



PEONY WHITE NEEDLE

(Very Rare China White Tea)

Country of Origin: China

Region: Fujian Province

Shipping Port: Fuzhou

Altitude: 2500 – 4000 ft above sea level

Grade: Bashan Silver Tip

Manufacture Type: White Tea - naturally withered

Cup Characteristics: This delicate white tea has a clean taste faintly reminiscent of fresh apples. Refreshing with a lovely, lingering flavor.

Infusion: A shimmering clear infusion

Ingredients: Luxury white tea

Information:

The production of white tea is very different to green tea. Firstly the leaves come from a special varietal tea bush called Narcissus or chaicha bushes. Secondly the leaves are not steamed or pan-fired, as is the case in green tea. These leaves are withered and dried naturally under semi-controlled conditions. If mechanical drying is required the leaves are baked (not fired) at temperatures less than 40°C. Thirdly only special leaves are selected. These leaves must show a very light green almost gray white color and be covered with velvet peach fuzz down. The ideal is a leaf or two being wrapped around a newly developing shoot. These shoots are plucked and segregated from the rest of the leaf being plucked. These leaves are then naturally withered and the painstaking process manual sorting to select the long ‘furry’ white tip occurs.

Peony White Needle Tea is the top grade available and very rare - hence its high cost. You will see the long white needles covered with furry down and a very uniform appearance – hallmarks of very rare white tea. These are the rules for picking Peony White Tea:

- Only picked between March 15 and April 10.
- Not picked on days that may be raining
- Not picked if the dew has not dried or if there is frost on the ground
- No purple buds allowed and the stems must not be too long or too short.
- Leaves damaged by wind, handling, insects or partially open are rejected and put into a lower grade.

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.

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° or 90°C. Place about 10-15 silver tips into 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. Look at the pattern of the leaves - they foretell life.

Iced tea-brewing method: - Not recommended as the delicate nuances of this particularly refined tea will be lost.