



The tea of life!

Behind every tea drinking man, there is a woman!

Some five years ago, Fahbin, my better-half, presented me with a pack of Chinese green tea. Not my first introduction to tea that is not black, but certainly one that was a spark.

And then, behind every tea drinking man, there are his friends!

It was Wasfia Nazreen who initiated a love for tea that I never thought existed - herbal and traditional green teas from India and mystical Tibet.

And then with time, I had a collection from, literally, the world over!

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all my friends who have over the years helped me form my budding collection. Yerba Mate from Colombia by Saiful Bhai, Addis from Ethiopia by Sid Bhai, black teas from Kenya by Sourav Bhai and Taskin, Turkish Herbal by Lenin, tea from the Borneo rainforest by Reema, Ceylon tea by Nirvana and Nafisa, Chinese green by Sabrina, another set of herbal teas by Rezwan, a green tea from Japan by Fumie, Chinese flower teas that Solveig got me from Berlin, and this assortment of black, jasmine, green and Puerh from my in-laws. And



it kept on growing.

In last few years my work took me to the US where I discovered this amazing Tea House at Santa Fe, New Mexico. Not only does this place boast a huge assortment but also has teas of the finest quality. I got home with some

Gyokuro Green, East Makaibari Black, 2001 Oak barrel vintage Pu-erh, Freak of Nature

(milky oolong), etc. Of which, Gyokuro Green is considered one of the finest of

Japanese teas. The process of making it makes this tea very interesting, as does its unique taste.

In Los Angeles, at a friends' place, I had the good fortune of tasting some fine Matcha - a powdered green tea that requires a bamboo whisk!

Talking about tea tools, the Latin American Yerba Mate is traditionally drunk in a gourd and sucked through a bombilla, a type of drinking straw. The use of strainers and infusers and the wide variety of tea make the whole idea of tea drinking more than a plain drink. It becomes an experience!

By Mishaal Aziz Ahmad
Photo: Sazzad Ibne Sayed

