

JASMINE BAI MU TAN is hand rolled and hand tied. The method used to make these special Jasmine tea wheels is as follows:

- * They begin with specially selected tea leaves (Leaves that are long and mottled white),
- * The leaves are then tied together and then carefully and painstakingly flattened to a wheel shape.
- * The tea is steamed and dried with fresh Jasmine flowers, which impart the delicate flavour and aroma.

The dry leaf appearance of the tea balls is tending towards a mottled and white appearance, indicating very early new season tea and extremely careful plucking and manufacture. (New season tea of this quality is rare and only available for 2-3 weeks each year!) When you place a Jasmine wheel in your cup you will see the leaves begin to uncurl and transform. Once the infusion time is complete the tea looks like a hedgehog - a total spiked ball.

In China Jasmine Bai Mu Dan - are highly prized and given as special gifts:

- On the birth of a son - The shape signifies a well-rounded life and as the boy grows into man fullness to life emerges (you can see this as this tea infuses from a round wheel to a multi-faceted ball).
- Upon a marriage - The two halves of the wheel signify the coming together of two special people and the desire that their life attains fullness and a long life together.
- To highly esteemed guests and friends - the cost of these special teas signifies respect and the desire to remain a friend in the fullness of life.
- For health, long life and luck - the benefits of the consumption of green tea have been well known for centuries and the cost of this special tea is said to impart good luck and the attainment of great wealth.

WILD ROSE is a fabulous example of the unique teas produced in the Chinese province of Yunnan. Generally regarded by many as the birthplace of tea. It stands to reason that a growing region with over 2000 years of history would produce many interesting variations. This tea, with its silver white tips hand sewn around delicate rosebuds is perhaps one of the most unique of these. Only the finest silver tips plucked from tea bushes grown at 1800 meters above sea level are used in its production. It is not known exactly when this tea was first produced but records in Yunnan indicate that it was being made at least as long as 250 years ago. What is known however is how this tea got its interesting name.

Weeping Rose was originally known simply as Rose Chrysanthemum tea. But there is a story that during the war, the allied forces built the famous Burma Road to move troops and supplies through China, starting in India, and ending in Yunnan province. A local widow named Huan Yue, who worked in a Yunnan tea factory hand stitching the Rose Chrysanthemum tea fell in love with a dashing young British pilot stationed in Yunnan, as their love grew stronger and the two decided that once the war ended they would marry. One day, the young pilot was called upon to fly a secret reconnaissance mission over the Gulf of Japan. He promised to be home that evening for dinner, and flew off as day broke over the horizon. As the day wore on, Huan Yue began to sense that something was wrong. Night fell with no word from her beloved pilot. Grief stricken, Huan Yue curled up in front of her cooking fire and went to sleep. That night her pilot came to her in a dream and told her that he had been shot down over the Gulf. The next morning, Huan Yue went back to the factory. As she began to sew the delicate rosebuds into the tealeaves, she began to weep uncontrollably, her tears falling into the tea. From that day on, the tea was called Weeping Rose.

WILD LILY If you happen to live in Yunnan's Tengchong County, you owe a debt of gratitude to the creator of this magical tea. Why? The County is home to Tengchong volcano, which last erupted during the Ming Dynasty in 1609. There was a lot going on at the time of the eruption. The emperor of the day was a man called Wanli whose rule ended up being the longest of any Ming Emperor, 48 years to be exact. The first Jesuit missionary, Matteo Ricci, moved to the country and was granted access to the Forbidden City. Wars were successfully being waged against the Mongols and Japanese. The famous Wanli Shipwreck occurred, scattering pottery all over the bottom of the ocean. Was the mythic power of the Volcano responsible for all these things? Perhaps.

One thing is certain: the mythical power of mighty Tengchong led to this tea. An artisan who lived near the volcano, feeling a tremor, decided to appease the universal forces in order to save his skin and his business. He wisely began working with what local produce was available, selecting the blooms of Amaranth, Hibiscus and Lavender, believing their roots in the region's volcanic soil would lend power to his creation. These he tied in with an exceptional, wiry leafed green tea grown in one of Yunnan's finest gardens. His technique was to tie the flowers into the tea while it was still damp, so that as the leaves dried, the blooms would become trapped. The artisan believed that concealing the floral burst within the tea would spiritually represent his hope that the volcano's lava would be forever trapped within the mountain's rocky shell. And you know what? It worked. The Volcano has never erupted since. Experience the power of Tengchong volcano yourself. Brew a pot and see how its wonderful flavour changes your life. The cup is clean and delicate highlighted by grassy tones, floral notes and hints of lemon. At the very least we guarantee it will improve your day!