

# 饮一杯茶 品一座城

从四季如春的中国昆明，到爱琴海边的土耳其伊兹密尔，从神秘古城摩洛哥非斯，到“探戈之城”布宜诺斯艾利斯，不论地点、气候、民俗如何不同，茶，总是以最恰当的方式出现在人们的生活中。独坐时，它是最静谧的陪伴；会友时，它是最温暖的分享；开心时大口啜饮，它的甜是喜悦的表达；难过时小口轻抿，它的涩又是情绪的共鸣……

因为一杯茶，爱上一座城，以及说不尽的故事。

From the ever-springy Kunming in China to the Aegean coastal city of Izmir in Turkey, from the mysterious ancient city of Fez in Morocco to the City of Tango, Buenos Aires, no matter the location, climate, or local customs, tea always finds its way into people's lives in the most appropriate manner. When you are sitting alone, it becomes the most serene companion; during gatherings, it is the warmest form of sharing. When feeling joyful, taking big sips of tea expresses delight; when feeling sad, sipping it gently resonates with emotions.

All because of a cup of tea, you'll fall in love with a city, and countless untold stories.

Savoring a Cup of Tea,  
Experiencing a City

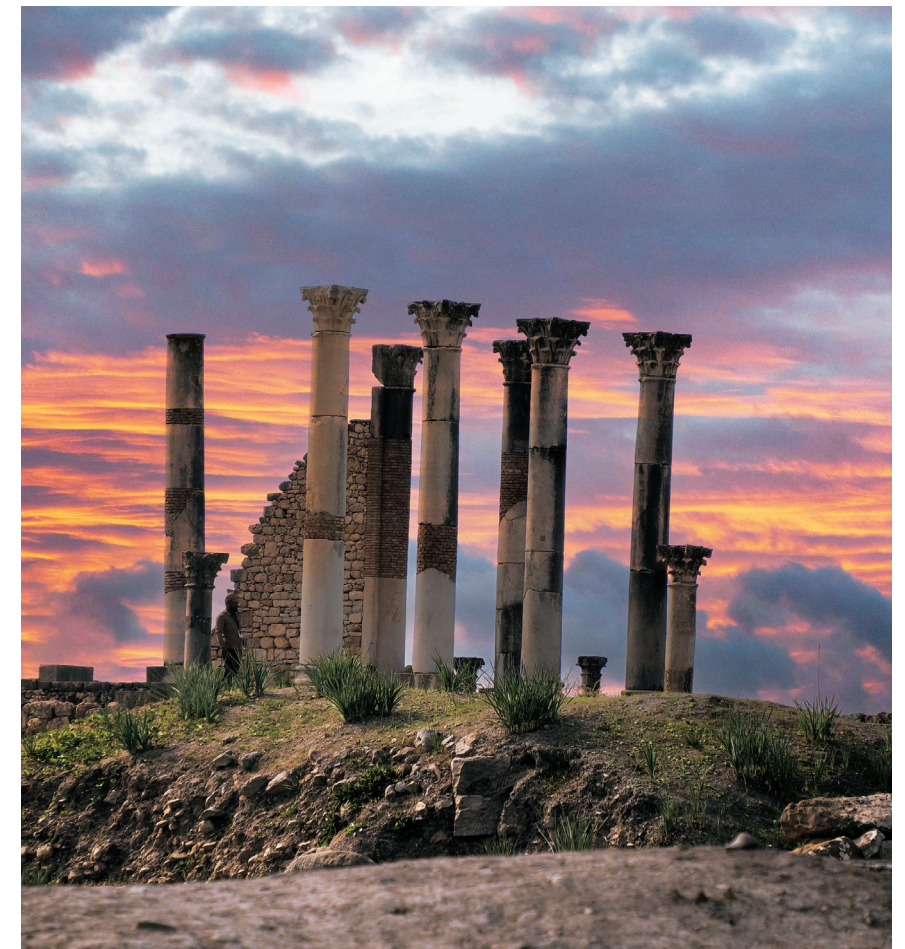




# Meeting Fez Through Mint Tea

● AUTHOR / CAMILLE PHOTOGRAPHS / PANORAMA MEDIA LNC., VCG, LV XING

In the early morning, as you walk through the winding alleys of the ancient towns stretching far along the banks of the Fez River, you will inevitably notice a common sight in every shop or dwelling: a tin tray, a tin teapot, and several glass cups. Whenever you take a seat in a small shop, the waiter will approach you, carrying the tray and those essentials, making a pleasant jingling sound. Tea leaves, sugar cubes, and mint leaves are tossed into the boiling water in the tin pot. With the teapot raised high in the air, the tea flows like sparkling crystals into the glass cup. Just a sip of this drink with rich sweetness, refreshing mint, and invigorating aroma will awaken your senses. This is Fez, Morocco's third-largest city and the oldest among the four ancient imperial cities.



This kind of tea renowned in every household of Fez is the national drink of Morocco—Mint Tea. For a long time, residents along the Mediterranean had the habit of steeping mint leaves in water for drinking. In the mid-19th century, Chinese tea carried by camel caravans journeyed along the Silk Road and arrived in Morocco. Locals began to experiment by adding a small handful of tea leaves to their steeped mint water. To their surprise, the combination of mint leaves and tea leaves complemented each other perfectly. Mint leaves neutralized the acidity and bitterness of the tea without affecting its fine flavour, while the tea imparted a rich aroma to the mint-infused water. Thus, Mint Tea quickly gained in popularity among Moroccans, and further became an indispensable beverage for the locals and neighbouring countries, playing an essential role in social and cultural exchanges.



