

# New Western Cuisine



NO.79 January 2012



产品设计



美食看东方

Turn East and Feast

**Eveline Chao**

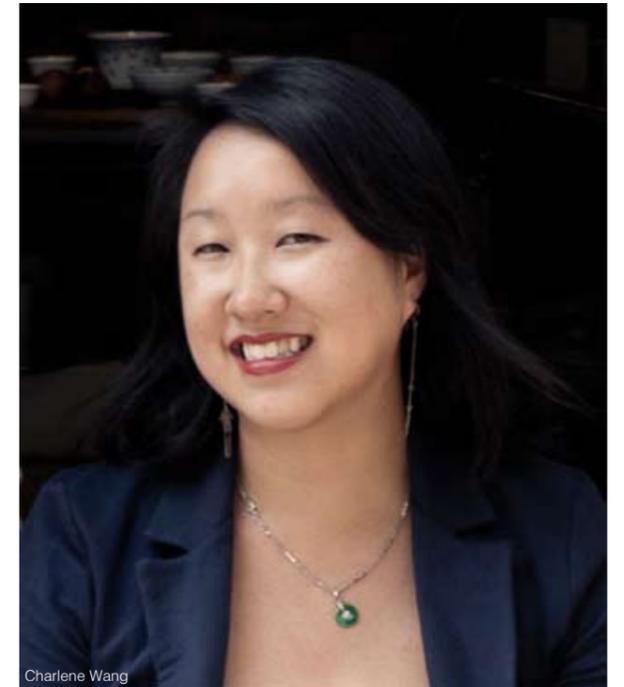
Eveline Chao is a freelance writer based in Beijing and New York, and the author of "NIUBI! - The Real Chinese You Were Never Taught in School."

赵懿是居住于北京和纽约两地的自由撰稿人，著有《那些学校不会教你的中文》。

## Body and Soul

A spotlight on Beijing-based social enterprise Tranquil Tuesdays

动静相宜



Charlene Wang

Unless you've been living under a rock for the past hundred years, you're probably aware that tea is good for you. It has been shown to reduce cholesterol, improve heart health, and is full of antioxidants. And of course, it's just plain delicious. But, what if you could drink tea that was not only good for the body, but good for the soul? With Tranquil Tuesdays, you can do just that. Tranquil Tuesdays is a tea company founded by Chinese-American Charlene Wang in 2010.

Born in Boston, but raised in California to parents from Taiwan and Hong Kong, Wang has always been passionate about tea. Her parents always served tea at family meals, and she vividly remembers being introduced to British-style high tea by them when she was 10. From there, Wang remained always on the lookout for great teas for her collection. After graduating from Wellesley College in 2003 she joined the U.S. State Department as a Foreign Service Officer. She was posted first to Bangladesh, then to Beijing, taking her obsession with tea international. She traveled to tea gardens in Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, and India, and sought out historical tea shops everywhere she went.

China was a veritable wonderland for a tea lover like Wang—after all, the practice of drinking tea originated here. She recalls sitting in a meeting at the Foreign Ministry and being utterly distracted by how good the tea was. To this day she can't remember what in the world the meeting was about, but can still recall the fresh, pure, revelatory taste of that longjing green tea. In Beijing, Wang was also struck by the incredibly smart, capable Chinese women she met everywhere who were



working at the bottom of the social totem pole, making little or no money. They were housekeepers, nannies, or women who just couldn't find any work in the competitive environs of Beijing.

Wang had worked as a Human Rights Officer in Bangladesh, where she'd learned about global issues affecting women everywhere, and in China in particular. It was clear to her that these women were talented but due to a variety of factors, such as lack of access to education and lack of flexible work options for those with children, had never had the chance to put their smarts to good use. "I don't think level of education or professional experience matters as much as someone's attitude, to work hard, learn, and grow. If someone has the right attitude and determination, everything else can be taught," says Wang. It was also around this time that Wang learned the term "social enterprise"—that is, an organization that applies business strategies to achieving philanthropic goals.

She knew then that she wanted to create a business that could serve as a platform to provide the training, support, and stable employment that would enable women to develop their full potential. Thus, Tranquil Tuesdays was born. Wang was by this time posted to Washington, D.C. but she quit her job with State Department and moved back to Beijing to create a business that would not only introduce the teas she loved to the world outside China,

but also do good for society. Unlike the teas most Americans tend to drink, the teas sold by Tranquil Tuesdays are unscented, unblended, and whole-leaf. (Take note—that Lipton-style standby is more or less made from the tea dust that is left over after Chinese tea producers have used up the good, un-cut stuff for its home markets.) Because they are so fresh, the high-quality, pesticide-free lines on offer change seasonally, and are personally sourced by Wang from small, family-run farms around China.

The company also sells handmade teaware designed and fired in Jingdezhen, the center of China's porcelain craft for the past 1,000 years. Tranquil Tuesdays makes an effort to partner with women-owned and operated businesses for all its business needs, from design to photography to production of the teas. Wang also seeks to fill every key position within the company with women who would otherwise have a hard time finding a job. "I wanted to create a social enterprise that responded to the specific needs of women in China. Therefore, through the organizations I seek to partner with, I especially welcome rural migrant workers, women who have not had schooling beyond middle school, sexual exploitation survivors, domestic violence survivors, and women who have attempted suicide to come work at Tranquil Tuesdays, and find the specific

resources needed for each woman," says Wang. Her first employee was Xiao Zhang, a former ayi, or cleaning person, and mother of one from rural Heilongjiang Province in China's frigid northeast. Following the pattern of many migrant workers in Beijing, Xiao Zhang and her husband had sent their son back to live with his grandparents because they could not simultaneously work and care for him.

