Tea garden standard headline

By IRVING NERN

Everyone knows tea originally came from China, but that was a bit more than 2,500 years ago, while the tea bushes back from 1600 B.C. It was the principle export of the British East India Company. That company everything quite a lot, on tea imports to the West, based on a price of tea, that of China.

In 1841 a British civil servant, Dr. Arthur Camillia sinensis civil servant, Dr. Arthur

On a visit to Glenburn Estate.

Visitors may need to pack an umbrella for the city's frequent drizzles, but the many of the best sights require only a short walk.

Cambridge standard hed

As a child, she visited Darjeeling. I have a chance to see tea plantations: Happy Valley, Glenburn and Makaibari. The first one is most famous as having the world's most expen-

Happy Valley plantation, the world's highest mountain, and was British colonial territory. It attracted a summer crowd of vacationers. It also proved to be a good place to cultivate tea. In fact, tea from Darjeeling became so successful, that it replaced China tea in world trade to become the world's highest quality black tea.

The tea of Darjeeling actually are not grown in Darjeeling, at 6,710 feet. It's too high. Most of it is grown downhill from Darjeeling, closer to the city of Ghum (or Ghoom). So really we should call it Ghum tea!

Today the area around Ghum and Darjeeling is carpeted with tea bushes. Some of these are very old—the Happy Valley "tea garden" as the plantations are sometimes called go back from the 1850s, and the bushes are around 80 and 120 years old. Happy Valley bought by some of the planners of tea to Harrow's. When a friend and I visited Darjeeling, I had a chance to see tea plantations: Happy Valley, Glenburn and Makaibari. The last one is most famous as having the world's most expen-

Travel

Cambridge standard hed

There is One Place is famous in America, thanks in part to President Bill Clinton's stay there. But it was known before that, based on to Cecil Rhodes' scholarship for Americans.

The One Place is what Cambridge University students in England call Cambridge University. And vice versa. But in Brazil the two universities are considered equivalent. Both are among Europe’s half dozen oldest, Architectur-

ETRIP TO ROUND 2, CHAI!

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Darjeeling from page 1

the tea leaves from spoilage.

Cambridge from page 1

Darjeeling tea leaves ready for brewing.

Drying, the now black tea is worked through a machine to grade. Tea is graded by size. Large leaf is generally higher quality. The dust, or fannings, are sold for tea-bags. As I was walking around in stock- ing feet—no one wears shoes in the plants—the fannings collected in a five-foot high pile in the corner. No one had much respect for fannings. Graded tea is poured into sacks, and shipped to the tea auction in Kolkata (Calcutta), south of Darjeeling. There the price is set, and it is shipped around the world. No tea outside of this geographical area can sell as Darjeeling—nor as any wine outside of Burgundy in France can sell as Burgundy. Of course, it’s hard to police such a guarantee outside India, and tea sold as “Darjeeling” often isn’t.

Most tea grown outside of Darjeeling is sold in the West as blends, and the cheaper Darjeeling also often is a blend. This doesn’t necessarily mean low quality, although in my experience the Darjeeling blends I’ve tried just haven’t measured up to the single-estate teas. Reeling tea infuses fast—one minute may be too long. Whole leaf Dar- jeeling, on the other hand, usually needs about three to four minutes. Water should just barely cover about one rounded teaspoon of tea per cup. Just place the leaves in the teapot. Strain with a tea filter to drink. Black tea keeps a long time—2 years is not unusual, able, except for first flush, which should be used more quickly.

Tea is supposedly healthy, based on its polyphenols in forma- tion. But the research on health benefits of tea, green or black, is still inconclusive. Tea does contain more caffeine by weight than coffee, but because it’s so light, you use less in a cup.

I asked the Glenburn tea garden staff about that—why not plant cof- fee? It’s pretty much the same growing conditions, after all. “We do grow in the south,” the innkeeper answered. “Actually. We could grow coffee right here, instead of tea! But why have one harvest per year when you can have four?”

The manager returned to usher me to the waiting Talla 44X. “Well, thanks for coming,” he said. “We do have a web site. You can buy directly from us.”

The Glenburn visit took about two hours. On the way back up the road, Davi the guide mused, “I’ve never had a tourist so interested in tea.” But he didn’t realize that, for someone from Fargo, this really was a once-in-a-lifetime trip.

Darjeeling from page 1

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The best place to watch is in the hallways of the Capitol or office build- ings, especially around the little underground train that runs between the Senate and House sides of the Capitol. Anybody can take the train—but you’ll have to go through a metal detector to get into the congressional off- fice buildings.

At the opposite end of the mall from the Capi- tol, past the Washington Monument and in wounded Constitution Gardens on the way to the Lincoln Memorial is the Vietnam Veterans Memorial. Not grandiose and proud, it is simply a set of black stone tablets running about 100 yards, listing 58,183 Americans killed or missing in the war. All of these mura- ms and memorials are in central Washington,

The U.S. Capitol rotunda is world famous for its slow and architectural details and Congressional staff themselves are known to indulge, looking for famous senators or representatives around the Capitol and its office buildings. There a hierar- chy here: while someone like Minnesota’s Collin Peterson is hardly worth a murmur, John McCain is a real find.

All of this is an easy walk after an hour-long train trip from London.