It is pretty simple to prepare Mint Tea. You place fresh mint leaves, green tea, and white sugar in a tin teapot, heat the teapot for a few minutes, and then it is ready to be served. In addition to the unique combination of mint leaves and tea leaves, Mint Tea is characterized by the Arab region's penchant for sweetness. While heating the Mint Tea, Moroccans often add sugar, spices, or fruit juice to the tea according to their taste preferences. Furthermore, Mint Tea has a special pouring method that is considered an art form. When serving Mint Tea to guests, tea artisans skillfully pour the tea from a great height, with the distance between the spout of the teapot and the cup reaching over a meter. It is believed that pouring the tea in this manner allows for better oxidation and produces a more aromatic flavor, while also embodying the philosophies of Islam and the hospitality of the Moroccans. According to Moroccan tradition, the serving of Mint Tea to guests consists of three rounds, with each round having a distinct taste that becomes sweeter with each successive round. The transformation of flavors with each round has given rise to a proverb in the region, "The first cup of Mint Tea is as rich as life, the second cup as sweet



as love, and the third cup as soft as death." It gives people advice, blessings, and a reminder. Therefore, it is customary for Moroccans to serve guests with sweet tea, presenting three cups of tea as a gesture of hospitality. The gorgeous glass cup, with Islamic characteristics and the fusion of refreshing mint and aromatic green tea, is pleasant to the eye. Every sip of the tea gives you a mouthful of exquisite blended flavor,

sweetens your heart and leaves a cool and lingering sensation.

Mint Tea is often regarded as the perfect choice to refresh and aid digestion during hot climates. However, Fez, located in the northern part of Morocco and situated on high ground, has a moderate climate that seems not to naturally align with the mainstream tea culture. Nevertheless,

some regions of Morocco experience scorching heat year-round, and Fez, as the first Islamic city in North Africa, has been the religious, cultural, and artistic center of Morocco for over a thousand years, representing the spiritual essence of the nation. Due to the interplay between the surrounding places and the religious rules that prohibit alcohol consumption, the culture of Mint Tea took root in Fez.





Locals even playfully refer to Mint Tea as their "whiskey".