Now though, Xiao Zhang receives training as Tranquil Tuesday's Inventory and Beijing Retail Accounts Manager, and thanks to the company's flexible hours is able to live with her son and send him to public school in Beijing. Tranquil Tuesdays is also sponsoring Xiao Zhang to take regular English lessons and several tea certification courses.

It is important to Wang that her employees learn real business skills that they can take away with them to any job. "I didn't want to just give women simple menial jobs that underestimated what they were capable of," says Wang. "Instead, I challenge each of our employees to achieve beyond what they think they are capable of."

It is a vision that anyone can get behind. Just as the flavors and aromas of tea must slowly develop, revealing its inherent qualities as it steeps, Tranquil Tuesdays is showing us that with the proper training, support, and encouragement, any woman can work in a job that showcases her innate talents, and live up to her full potential.

除非你过去几百年都不问世事, 否则一定知道茶对身体健康有益这件事。实验证明茶可以降低胆固醇, 含有丰富的抗氧化剂并有利于心脏健康。不仅如此, 茶还是相当可口的。而且喝茶不仅对身体有益, 对精神也同样有益, 在宁静二天, 茶就有这样的效果。宁静二天是由华裔美人 Charlene Wang 于2010年创办的。

父母来自香港和台湾, 出生于波士顿, 成长在加利福尼亚, Charlene 一直对茶抱有极大热情。她的家庭聚会上茶是不可或缺的一部分, 而她更记得父母向10岁的自己介绍高端的英式饮茶。从那时起, 她就一直在寻觅更好的收藏。2003年从卫尔斯利女子学院毕业后她加入了美国外交部, 被派往孟加拉和北京, 令她的茶叶嗜好走向了世界。她参观了斯里兰卡、印度和孟加拉的茶园, 并光顾了所有能找到的老茶馆。

而中国对于她这样的饮茶爱好者更是终极之地——饮茶的习惯起源于这个国度。她记得在外交部开会时却因为感慨于茶的好品质而分神。如今回想, 她早已不记得那次会议为了何事, 却依然对那新鲜、香醇的龙井茶香记忆犹新。令她同样印象深刻的还有在北京遇到的勤劳智慧却在底层努力营生的女性们, 她们在这个竞争激烈的城市中做着保姆、月嫂或者根本找不到工作。

Charlene 在孟加拉时曾做过人权工作员, 在那里她深刻了解到各种世界问题对女性的影响。她很清楚这些女性的潜力, 但是却因为缺少接受教育的机会或是因为缺少弹性的工作环境, 致使她们无法发挥自己的智慧。“我不觉得一个人的教育水平或是专业经验比她想要学习、努力工作、进

步更重要。如果一个人有好的态度和决心, 那其他的事情都可以慢慢培养。”也是那段时间, 她初次听说了“社会企业”这个词——指的是那些运用商业策略达到慈善目标的组织。

她希望建立一个企业来为女性提供接受培训、支援及稳定工作的平台, 使得她们能够挖掘自己的潜质, 因此宁静二天成立了。那时外交部召她回华盛顿, 但是她却辞掉在政府的工作搬回了北京, 创建了一个不仅能向世界介绍她所热爱的茶文化, 同时还能为社会做出贡献的公司。不像美国人常饮用的茶品, 宁静二天所出售的茶叶为无味、无混合, 并且是全叶状。因为是新鲜茶叶, 所以会随着季节不同而变更茶铺。这些茶叶是由 Charlene 本人亲自从小规模家庭茶庄购得。

宁静二天同样销售景德镇制作的手作茶具。从设计、摄影到茶叶生产, 宁静二天都努力和其他全由女性运作经营的公司合作。Charlene 同样尝试将公司内部所有关键职位提供给除此外很难找到工作的女性。“我希望能创建一个社会企业来解决中国女性的特殊需求。所以通过合作的公司, 我会特别欢迎那些外来务工的、没接受过中学以上教育的、家暴受害者或者是有过自杀经历的女性来我们这里工作, 并且找出每个人所特别需要的资源。”她的第一名员工小张是来自黑龙江省的一名母亲, 在北京曾做过阿姨。和许多外地务工人员一样, 小张和丈夫不得不把儿子送回黑龙江的祖父母家, 因为他们没办法同时工作并照顾儿子。

但是现在, 小张经过培训后成为宁静二

天的物资及北京分店经理, 同时由于公司的弹性工作时间, 小张把儿子接回身边, 并送往周边一所公立小学读书。宁静二天同时还资助小张上英语课及其他茶叶资格认证课程。

对于 Charlene 来说, 她的员工学习可以带到其他工作岗位的商业技能也是非常重要的一个环节。“我不希望仅仅给她们简单的工作, 我知道她们的潜能, 所以我挑战她们, 让她们实现她们自己都不相信的目标。就像茶叶需要慢慢品味一样, 每个人潜在的能量也要慢慢发掘。”

宁静二天让我们明白, 只要有充分的培训、支持和鼓励, 任何女性都能展现她的天赋, 实现自己的潜能。

