

News from the Tea Gardens

At Camellia Forest

Greetings and happy summer,

It's hot out there, and this read will pair great with some iced tea. Sit back, relax, and sip away while you find out about what's been happening here at the tea gardens. We use this newsletter to update you on events and workshops, give tips for tea gardening, and more!

Carolina Piedmont Summertime Tea Talks -August 29th

Calling all tea lovers, locavores, and growers! We are partnering with RambleRill Farm in Hillsborough, NC to host a symposium on growing local tea and community. Our panel consists of 5 presenters who cover a range of topics related to tea, such as growing and processing, medicinal and therapeutic aspects, and the US tea renaissance. Your registration will include the speaker series, a tour of the farm, and tea tasting. Register through [RambleRill Farm](#) now to reserve your spot!

What's been happening in the gardens?

After an abundant first flush in late spring, we have approached the second. These new growths mean there's more to harvest in the upcoming weeks. We've also been taking care of our tea seedlings. For gardening tips and more stories from the gardens, see page 3.

Summer, 2021



Workshops

INTRO TO THE TEA GARDEN

SATURDAYS, 2-4

July 10, 24

HARVEST AND PROCESS

SUNDAYS, 10-3

July 11, 25

[Go here for more info or to register](#)

PICK YOUR OWN

(with completion of harvest/processing workshop or prior experience)

AUGUST weekends

[By appointment](#)

Meet our volunteers!

If you have been around our gardens recently, you've probably heard about two of our volunteers, Caroline and Danielle. They are an integral part of the Camellia Forest family and we are so very grateful for all their help and friendship. We enjoy sharing tea and learning together in the gardens!



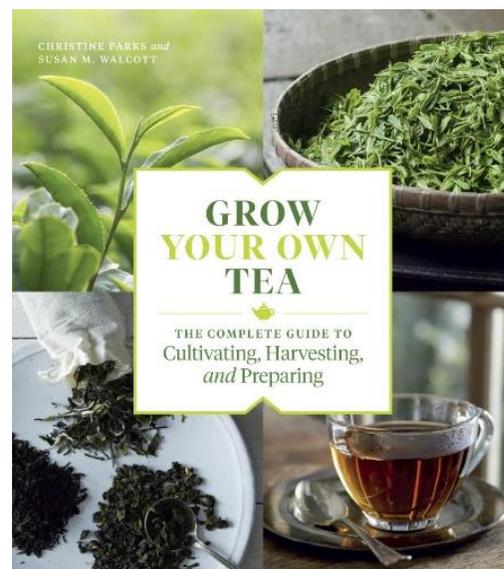
Caroline and Danielle at First Flush Fest

Both Caroline and Danielle have contributed greatly to this spring's harvest and First Flush Open House.

We have learned a lot about the tea industry from Caroline – who spent decades as the buyer and manager for the tea and coffee department at Southern Season, a specialty food store in Chapel Hill. Caroline grew the tea department from the ground up! After being introduced to a retail icon of the tea industry, her eyes were opened up to the possibilities. She dove into learning more about tea, found exceptional vendors, and brought it all back to share with her customers. For many years, Caroline shared quality tea to the local market, as well as met national demand. Though we've known each other for years, our friendship and work together has grown, especially this past year.

Danielle joined us in April of this year. She has always loved tea, began her learning journey by working at tea houses and followed her interest to graduate from the Master's degree program in Tea Science at Zhejiang University. Her expertise shines in tea evaluation. To her, a good cup of tea not only tastes good, but brings complexity and facets to the flavor. At the gardens, she helps pick tea leaves and joins us in tasting new blends. She notes that at Camellia Forest, it's the first time she's had a hand in the process from the very beginning, to sampling the tea at the end.

GROW YOUR OWN TEA



After 5 years of planning, research, and writing we're still celebrating! Published this past September, we are honored that booklist named it "the guide of guides to growing tea." Available at [Camellia Forest](#) (signed copies by request/at in person events).

SPEAKING OF TEA

We love spreading the word about growing local tea. Last fall we gave our first virtual seminar for Carolina Farm Stewardship Association Sustainable Agriculture Conference. We are excited to be returning in person this year for the CFSA conference at the Durham convention center, Nov 14th. We're also looking forward to speaking with members of the Durham Garden Forum on Sept 21st.

We are also adding personal consulting by phone, zoom, or in person. [Contact us](#) to book us at your next event in person or online, or to schedule a visit - times fill up quickly!

What is second flush?

Depending on who you ask, second flush is a calendar time for harvesting tea leaves in the months following springtime “first flush” or simply when the new growth following first flush matures. New growth is stimulated by plucking within the next couple of weeks – so pick more tea to have more tea to pick!



“But indeed I would rather have nothing but tea.”

-Jane Austen,
Mansfield Park



Seedlings

Growing tea from seed can be fun. In the summer, they usually germinate in just a few weeks when it is warm. The most important thing is to keep them from drying out. In the garden, seedlings sometimes manage to grow themselves where they fall.



Fun Fact

(We admit our nerdish nature and invite you to learn with us as we explore all aspects of tea)

Tea connoisseurs treasure the first flush in spring, compared to tea harvested at other times of the growing season. But what about the effects of summer on tea quality? In a recent review of the scientific literature – geared towards the possible impacts of climate change – shows a complicated picture of differences that vary depending on geography and weather. Interestingly, one of the more consistent findings was an increase in phenolic compounds (or antioxidant capacity) with drought stress. For a peek at the 86 studies reviewed: <https://www.frontiersin.org/articles/10.3389/fpls.2019.00939/full>.

Friends of Camellia Forest

Over the years we have been grateful to meet so many people that have grown our communi-tea! Each season we want to highlight stories and people who are doing great work in growing local tea.



Recovery Tea
APPALACHIAN
TEA & TISANES

One of these friends is [Recovery Tea](#). Rachel and Candice produce their own tea blends in West Virginia, with a percentage of sales going towards WV recovery programs. They are also partnered with a transitional housing recovery facility. But why tea? Rachel and Candice wanted to bring an aspect of holistic and therapeutic treatment to recovery. They determined that tea was sustainable for the environment, had a community aspect, and provided a health factor. We first met them when they attended our Harvest & Processing workshops (twice), and now they come harvest leaves for their blends at the Tea Gardens while they for their own plants to grow.

Camellia Forest Nursery & Tea Gardens is located at:

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Contact us: teaflowergardens@gmail.com