

Grand Tour Report (tea culture)

*Because of the sudden change of the schedule, we didn't go to the Fukujuen Uji Workshop which is supposed to be the place where we are in charge of, so the content of this report is mostly based on the research we did.

Chapter 1: Introduction

Background of the topic:

Green tea is now ubiquitous in Japan, but when it first arrived from China in the 700s, the drink was unknown except to a handful of priests and noblemen. A few hundred years later during the Kamakura Period (1192-1333), green tea leaves which imported from China and cultivated in Uji started becoming popular among the nobility.

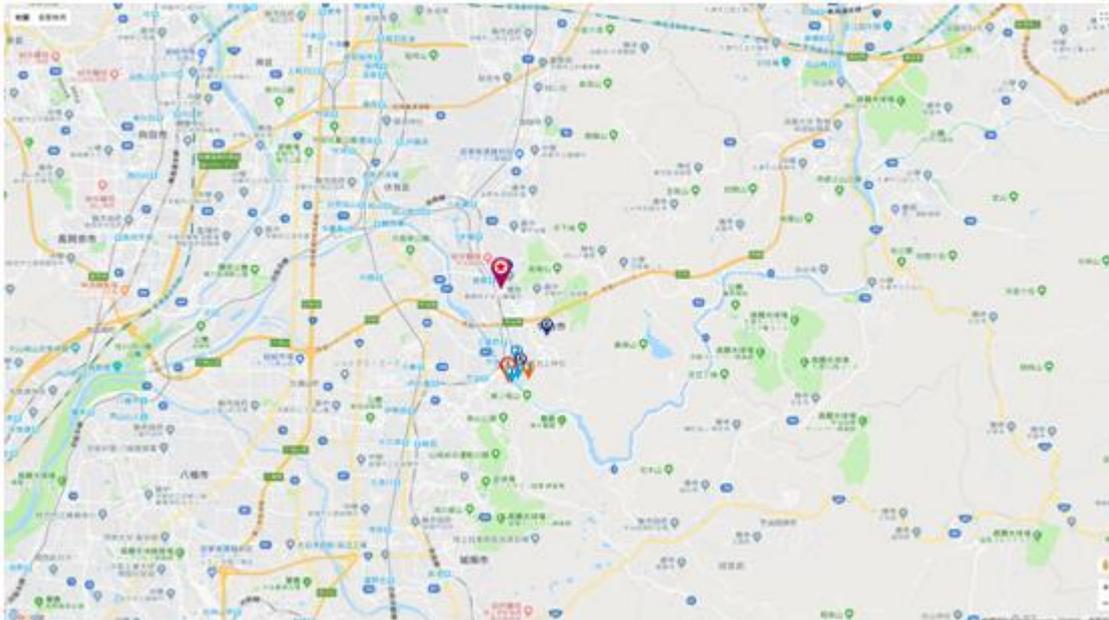
Eisai, the Zen priest who imported Zen Buddhism to Japan from China, introduced the benefits of the beverage in a book and advised the Uji priests in tea plant cultivation and preparation. Tea drinking later became popular among the masses, and Uji earned a reputation for excellent tea production as one of the first places to engage in tea cultivation. Today, Uji's tea is still regarded to be of superior quality.

Objectives of the project:

Green tea is one of the most popular alternatives. Besides, Uji green tea from Japan is well known worldwide for its uniqueness. So we will like to investigate on the following objectives:

1. the value of Uji green tea
2. the difference between China's tea culture and Japan's tea culture

Area of Fukujuen Uji Workshop:



Chapter 2: Methodology

Choice of method:

Again since we ran out of time and the different arrangement on the schedule, we didn't actually go to Fukujuen Uji Workshop for photo taking inside, interview and deliver questionnaires. So our group conducted research online instead.

Classification of the studying target:

1. Focus:

To investigate the uniqueness of Uji green tea

2. Topic:

A. The value of uji green tea (historical, international, national)

B. The difference between China's tea culture and Japan's tea culture

3. Foresee problems and solution

Problem 1:

We didn't have enough time to explore more about the green tea culture when we were in Uji, so we used our time to buy more souvenirs for further investigation and reminiscence.

Problem 2:

Originally, we would get into the workshop and try to make our own Uji green tea. The problem that we predicted is that making uji green tea cannot really let us understand about the uniqueness of uji green tea because most of us didn't have the experience of making China's green tea. So, we went online to understand about the China's green tea as well.

