



COLORADO SPRINGS
CHINESE CULTURAL INSTITUTE
科泉市中華文化協會

茶葉香談

春 SPRING

TEA LEAVES

Spring 2017

Colorado Springs Chinese Cultural Institute

www.cscii.org



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Chinese Proverb

“Today’s task is today’s to complete”
今天事，今天毕。

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A Realistic Perspective of the Chinese-American Immigrant Life

By Jiaying Peng

I think I can speak for most Chinese-American immigrants who came to the U.S. when they were young children when I say that the one of the most embarrassing experiences in their childhood was speaking Chinese with their families in front of their American friends. The look that my friends gave me the first time I spoke Chinese with my mom in their presence made me never want to do it again. I know the reason why I was ashamed to speak my mother tongue with my family in public – the single bewildered look I received from my friends was enough to discourage me from ever wanting to do it again, but I also know that the explanation is silly and unreasonable. For most of pre-teen years until right up to freshman year of high school, I was always scared to act “too Asian” in front of my American friends, and I never really embraced my culture and heritage until late in sophomore year. Through the last couple of years, I’ve learned to love my cultural background and appreciate my identity as a Chinese-American immigrant.

One of the aspects of living as an immigrant that many people don’t consider is how difficult it is to reconcile one’s original background with the culture of the United States. Personally, I struggled with this a lot, being a young girl who just wanted to fit in with all of her friends. What I didn’t realize was that I was borderline sacrificing a part of my identity. I realize now, that no matter how hard I would have tried, I couldn’t erase my being an immigrant. So, instead of trying to sweep my heritage under the rug, I’ve slowly started to embrace and flaunt it. No longer am I embarrassed to bring lunches from home that consists of rice and whatever food my mother cooked last night; in fact, I often invite my friends over to eat because I’ve realized that I handpicked a bunch of very good friends who appreciate my culture and encourage me to embrace it. No longer am I too embarrassed to talk to my mom on the phone in Chinese when I’m in public. I used to switch from Chinese to English in a heartbeat whenever I would think someone was staring; now, if someone’s staring at me, I smile back, proud of the fact that I am bilingual.

I think for any immigrant who came to the U.S. when they were young, the most difficult part of life here is not assimilating to the culture; instead, it is trying to find the right balance between the traditions of their home country and the nuances of American society. For me, it has been an arduous journey, but it is one that I am glad to have taken.

Wudang Mountain

By Debra Bellas-Dow

Ever since I was a young child, I have been intrigued by the history of different places around the world, as well as the ancient and modern day cultures of each. It is the culture of China to which I continue to feel a deep connection. China is a very large country, with each region offering many different experiences, history, architecture, agriculture, dress, and lifestyles. In this article, I would like to share one of my favorite destinations in China, Wudang Mountain.



There are several ways to reach Wudang Mountain. The two common ways are to fly to Wuhan or China's capital city of Beijing. From Beijing one can choose to travel approximately 21 hours by train, which will take you straight to Wudangshan city at the base of the great Wudang Mountain. Another popular route is to take a two hour flight from Beijing to Xingfang city. Once you reach Xingfang, it will take another two hours by taxi to reach Wudangshan city.

As the largest existing Daoist complex, Wudang has been built up over several centuries. The first temples on Mount Wudang were constructed during the Tang Dynasty (618-907). By this time Daoism had become a state religion, coexisting with both Buddhism and Confucianism as one of the three great religions of China. Daoist culture has existed on Wudang since the East Han Dynasty (25-220). The movement began with a few early Daoists settling on the mountain in order to practice their worship of nature. Well into the Ming Dynasty, there was a surge in the building of temples at Wudang to honor Zhen Wu, a prince that left everything behind to study inner alchemy, the secrets of longevity.



Yes, there are many stairs to the summit of the mountain. As you climb one feels like they are climbing to the top of the world. Once at the "Golden Temple", it is breath taking. While climbing Wudang, it is very common to see Daoist martial arts being practiced in a most majestic setting. Tourists can visit Wudang Mountain not only for the magnificent natural scenery surrounding the Golden Palace at the summit. One can also better appreciate Taoist Culture and the Wudang Martial Arts through participation in offered featured activities.



Along with the very rich history and grand architecture Wudang offers, it was also the ancient practice of Inner Kungfu that led me to this very unique location. Here at the Mountain, I have learned so much about the culture of ancient China as well as having the privilege of watching the culture in the Wudang area grow. As wonderful as this is, the greatest growth I have experienced when visiting, is the personal growth within myself.



Wudang Mountain

There are countless herbs that only grow on this mountain, and they are used to this day as very effective and natural Chinese Medicine.

Though Wudang does have a fine Medical Hospital, many still seek medical assistance from an herbal chemist which would be located in a Chinese Medicine House like the one pictured above. On the back wall, there are drawers filled with fresh herbs to create medicine. On my first trip to Wudang, I developed a respiratory infection. Another fellow martial artist, took me to a Chinese Medicine house. There, the Chemist put my hand on a pillow between us. He pressed his fingers lightly at different places on my wrist and lower arm. We watched while he would write down the name of the herbs he wanted to give to me. Once he completed his examination, he handed his list to his assistant. An hour later the medicine was ready - several packages of a brownish green liquid, which I was instructed to heat up before drinking. Even though the liquid had a very heavy earthy taste, I was grateful to be feeling better in a few days.



The street markets are a very common scene in this city. Most of the population of Wudang are farmers, which grow their own vegetables. The street markets are a wonder to see. Such rich vegetation to experience whether you are dining at a family's table or at a luxurious hotel. Also, there are countless varieties of tea's which are cultivated on Wudang Mountain.

My hope in writing this article is to share a little information about an amazing location. Wudang Mountain is full of rich history, delicious food and wonderful people - a place one must experience at least once in a lifetime.



Mission Statement

The CSCCI is committed to fostering understanding of Chinese culture by promoting opportunities for events, networking, travel, education and services available to the people of Colorado Springs.

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Colorado Springs Chinese Cultural Institute

To become a member, please complete the information below and send the form with your check or money order to:

Colorado Springs Chinese Cultural
Institute
PO Box 2625
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Membership Benefits:

- Discount ticket pricing for all events and activities
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TIAA Kite Festival

Celebrate Asian American Heritage month with a kite festival held at Denver Green School on May 20th. The event will start at 10 a.m. and continue until 2 p.m. There will be food, music, cultural entertainment, poetry from the students of Denver Green School, and a "highest flying" kite competition! They will also be giving away 300 kites!

Upcoming Asian Holidays

Dragon Boat Festival
August 28-30, 2017

Mid-Autumn Festival
October 4, 2017

Upcoming Asian Cultural Events

TIAA Kite Festival
May 20, 2017
Denver Green School, Denver, CO.

Dragon Boat Festival
August 26, 2017

Moon Festival Dinner*
October

*Register online at www.csccl.org

Dragon Boat Festival

Join the Colorado Springs Chinese Cultural Institute for the annual Dragon Boat Festival. This event will be on August 26th and will feature fun events such as boat racing! Sign up with your team of 12 rowers by emailing Debra Bellas-Dow at debrat.bellas-dow@comast.net.



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