



*Specialty Tea*  
**PAI MU TAN**  
(China White Tea)



**Country of Origin:** China

**Region:** Fujian Province

**Shipping Port:** Fuzhou

**Grade:** Pai Mu Tan Grade #1 (a.k.a. White Peony)

**Altitude:** 2000 – 4000 ft above sea level

**Manufacture Type:** White Tea - naturally withered

**Cup Characteristics:** Clear slightly pale cup with a fresh aroma and a smooth velvety flavor. Delicate jammy notes reminiscent of Keemun or a mild Bordeaux

**Infusion:** Pale yellow

**Ingredients:** Luxury white tea

**Information:**

This is the highest grade of white tea available before one enters the stratosphere in pricing for white teas such as Peony White Needle Tea. Pai Mu Tan leaves are plucked from a special varietal tea bush called Narcissus or chaicha bushes. Secondly the leaves are not steamed or pan-fired (the process used in green teas). The leaves are naturally withered and dried in the sun. If mechanical drying is required it is a baking process at temperatures less than 40°C. Thirdly only special 'two leaves and a bud' are selected. These leaves must show a very light green almost gray white color and be covered with velvet peach fuzz down. White teas that are withered in conditions that are too hot will become reddish and in conditions that are too cold they will become blackish. You will see on this Pai Mu Tan that the tea maker struck the perfect balance between solar and indoor withering resulting in a perfect white tea.

The western cosmetic industry has recently discovered the benefits of white tea. In addition to its anticancer properties, tea has a calming and detoxifying effect on the skin. White tea is especially potent in that it has three times as many antioxidant polyphenols as green or black tea and has been shown to be 100% more effective in mopping up free radicals that cause skin to sag. Some of the world's top cosmetic companies are becoming very interested in white tea for skin creams and the result is that high grade white tea is becoming even more rare than before.

Researchers at the Linus Pauling Institute in Oregon tested white teas on selected rates to test for the ability of white teas to inhibit natural mutations in bacteria and to protect the rates from colon cancer. Interestingly, white teas were found to be more effective than green tea in inhibiting the early stages of cancer but researchers were quick to point out that their study was on rats and the effects should not be extrapolated to humans. The researchers also discovered that white tea contains higher levels of caffeine compared to green tea brewed under the same conditions. They suggested that this could occur because white tea oxidizes during withering whereas in green tea the oxidation process is stopped early in the tea making process by steaming or panfiring.

**Hot tea brewing method:** When preparing by the cup, this tea can be used repeatedly (à la chinoise) - about 3 times. The secret is to use water that is about 180°F or 90°C. Place 1-2 teaspoons of leaves in your cup and let the tea steep for 3 minutes. Then begin enjoying a cup of enchantment - do not remove the leaves from the cup. Once the water level is low - add more water, and so on - until the tea flavor is exhausted. Alternatively for 1 time use, add boiling water and steep for 3-5 minutes according to taste. Milk or sugar will mask the delicate characters of this tea and are not recommended. Look at the pattern of the leaves - they foretell life.

**Iced tea brewing method:** It is not customary to make iced tea from white tea, nevertheless if you wish to do so we would recommend the following method: Place 6 teaspoons of tea into a teapot or heat resistant pitcher. Pour 1 1/4 cups of freshly boiled water over the tea. Steep for 5 minutes. Quarter fill a serving pitcher with cold water. Pour the tea into your serving pitcher straining the leaves. Add ice and top up the pitcher with cold water. Garnish and sweeten to taste. [A rule of thumb when preparing fresh brewed iced tea is to double the strength of hot tea since it will be poured over ice and diluted with cold water.]