Chapter 3: Literature Review

Tea cultivation in Uji can be traced back to early 11th century, it shows that there is a long history of green tea in Uji, matcha. The tradition of cultivation originally started at Kozanji Temple in Kyoto, however, it was the tea from Uji that had superior quality. A Japanese Buddhist priest imported both Zen Buddhism and green tea to Japan from China around 700 A.D. Nowadays, not only matcha is produced, but also matcha flavored ice creams and sweets.

China is the undisputed juggernaut in the tea growing arena. The sheer volume of tea that they produce crushes the competition. China grows and manufactures every variety of tea and has a very diversified portfolio. They produce a lot and they produce it well. Historically, China was the seed of the worldwide tea obsession, and the first to cultivate and export it to the rest of the world. We could say that tea first got its roots in China! Actually, there is a big difference in the way to grow tea in China and that in Japan. Tea in China is grown under sunlight while tea in Japan is shade grown in order to disturb the photosynthetic processes so that more chlorophyll is kept in the tea leaf tissue. It helps to strengthen the body's immune defense and help to cleanse the blood. Tea in Japan is rich in amino acids which are responsible for the coveted umami flavor which is very popular. The Japanese tea curing process is done via steaming as opposed to withering and pan-firing. The significant difference between Chinese and Japanese Tea is that the latter is fixed by steaming, whereas

the former is fixed* with drier heats such as pan-frying. Top teas are Sichuan Dew and Organic Bohea Lapsang from China and Sencha and Matcha from Japan.

Chapter 4 Photograph analysis



It is located on the scenic beauty of Uji River. On the other side we worshiped Byodo-in Temple, the back is the Asahi Mountain. It is a place that is related to the Asahi-en Garden which is one of Seven Tea Garden (Shichi Meika-chan) since ancient times. It is also adjacent to the Asahi kiln, one of the historical name ceramics of the Seven Kilns of Enshu (Easy Shop Nagama). As what we have mentioned at the beginning, we actually did not visit the Uji tea workshop due to the rearrangement of the tour. Therefore, we do not have any photo in this workshop to make analysis.

Chapter 5 Findings of the interviews

Unfortunately, we did not visit the Uji tea workshop because of the rearrangement of the tour. Therefore, no interview was made for the information of Uji or tea culture.

Chapter 6 Conclusion

As everyone has their own taste, it is hard to figure out the best flavor of the tea. But it is proved that the Uji's green tea is the unique one that other countries could hardly copy. Couple with the insufficient information collected in Japan, we can only provide limited information about the Uji's green tea. It is for sure that the value and the uniqueness of green tea are very high.

Chapter 7 Reflection

WONG TAT HIN: Richard Branson had once said that “ Education doesn’t just take place in stuffy classrooms and university buildings, it can happen everywhere, every day to every person.” In this grand tour, we went to Shanghai and Japan. We paid a visit to our sister school. We went to the Railway Museum. The tourist spots that we visited were exhaustive. Throughout the trip, we tried, we played, we learnt. The whole trip was unforgettable and marvelous. Collaboration, cooperation and communication are what classmates and I have improved. United we stand, divided we fall. We worked as a team to deal with all obstacles we met. The experience was extraordinary and the whole trip was remarkable.

KE ER: This trip is definitely going to be one of my best memories in school life. Throughout the trip, we learnt how to work together; we shared the happiness and tackled the tough missions together. In this trip, we went to Shanghai and Japan, to understand and learn the culture. This broaden our exposure to the world.

TAM PAK LONG: This trip has already been one of my best memories in the school life. Grand tour is always one of the most anticipated activities in the King Ling’s school life. I did not just go to Shanghai and Japan for the tourist spots, learning their culture and shopping, but I mainly enjoyed my moments hanging out with my classmates. During the trip, we found foreigners in Shanghai and the locals in Japan for saying “Happy birthday to King Ling College. “It was undoubtedly a challenging mission for us as we do not know how to speak Japanese and it was very embarrassing too. Also, we took care of each other so that our friendship have been further enhanced. This experience would be a very unforgettable one. After we graduate, it will be a “hot topic” when we meet each other again.

WONG TAK TAI: In the whole trip, all classmates share the joyful time in Shanghai and Japan. We tried the tea from China and also the tea from Japan. Having a taste of that, we knew that there is a big difference in the two different culture. We also went to the sister school and had lessons in the school. We separated into different groups and I was assigned to have the Biology lesson. Having a lesson in Putonghua which differs from the language that our school is having during Biology lesson is challenging but amazing. Another challenging mission in the trip is to invite the locals and non-Asian tourists to congratulate King Ling College for the 25th anniversary. Language barrier is the biggest challenge but we did our best to communicate with them. The grand tour will be the best memory in my life.

Chapter 9: Bibliography

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