Today, the Medina of Fez (El-Bali) still preserves its medieval charm as the former capital. Passing through the Bab Boujloud, the blue and green mosaic-tiled gate adorned with Islamic patterns, you enter the ancient city of Fez, where exquisite Islamic architecture embellishes the maze-like gray and yellow houses, workshops, and bustling marketplaces that flourish side by side. While standing on the narrow and winding streets, you will discover many hidden gems. The Woodcarving Museum showcases the


breathhtaking traditional wooden craftsmanship of Fez, while the vibrant mosaic factories recreate Islamic designs steeped in history. Handicrafts are the soul of Fez, and Morocco's advantageous geographical position, located at the intersection of the Mediterranean and the Atlantic, has allowed these crafts to gain worldwide acclaim through well-established trade routes. Since its establishment in the Middle Ages, Fez's most famous tannery, standing quietly in the heart of the ancient city, has preserved traditional handcrafting methods. From the terraces of various leather shops, you can observe the waist-deep interlocking circular stone basins,

and colorful dye vats shining brightly under the sun. Mint leaves come in handy again, serving as a natural air freshener for travelers unaccustomed to the natural odors of the tannery.

As night falls, the locals would usually indulge in a specialty known as Tagine—a dish with a conical-shaped lid containing predominantly beef or chicken, accompanied by vegetables such as potatoes and flavored with olives or curry. Slow-cooked for a long time, this spicy and aromatic evening meal pairs well with a pot of Mint Tea to counterbalance the greasiness of the meat. If you wish to immerse yourself in the local culinary traditions, you can also complement the meal with a few pieces of Moroccan pastries. The sweet



aroma of the tea and the delectable taste of the sugar are cool kisses from this small city to its guests.

This is the specialty tea of Morocco, and this is the serene and beautiful ancient city of Fez. Standing on the hills that encircle the city, you will feel like stepping into the world of *One Thousand and One Nights*. The narrow streets, winding paths, elegant gardens with fountains, traditional houses, bustling markets... everything before your eyes resemble a spilled palette, offering you a multi-layered, mint-like experience. 





# A Cup of Çay to Sweeten the Soul

● AUTHOR / WANG XIAONUO

PHOTOGRAPHS / WANG XIAONUO, PANORAMA MEDIA LNC.,  
LV XING

Türkiye serves as the connecting bridge between Europe and Asia, where the cultures of both continents blend harmoniously, giving rise to a unique cultural atmosphere and culinary habits. For example, European coffee evolved into the distinct Turkish coffee upon reaching this magical land, and Asian tea, when brewed on Turkish stoves, acquired its unique flavor.

Life in Türkiye moves at a slow pace, and Izmir is both laid-back and charming. In Izmir's restaurants, breakfast is served until one or two in the afternoon, and a delightful breakfast is incomplete without the accompaniment of Çay, the Turkish black tea.

Picture an array of finely sliced cheeses, pastries, sausages, and fried eggs spread across the table. The server approaches with a pot of tea, pouring the amber-colored, clear tea into crystal teacups and adding a couple of sugar cubes. The morning becomes filled with sweetness as one takes in a breath of the tea's fragrance mingling with the rising steam. The process of brewing and drinking tea in Türkiye is meticulous, with specially designed double teapots. The lower pot boils water, while the upper pot holds the tea







leaves, serving as a lid for the lower pot. Once the water in the lower pot boils, it is poured into the upper pot, allowing the tea to steep to the desired strength before being poured into the teacups. The boiling water in the lower pot keeps the steam flowing, fully releasing the tea's aroma. Thus, Turkish tea is not simply brewed but rather boiled. The teacup used is a small, slim waist glass, which locals find appealing. Some say its shape resembles the tulip, Türkiye's national flower, while others compare it to the graceful waist of a young girl—in any case, it's truly captivating.

