

## Pu-er Tea

### Brown leaf and dark tea

Pu-er tea is after-fermented tea and it is only found in China. It has more than 400 years of history and is made by pressing. Pu-er tea uses old tea leaves. Its four primary processing steps involve fixing, rolling, piling and drying. Because tea leaves are rough and old, Pu-er tea is fermented longer than other tea in general. After that the colour of leaves is mostly dark brown, so it is actually called “black tea” in its place of origin. Pu-er tea is the most popular “black tea”, so it is often called Pu-er tea by western people. Pu-er’s pronunciation is similar with the English word “Pure”, so sometime people also call it “Pure tea”.



Pu-er tea is mainly produced in Hunan, Hubei, Sichuan, Yunnan, Guangxi province of China. Pu-er tea is the favourite drink of some of China’s ethnic minorities, such as Tibetan, Mongolian and Uygur. Pu-er tea is a daily life necessity.

Pu-er tea has lot of products based on different shapes, mainly in tight tea and loose tea. Tight tea can look like a brick, pie, cake or bag. Yunnan Pu-er tea is one of the more famous of them which is known all over the world. Different from other kinds of teas, the longer it is stored the more expensive Pu-er tea is.

### Yunnan Pu-er tea

Yunnan Pu-er tea is the main representative of Pu-er tea. It is mainly produced in the Yunnan province of China. Pu-er tea has a very long history, with records as early as the Tang Dynasty of tea trade. It takes rolled and dried green tea as raw material, then once processed through a special process called splash and accumulation of fermentation, it is dried and is processed into tea. After that it is pressed to make different shapes of tight tea.



Pu-er tea has a long lasting unique flavor which is only found with large leaf tea from Yunnan province. The taste is strong and it can be brewed many times. It is still very tasty even after five or six brewings. The brewing tea is dark orange or dark brown. After brewing the leaf color is between yellow and green. Allow it to stay in the mouth for a moment, carefully savoring then taste and sweetness of Pu-er tea.

## Brewing Pu-er tea

- Temperature: 100 degree boiling water.
- The amount of tea: tea ratio is 1:50, or about 2/5 of the container capacity.
- Water: Pure water or spring water. Note: Hot water should not be boiled over. Over boiled water has less oxygen so that will affect the quality of the tea.
- Time: It depends on the tea. Generally tight tea can be brewed for a slightly shorter time, loose tea can be a little longer. This is dependent on the amount of tea used. It is shorter if the amount of tea is less, or a little longer if the amount of tea is more. The first and second brewing can be shorter, after that it may be slightly longer.

### Tea pot selection:

Purple clay teapot (best): Purple clay teapot has good ventilation and good insulation, so it is the best choice for Pu-er tea due to the high temperature needed to brew Pu-er tea.

Tureen Cup (most common): As tureen usually has an elegant style that best reflects the beauty of the color changes of Pu-er tea, so tureen cup now is most commonly used for modern brewing .

Ceramic pot (practical and convenient): A bigger pot is suitable to show color, smells, and taste of Pu-er tea. The ceramic pot is generally larger than other pots, and its unique classical beauty is more in line with the tea. It is specially suitable for friends to enjoy tea together.

### Brewing tea steps:

- Preparation: Tea pot and Pu-er tea.
- Wash and warm tea pot:
  - Put boiling water into the tea pot to clean and warm.
  - Empty before adding tea
- Tea: Put the Pu-er tea carefully into the pot.
- Put boiling water into the pot quickly to brew up tea. Length of time for brewing the tea depends on personal choice.
- Offer tea: Filter tea leaves in another cup. Pour tea into tea cups.

## The benefits of Pu-er tea

Tea can aid in the digestion of meat and fat. It helps to adjust the three metabolisms (glucose metabolism, fat metabolism and water metabolism). Mongolian doctors believe that Pu-er tea is good for kidney function. Pu-er tea has a similar result to traditional Chinese medicine Citrus and can get better when it is stored longer. It makes hundreds of precious enzymes in storage and can help nephritis and diabetic nephropathy treatment.

