouses tucked away in gardens and nestled beside the natural beauty of mountains and rivers are enchanting places of repose for people to rest and recreate themselves.

China is a country with a time-honored civilization and a land of ceremony and decorum. Whenever guests visit, it is necessary to make and serve tea to them. Before serving tea, you may ask them for their preferences as to what kind of tea they fancy and serve them the tea in the most appropriate teacups. When you drink a cup of tea, you may enjoy the scenery around yourself, and you will find the world in fact is very beautiful and the world is different before what you thought.

(511 words)

Focus on Writing

- 1. Complete the following sentences according to the text.
 - Chinese tea has a history of 5, 000 years; it was exported to so many countries from the Tang Dynasty to Ming and Qing Dynasties, such as _____, ____, and
 - (2) Lu Yu, who wrote *The Book of Tea*, was called in Chinese history.
 - (3) The process of _____ means comprehending the quality of tea and appreciating the taste and temperament of tea.
 - (4) The ideal location of drinking tea should meet the requirements of ______, and
 - (5) The tip of serving tea to the guests is to ask their ______ first, so that you may give them the most suitable tea and teacups.
- 2. Fill in the blanks according to what you read from the passage. Try to introduce it in your own words.

Topics	Descriptions
Could you list some better-known places to enjoy a good cup of tea in China?	
How to savor tea?	
What are the elements consist of the ambience of savoring tea?	

3. Design your teahouse after reading the passage followed.

Tea is both the oldest and currently the most popular beverage in the world next

to water. Although tea is only cultivated in a few countries, the custom of tea drinking spreads all over the world. There are more than 3, 000 different types of tea. China, as the original tea producing country, produces most types of rare tea and annually exports 18% of the entire world tea market. Tea shrubs are thought to have existed in China as early as five thousand years ago, and the cultivation of tea dates back two thousand years.

In past dynasties, Chinese people developed tea drinking into an art form: a tea ceremony involving a pattern of elaborate etiquette formed from ancient Chinese hospitality. The ritual involves the selection of tea, production of tea, process of brewing, selection of tea set, and the drinking environment.

Background

The teahouse as a social setting played an important role in Chinese history. Teahouses historically have been, and currently are common throughout China, especially in the southern tea producing regions. In ancient times, the teahouse was the only non-religious place for public communication, recreation and social activities. In large cities, some of the teahouses were the centers of non-government organizations and clubs, while others were used for transacting business.

Teahouse Creation and Decoration

Teahouse design means the creation and decoration of the entire tea space, rather than a single layout of the tea room. The so-called teahouse design takes tea as the soul and takes tea set as the main body, combining with other forms of art in particular tea space. As a result, all these elements form an independent theme of the tea art. There are nine basic elements to be designed in a teahouse in general.

Tea

Tea is the soul and the ideological basis of the teahouse design. Because of tea, there is a teahouse and teahouse design. Tea is both the source and the target in all tea culture and related forms of artistic expression. Tea should be the first choice of teahouse design. The design concept of tea often makes up the main clue of the design.

Tea Set Combination

Tea set is the basis and main factor for the design of teahouse. The basic characteristic of tea set is the combination of practicality and artistry. Tea set should be located in the most significant position in the layout of the teahouse, so that it is easy for the tea ceremony demonstration.

Mat

Mat refers to the overall layout put under the tea set, as well as the collective name of all the fabric cloth put under floor of the teahouse. The functions of the mat: keeping the tea set clean, avoiding directly contacting the floor and using its own features to complete the theme of the teahouse design.

Flower Arrangement

Flower arrangement refers to people who use the nature materials such as flowers, leaves and grass to form different lines and changes of the flower, as well as complete the recreation of the flowers with a certain ideas and emotions. Flower arrangement in teahouse should embody the spirit of tea and the pursuit of respect for nature. Its basic features are: simple, elegant, small and delicate.

Incense

Incense plays very important position in the teahouse. It is not only a form of art integrated into the teahouse, at the same time, it is a good smell filled the space around the teahouse, so that people may get a very comfortable feeling. More importantly, incense may also make the process of tasting tea becomes more colourful.

Painting Hanging

The paintings and pictures in a teahouse mean the general name of all the calligraphy works and paintings in the background environment. People usually choose to hang the Chinese calligraphy works and Chinese paintings.

Related Crafts

Related crafts may not only effectively decorate but also deepen the theme of teahouse under certain conditions.

Tea Cakes and Fruit

Tea cakes and fruit are the general name of all kinds of cakes, fruit and food eaten by people during the process of drinking tea. The main features are: small portions, small size, delicate production and elegant style.

Background

The background of the teahouse refers to the artistic forms set in the teahouse in order to obtain some visual effects. Setting up a background may give people a visual barrier, so that people may get a certain degree of psychological security.

Teahouse Creation and Decoration

Compositional Elements Tea

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(Continued)

	Teahouse Creation and Decoration
Tea Set Combination	
Mat	
Flower Arrangement	
Incense	
Painting Hanging	
Related Crafts	
Tea Cakes and Fruit	
Background	
	Signature