During the Ottoman Empire era, tea arrived in

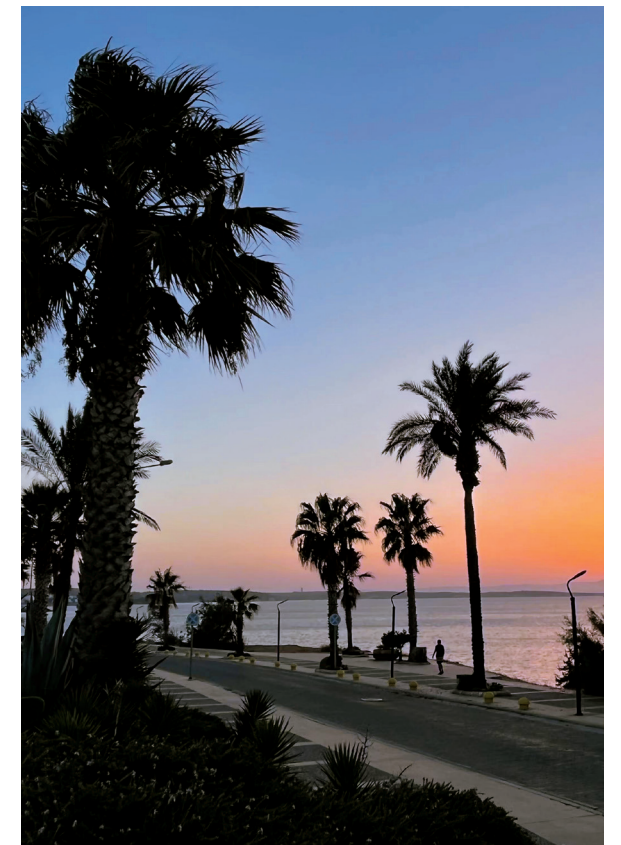


this land as a precious treasure along the Silk Road. However, the common people were still accustomed to drinking coffee. It wasn't until the 19th century when Sultan Abdul Hamid II developed a liking for tea, that Türkiye officially embraced this beverage. Towards the end of the 19th century, Türkiye began cultivating tea locally. After the establishment of the Republic of Türkiye, the legendary founding father, Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, aiming to boost the country's economy, developed the tea planting industry and established the first tea factory in Rize, in the northeastern Black Sea region. The aromatic tea has since then established its "roots" in Türkiye.

According to the International Tea Committee (ITC) report, the demand for Turkish tea is astounding, with an average consumption of 4

kilograms of tea per person per year, roughly 1250 cups per individual. This means that in Türkiye, a staggering 245 million cups of tea are consumed daily. Hence the popular Turkish proverb: "A conversation without tea is like a night sky without the moon." Clearly, the Turkish people are passionate about their tea.

In Izmir, there's no distinction between different types of tea. In fact, throughout the entire country, there is only one kind of black tea, presented as a large-grain black powder. It is typically sold in retail packages starting from one kilogram, highlighting its significant consumption. In Izmir, enjoying a cup of black tea is an all-time activity. Whether you're spending the afternoon in an upscale restaurant with delicate tea snacks, having a cup after any meal to balance the richness, or sitting at a simple tea stall on the







street, playing backgammon as you sip, or even wandering by the seaside with steamy tea kettles nearby—there's always time for tea. If you can't leave your place, don't worry; tea shop assistants can be found all over the streets, providing the thoughtful service of delivering tea to your door and collecting used cups. Due to the lack of variety, there isn't a significant difference in taste between different brands or regions of Turkish black tea. In the presence of Turkish black tea, everyone is treated equally.

Izmir faces the Greek islands across the sea, and with just an hour's boat ride, you can reach Greece. Due to its geographical proximity, Izmir has been significantly influenced by Greek culture. The area is blessed with emerald blue waters, giant palm trees lining the streets, and a picturesque coastline reminiscent of Greece.