### 1. Weight loss

Polyphenols and its oxidation products in Pu-er tea can dissolve fat and promote lipid discharge, so it can help to reduce total cholesterol, free cholesterol, low-density lipoprotein cholesterol and triglyceride content in the blood. Thereby it reduces arterial vessel wall deposition of cholesterol and incidence of arterial disease. It can also activate the protein kinase, accelerate lipolysis, and help to reduce fat within the body. It is also known as the "diet tea" or "keep fit tea."

### 2. Enhance gastrointestinal function, improve immunity



The active ingredient in Pu-er tea inhibits the growth of harmful microbes in the stomach, while also promoting beneficial bacteria growth and reproduction. Its alkaloids can promote the secretion of gastric juice and flavanols that can significantly enhance gastrointestinal motility. Studies have also found that catechin compounds and saponin in Pu-er tea an antimicrobial effect on oral bacteria, E. coli, typhoid and paratyphoid bacillus, Staphylococcus aureus, and other pathogens. That thus Pu-er tea has significant effect of reducing inflammation, reducing acid regurgitation, and aiding constipation. It has been the popular medicine for reflux for a very long time. Theanine in Pu-er tea also strengthens the immune system.

### 3. Anti-aging and active brain

The body's natural aging, cancer, cardiovascular and other degenerative diseases have a common process, which is cell oxidative damage by oxygen free radicals. The Catechins and flavonoids complex in the Pu-er tea have a high level of hydroxyl hydrogen which can provide large amounts of hydrogen protons that react with free radicals and remove excess free radicals, thereby protecting health.

### 4. Lowering blood pressure and blood sugar

Theanine in Pu-er tea inhibits blood pressure. Alkaloids and flavonoids relax the blood vessel walls increasing the effective diameter of the blood vessels that causes vasodilation and lowering blood pressure. Studies have shown that tea polysaccharides have a significant effect on lowering blood sugar, which acts like insulin. Pu-er tea contains lots of tea polysaccharide, which is an ideal drink for diabetics. It has been customary in some areas to use Pu-er tea to assist the treatment of mild diabetes.

### Pu-er tea and health

Evening is a good time to drink Pu-er tea. After the meals in a day, the body accumulates some fats in the digestive system. Drinking a cup of Pu-er tea can help to break down the accumulation of fat, which is both good to the stomach and helps

digestion. The nature of the Pu-er tea is mild and will not affect sleep. It is particularly suitable for the following people to drink Pu-er tea:

### **1. People seeking to reduce body fat**



Pu-er tea have special properties that assist to inhibit belly fat accumulation. Speaking of obesity, people immediately think of abdominal fat, while Pu-er tea has a significant effect for suppressing increase in abdominal fat. It is best to drink tea just after brewing for this type of diet. It has very good effect for

weight loss when drinking 1.5 litres a day before and after a meal for considerable length of time.

### **2. People seeking to reduce high blood sugar**

Because tea polysaccharide in Pu-er tea has a similar effect to insulin, it can reduce the body's blood sugar levels. Polyphenols and their oxidation products can dissolve fat, promote the discharge of intravascular lipids and lower blood cholesterol levels, so a drink of Pu-er tea daily can assist to maintain health.

### **3. Young women**

Pu-er tea contains large amounts of trace elements which can act as antioxidants such as zinc, manganese, copper and selenium. It is good for skin health. Catechins, theaflavins, theanine, tea polysaccharides and complex flavonoids can reduce free radicals. It has antioxidant and cell growth effect, so is very suitable for young girls to drink.

### **4. People who smoke or drink alcohol**

Caffeine in Pu-er tea can stimulate the bladder, so it has the effect of a diuretic and assists to alleviate the affects alcohol poisoning. Polyphenols in Pu-er tea can eliminate smoke free radicals when people are smoking and reduce smoke toxicity on the human body. Polyphenols also have strong adsorption effect, so drinking lots of tea can alleviate the toxic effects of heavy metals.

### **5. People with constipation**

Pu-er tea can quickly cool off heat and can assist to clean digestion and intestines. In summer the stomach can become "heavy" and especially prone to constipation. Drinking Pu-er tea is very beneficial for maintaining health of stomach and is known as "the body's cleaner."