



Closer Inspection

"Different teas require different water temperature," Wong says. For example, green tea is best served between **165 and 175 degrees**, she says; an open glass container distributes the heat more quickly.

The **Dragon Well Supreme** green tea (\$32 for 2 ounces), from Hangzhou, in China's Zhejiang province, is brewed using nesting glass tubes. Hot water strains through the tea leaves in the inner tube, which is then removed and set aside when the tea is infused.



This **tea is so mild**, says Wong, that it's a good starting point for those who aren't avid tea drinkers.



This **artisan tea** (\$10 for a pack of eight) from the Fujian province is white tea leaves tied around a jasmine blossom. In hot water, it opens to a flower-like appearance, while infusing the tea.



To serve white teas, Wong says she prefers to use a **cha chong**, which can be a personal teapot and teacup. While loose leaves are placed inside, the user gently presses the top in place with an index finger, while supporting the raised sides with two fingers.

Wong's **Eight Treasures tea** (\$8) contains chrysanthemums, roses, wolfberries, osmanthus, honey dates, raisins, green tea and dried longan.



Wong serves oolong in a **Yixing teapot**, made from porous clay that will absorb the tea's aroma over time. Hot water can be poured over the small pot; when the moisture evaporates, the tea is ready.

Something to sip on

D.C. Chinese teahouse aims to educate drinkers

BY KRIS CORONADO

Ching Ching Wong lifts a small cup of tea to her lips and takes a sip. "You can drink a lot, and your palate does not feel tired," the 48-year-old says of the brew. "You can just keep drinking it. You want more and more."

So she does drink it. All day.

It's part and parcel of the job for the owner of the Ching Ching Cha teahouse (1063 Wisconsin Ave. NW, 202-333-8288, www.chingchingcha.com). Wong, who was born and raised in Hong Kong and opened the Georgetown space in May 1998, aims to educate Americans about the culture and tradition of Chinese tea.

First: Don't expect silverware and tablecloths. Instead, customers can plop down on pillows on the floor after taking off their shoes. "Once you take off your shoes and sit on the floor, you undo something" inside, she explains.

As for the tea itself, Wong estimates she offers 80 varieties, but other traditional tearooms have only three kinds of tea, she says. Here, a look at Wong's teas and teaware.



Oolong tea, such as **Alishan oolong** (\$25 for 2 ounces), is fermented; the more fermented, the darker and smoother the tea's infusion; the less fermented, the lighter and more aromatic the infusion.

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