Here, you can find the ancient Greek city of

Ephesus, dating back to the 10th century BCE, the best-preserved classical city on the eastern Mediterranean coast, which became the capital of Asia Minor during the Roman period. The logo of Nike draws inspiration from the statue of Artemis, the goddess of victory, in the temple here. Traveling northwest along the Aegean Sea for over 150 kilometers, you'll encounter the 17th-century Ottoman-built castle of Cesme, an excellent example of Ottoman architecture. These structures from different civilizations coexist in Izmir, creating a delightful gathering across time and space. Then there's the charming Aegean town of Alacati, with a history of just 150 years. Its stone-paved streets and houses covered in vibrant window decorations make it feel like stepping into a romantic Greek island. Only a cup of sweet Turkish black tea from a small shop by the street can bring your soul back to reality. In the end, the people of Izmir have held onto their fondness for their flavor-packed Çay. ☕





# The Enchanting Allure of Yerba Mate

● AUTHOR / HE BEIBEI

PHOTOGRAPHS / PANORAMA MEDIA LNC., VCG, LV XING

Latin Americans are often associated with a carefree and leisurely lifestyle and also for embracing festivities with fervor. Surprisingly, Argentina is also a nation that appreciates the taste of bitterness. Their national drink, yerba mate, or mate, is bitter, and some say it resembles China's bitter tea, with a bitter initial taste followed by a delightful aroma and aftertaste.

If you encounter a foreigner carrying a large thermal mug wherever they go, chances are they are Argentine because they have a habit of enjoying hot beverages. Almost ninety percent of Argentine households have yerba mate, and it's an integral part of their lives—whether it's serving guests at home, picnicking on the grasslands, working late in the office, engaging in informal conversations, or even students going to school—mate is indispensable, a truly national drink.

In 2018, there was news that Argentines launched a campaign on social media to demand an emoji for yerba mate. They passionately believed that such an important beverage should have its own symbol, just like coffee and beer. Fortunately, their efforts paid off, and Apple provided them



with an exclusive mate emoji.

In fact, Argentines have been tirelessly promoting yerba mate to the world. To promote and preserve the traditional culture associated with yerba mate, Argentina has designated a National Mate Day and even holds a Yerba Mate Princess Contest. Their obsession with yerba mate extends to various fields, including music and sports. During the 2022 World Cup, large quantities of yerba mate were sent to Qatar before the Argentine national team players arrived. After Argentina won the championship, in a photo Messi shared at his home in Argentina, he can be seen holding the World Cup in one hand and a cup of yerba mate in the other.



In the mysterious primal rainforests of South America, a plant called "Paraguayan holly" grows, which absorbs the essence of nature. In Spanish, it is known as yerba mate.

Over 500 years ago, there were brave and warlike





indigenous people, the Guarani, living in South America, who made a living through hunting and gathering wild fruits. Before going into battle, they would drink a beverage made from the leaves of a "magic tree". With this drink, they fought fiercely until the end. If you think it was just an ordinary drink, you'd be wrong. This bitter liquid had an exciting and stimulating effect, enhancing their combat spirit.

In Buenos Aires, the love for yerba mate extends to the vessels used to drink it. In the city center, numerous stalls and shops sell a variety of yerba mate accessories made from different materials, such as wood, ceramics, cowhide, horn, and pure silver. These cups are not only drinking vessels but also considered works of art. They are richly decorated, featuring metal embossing,

intricate wood carvings, gourd inlays, and even leather wrapping. The ornamentation includes a wide range of motifs, from the likeness of soccer legend Maradona to religious elements like little angels and the Argentine national team logo.

Preparing yerba mate requires a certain technique. The water is heated to around 85° C, and then the yerba mate leaves are filled to three-quarters of the teapot. The teapot's mouth is covered with the hand and shaken vigorously, causing the fine yerba mate powder to stay on top. Afterward, the teapot is tilted at an angle of about 45 degrees, and the straw (a special straw used for drinking mate) is inserted at the bottom to sip the beverage. As the water level reduces in the cup, more hot water is added,



and this process can be repeated throughout the day, making one cup of yerba mate last all day.

The straw used for drinking yerba mate is quite special, as it comes with a built-in filter function. As yerba mate is in powdered form, without this amazing straw, drinking it would result in getting tea leaves in your mouth.

In recent years, new ways of consuming yerba mate have emerged thanks to cultural exchange. For instance, in some areas of Buenos Aires, people add ice and lemon slices to make a cold beverage, perfect for hot summer days. To enhance the flavor, some people mix yerba mate with mint, cinnamon, and other ingredients. To mask the bitterness, others add a bit of milk, honey, or sugar.

