



Dewi Tea

Wishes you a Joyful Autumn!



## News From the Leaf Vol. III

Fall 2006

September 23, 2006 was the Fall Equinox. Temperatures in this hemisphere are beginning to drop and the thought of a steaming pot of hot tea begins to make more sense. Fortunately, we have several new varieties on our list to fill your pot with, most recently an Autumnal Darjeeling from the Makaibari Estate and a milk oolong from Taiwan.

The Makaibari estate is nestled in the foothills of the Himalayas and has been producing excellent tea since 1859, and organically grown, fair trade certified teas since 1991. Milk oolong is a lightly oxidized (25%) oolong with a smooth and creamy texture and a sweet, almost milky flavor.

These teas, and all of our new varieties and blends, are available for wholesale and retail.

### A Closer Look at Rooibos

Rooibos (pronounced ROY-boss) is a flowering bush grown in the Cedarberg Mountain region of South Africa. The leaves and stems of the plant are harvested, and the bulk of it is processed by means of crushing and bruising, which causes oxidation and imparts rooibos's distinctive red color. It is then sun-dried and used to make a delicious caffeine-free tisane that is excellent hot or cold and with or without milk and sugar. Rooibos has gained popularity for its pleasing flavor and the notable levels of polyphenol antioxidants it contains. Antioxidants are believed to help fight against damage caused by free radicals which may cause premature aging, cancer and other illnesses.

Rooibos (*Aspalathus linearis*), strictly speaking, is not a tea since it does not come from the *Camellia sinensis* plant, but rather a tisane. It differs from tea, also, in that rooibos is low in tannins, which can give true teas an astringent quality when over-steeped. On the contrary, the longer rooibos is brewed, the more flavorful and healthful it becomes.

The health claims for drinking rooibos derive from its high level of polyphenol group antioxidants. Laboratory tests indicate that rooibos may fight mutagens, changes in animal cells connected with cancer. Although human studies still need to be done, evidence for rooibos's antioxidant power, so far, looks promising and preliminary reports indicate that rooibos may have the potential to guard the body against cancers, heart disease, and other illnesses. It also exhibits no known side effects. It will be exciting, as time passes, to see what the future brings in our knowledge of rooibos, its antioxidant properties, and its apparent benefits to human health.\*

\*Go to [devitea.com](http://devitea.com) for the complete article and list of references.

### Holiday Gift Suggestions

(yes, it's that time again)

I don't know about you, but it seems like we finally get adjusted to the new school and fall schedule when the ubiquitous catalogs begin filling our mail boxes and the harbingers of the holidays begin chanting the mantra, "buy, buy, buy." We don't have a catalog (yet) but, I have to admit we are adding a small voice to the chanting throngs of merchants. We hope that tea ends up on your list of thoughtful, healthful and environmentally sensitive gift ideas. Tea is renewable and requires no batteries, it tastes great and even little boys (big boys too) appreciate a cup of tea and all the goodies that go with it.

We offer a unique selection of items that will please even the pickiest on your list. Our many tea-package sizes and varieties, accoutrements, samplers and price ranges make tea the perfect big item gift, host gift, or stocking stuffer. We can also customize selections for your business gift needs. And, most importantly, we have glossy red gift wrapping available!



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# Tea Forum



## The Pearl Blossom Display Tea Story

Tea has been around for thousands of years and the concept of tying tea leaves with flowers, as an art, was first done during the Song Dynasty (960-1279) for the Emperor's visual pleasure. This tea, however, was never brewed to drink.

Only in the last few decades have display teas been made for drinking. Talented artisans select beautiful flowers and long tea leaves to be sewn together to make spectacular displays. The leaves and leaf-buds of a specific variety of tea plant, the Da Bai Cha bush (literal translation: Big White Tea bush), are used to make these tea pearls. These leaves are either processed into green or white tea, then used to make the "Pearls." Some display teas are still meant for display only, but our line of Pearl Blossom Display Teas taste as great as they look. We have sourced these rare, expertly hand-sewn artisan teas very carefully to offer the highest quality. All ingredients are selected for both their beauty and aroma and flavor when brewed. Brewing should occur in a clear glass vessel, and the tea can be steeped for a long time, as the pearl brews slowly and has a smooth delicate flavor. The flavor is enhanced by the flowers chosen to be sewn with the leaves. In general we do not recommend milk for these teas as it would cloud the visual show and mask the true flavor.

The resulting liquor and display in the glass are only part of the fun; if you choose to enjoy these teas be sure to watch closely as the pearl dances then blooms in the hot water.

## Devi Tea News

StarChefs.com first ever International Chefs Congress was an exciting event for everyone involved. As the tea sponsor we had the opportunity to meet and brew tea for some of the world's top chefs. One of the highlights was serving our Yunnan Gold tea as its own course in an eight course meal at the James Beard House in Manhattan. We used five grams of tea in our Lu Yu Brewer and steeped it twice with 200° water. It followed Gregg Wangard's, of Ocean & Vine at Lowes Santa Monica Hotel, thrilling course of artisanal cheeses and seasonal fruit which included a Black Mission Fig Brulée with Montforte Gorgonzola and Stravecchio Cheeses. Patricia Yeo, of Sapa Restaurant in New York, focused her congress presentation on how to use tea to smoke chicken. For a special congress dinner at Sapa, we paired our Four Seasons oolong with her phenomenal course of Seared Scallop with Butter-scotch Sauce and Parsnip Puree.

It was an honor for us to be part of this inaugural event. Go to [starchefs.com](http://starchefs.com) to review congress highlights and get the dates for their Rising Star Revue,™ a not to be missed, quarterly culinary extravaganza.



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