If you visit Buenos Aires and the host brings out a leather teapot adorned with metal decorations and takes a sip before passing it on to you, then congratulations—you are a cherished guest and a true friend in their eyes.



Aside from its unique taste, yerba mate's popularity is also attributed to its reputed health benefits, regarded as the "tea of the gods" by locals. According to a friend from Buenos Aires, yerba mate contains over a hundred active substances that can effectively prevent diseases, aid in digestion, and act as an antioxidant, leaving people full of vitality every day. Of course, we cannot verify these miraculous effects, but nearly all of my Argentine friends say that yerba mate indeed has an invigorating effect—a cup

of yerba mate in the morning can wake up the body without causing the accelerated heartbeat associated with caffeine.

If you find yourself in Buenos Aires, why not take a City Walk? So my friend, take a stroll through the city, and when you see locals enjoying yerba mate, locking eyes with you, smiling, and offering you a cup with the straw, don't hesitate and accept it as yerba mate also symbolizes sharing. ☺





## A City Reflected in a Cup of Pu-erh Tea

● AUTHOR / CHao

PHOTOGRAPHS/ CHao, PANORAMA MEDIA LNC., VCG, LVXING

Walking through the streets and alleys of Kunming, China, you can always spot a variety of tea shops. Enticed by the unique and tranquil fragrance of fermented tea permeating from within, you will be inevitably drawn to the array of tea cakes displayed inside. When the shopkeepers notice your interest, they will warmly invite you inside, inquire about your preferences, and brew a pot of hot tea for you. As you savor the aroma and take a sip, the smooth and mellow tea not only pleases your throat, but also gives you a sense of history with its thousands of years of culture.

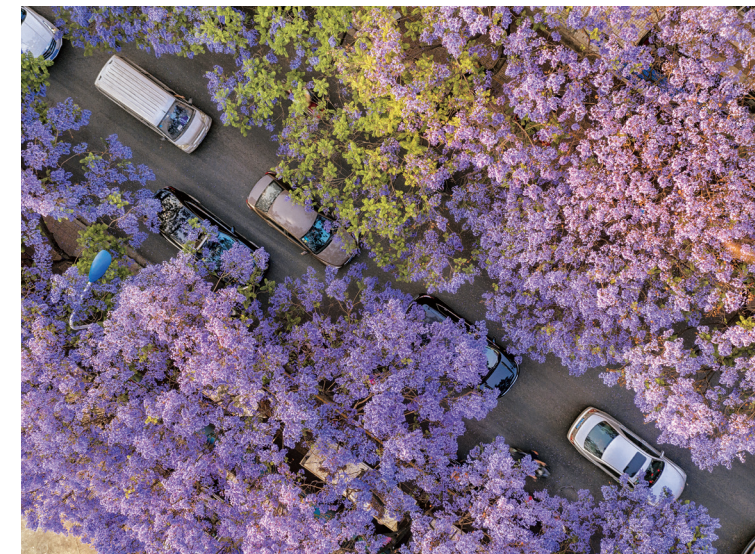


China is the birthplace of tea, with numerous provinces boasting a rich history of tea tree cultivation. Yunnan, in particular, began growing tea over 3,000 years ago. Flourishing during the Tang and Song Dynasties, and reaching its peak in the Ming and Qing Dynasties, Yunnan tea has stood the test of time, and stood out from its many competitors.

Yunnan is known for its diverse tea varieties, many of which come from ancient trees. Among them, the most representative and renowned is Pu-erh tea.

As one of China's famous teas, Pu-erh tea was once presented as a tribute to the royal family, attesting to its preciousness. Made from the sun-dried leaves of Yunnan's large-leaf tea trees, Pu-erh tea was traditionally processed into compressed tea cakes for the convenience of long-distance transportation. These cakes can be stored for quite a long time, and undergo continuous fermentation when exposed to air, resulting in a matured and aged flavor.

Based on different processing techniques, Pu-erh tea can be classified into raw (sheng) and ripe (shou) tea. Both types are produced from sun-dried green tea leaves that undergo processes such as withering, rolling, shaping, and drying. Ripe Pu-erh tea undergoes additional artificial fermentation, while raw Pu-erh tea remains unfermented. In terms of appearance, ripe Pu-erh tea has an overall reddish-brown color and emits a matured aroma reminiscent of aged and camphor-like fragrances. The resulting brew is a rich orange-red liquid. Newly-made raw Pu-erh tea cakes exhibit shades of grayish-green



or dark green and possess a fresh aroma akin to lotus leaves. With increasing years of storage, they gradually turn yellow and eventually reddish-brown.

There is a historical significance behind the shape of Pu-erh tea cakes. Since the Tang Dynasty, as communication between the Tibetan region and the mainland became more frequent, trade routes were opened up in southwestern China, with tea as the main commodity and mule caravans as





the primary means of transportation. Pu-erh tea played a vital role in Yunnan's trade. The Yunnan Tea-Horse Road saw the transportation of Pu-erh tea to Tibet and the return of unique Tibetan products to the mainland. Over time, this trade came to be known as the Tea-Horse Market, the commercial routes were referred to as the Tea-Horse Ancient Road, and the cultural exchange it engendered became known as the Tea-Horse Culture. The Tea-Horse Culture reflects a facet of the cultural integration and development of diverse ethnic groups, embodying fine qualities of the local people such as resilience, courage, and inclusiveness.

During the Qing Dynasty, with flourishing trade, Yunnan saw the rise of the Xi Zhou commercial guild led by the Yan, Dong, Yin, and Yang families. They transported Yunnan tea, Sichuan







silk, and Jiangxi porcelain to the rest of the world and imported jewelry, diamonds, motorcycles, and other novel items to China, engaging in foreign trade. The Yan family, which rose to prominence through the Tea-Horse Road, invented the pressed Pu-erh tea cake with a hollow center for convenient transportation. Since the Yunnan people referred to block-shaped objects as "tuo", Pu-erh tea was initially known as "Tuo tea". In the past, this "Tuo tea" was sold to the Yibin area of Sichuan, where locals enjoyed it brewed with water from the Tuo River, resulting in an excellent taste. The perfect combination of Tuo River water and "Tuo tea" enhanced the reputation of "Tuo tea", and it was subsequently renamed as the "Tuo cha" that we know today.

Kunming still preserves the charm of its old streets. Although the city walls have collapsed and been removed, the interweaving alleys still evoke



the scenes of old streets and markets during the Qing Dynasty and the Republic of China era. The quaint stone paths, brown wooden buildings, and towering archways in the streets are all witnesses to history. The wafting tea aroma, the melodious sound of copper beating, the tie-dye fabrics, and the clay cat figurines all showcase the cultural essence of Kunming.

A land of plateaus, Yunnan boasts lush forests and fertile soil. Here, not only do tea trees thrive, but also a plethora of wild mushrooms grow. Pairing mushrooms with Pu-erh tea can be considered a unique culinary philosophy of the locals. Mushroom hot pot is a must-have when you are in Kunming. The soup base, made with edible wild mushrooms, is exceptionally flavorful paired with a cup of Pu-erh tea or Pu-erh-

infused dishes such as Pu-erh tea eggs, braised Pu-erh pork, Pu-erh tea-stewed chicken, and more. The combination of Pu-erh tea and mushroom soup creates an exquisite harmony that delights the taste buds with every mouthful.

Yunnan's landscape is magnificent, with ranges of mountains, clusters of lakes, ancient cities, and old streets. It takes a considerable amount of time to fully appreciate its beauty. Leisurely strolling and savoring, you will take in the breathtaking sights and experience the carefree and pleasant atmosphere. Just like a cup of robust Pu-erh tea, time bestows upon it various shades of broth and a rich and layered taste. The more time you give it, the more you can relish the delightful surprises it brings to your palate. Life, like drinking tea, can also be enjoyed by starting with a cup of Pu-erh. 🍵