The Men of Tea
A Common Thread

by Pearl Dexter
Photographs on pages 24-25
by Shu-Ching Ng

TEA has always acknowledged the people who are part of the common thread that supplies tea for our tables. At the recent World Tea Expo in Las Vegas I met up with my friends in tea, and also established new friendships. I coordinated a group photo of those for who many of us in the tea business regard as the movers and shakers of this industry. The tea business has flourished. The younger people have learned a wealth of information from their leaders and achieved accessibility to them through events like the World Tea Expo. Now, some of the younger generations are following in the footsteps of their pioneer tea mentors. The people mentioned here have had a great influence on the burgeoning specialty tea business in America. They have ardently embraced the tools to learn and passionately passed on their knowledge to their customers. We applaud them and recognize their great service in the world of tea. I have met all of these men and travelled with several of them on my sojourns of tea. They are some of the greatest students and teachers of all things tea. A few of their biographies may be succinct, but that doesn’t lessen the gift they have given to us all.

George Jage is the president and founder of World Tea Expo. Jage and his wife Kim head up the Expo and they just wrapped up the 2011 event in June at the Las Vegas Convention Center. It gathered more than 200 exhibiting companies from 16 countries and more than 4,600 tea industry members from 39 countries. “The U.S. market for specialty teas is literally just coming to a boil, and that was certainly clear on the Expo floor,” said Jage. The World Tea Expo is well known as the premier business-to-business event dedicated to specialty tea. There are educational classes and workshops, new products showcase, and multiple tastings of tea from origin countries that are catered to tea retailers, restaurateurs, food service leaders, hoteliers, spa owners, and other business professionals. Jage’s parent company—World Tea Media—also produces World Tea News and the prestigious North American Tea Championship, the only independent competition, judged by professional cuppers, to distinguish the highest quality and best tasting teas that are commercially available in the North American marketplace.

This fall, Jage and World Tea Media will launch World Tea East, September 9–10 at the Pennsylvania Convention Center. Their objective is to support and fuel the expanding demand for specialty tea and related products in the Northeast, mid-Atlantic, and Southeast United States, and provide solid tea education for the category’s ever-growing popularity, said Jage. “The timing of World Tea East is designed to facilitate immediate or near-term business for the holiday season and first-quarter business.”

In 2008 George Jage received a Nevada Entrepreneur Award from In Business Magazine, and in 2010 he received the Jerome Vallen Industry Executive of the Year Award from The William F. Harrah College of Hotel Administration at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas (UNLV), tourism and convention administration department.

George, Kim, and their two children live in Las Vegas.

www.worldteaexpo.com OR www.worldteaeast.com

James Norwood Pratt is a North Carolina native. He has served the cause of tea around the world since 1980 as author, editor, instigator, and teacher. He has acted as Honorary Director of America’s first traditional Chinese tea house, as International Juror of India’s first-ever tea competition, as editor-in-chief of James Norwood Pratt’s Tea Dictionary, and has lectured throughout America on the venerable subject of tea. As an educator he has become America’s acknowledged “Tea Sage” and is quite possibly the world’s most widely read authority on tea and tea lore. His most recently published work is The Ultimate Tea Lover’s Treasury.

He lives with his wife Valerie Turner Pratt in San Francisco.

www.jamesnorwoodpratt.com
Manik Jayakumar’s world of tea began shortly after he finished school. He worked on tea estates in his native country of Sri Lanka, developing skills in growing and producing some of the world’s finest teas when he was still a young man. He learned his trade studying under David Perkins at the Brunswick Estate. In the beginning he shadowed the manager of the estate, learning all about the agriculture and management techniques of the tea plantation. Later, he was tested, and with his increasing knowledge, he was promoted to become the superintendent and manager of high-grown plantations in the Uva, Nuwara Eliya, and Dimbulla districts.

Manik was the agricultural advisor for the very first certified-organic tea project in the world in the Uva district, working closely with a German company called GEPA. The benefits of organic farming were very rewarding to Manik Jayakumar. Nature corrected itself and birds and creatures returned to the surrounding forests.

When political violence in the country grew too intense for his family, Manik moved to Indonesia where he managed other tea estates.

In the mid-1990s Manik moved again, this time to the United States. Here he set up a small tea-importing company which initially focused on Ceylon teas from his homeland. Eventually the operation grew too large for his garage, and moved into a series of warehouses just outside of Los Angeles. Today, his company, QTrade Teas & Herbs, is the largest importer of organic teas in North America, and a leading supplier of high quality multi-origin teas to specialty markets globally. His extensive travels to tea-producing countries worldwide have fostered strong relationships with small and big tea garden managers. Manik’s company has been fair-trade oriented from the beginning. He has a big heart for the laborers—he has stood side by side with many and seen their self-esteem grow.

Sri Lanka not only supplies some of the best tasting teas in the world, but also grows amazing herbs and spices. QTrade saw the American interest in herbal infusions and now directly imports organic herbs and spices from Sri Lanka and other origins. Manik considers himself a student of tea to this day and is thrilled to take a small group on a pilgrimage to his native country once a year to walk through the tea fields and learn about the manufacturing and processing of tea at the source.

Manik and his wife live in California.

www.qtradeteas.com

Manjiv Jayakumar’s life has been steeped in tea from the beginning. Raised on his father’s tea estates in Sri Lanka, Manjiv developed an appreciation for the work and skill required to produce a quality cup of tea at a young age. After the Jayakumar family moved to the United States in the mid-1990s Manjiv pursued an ivy-league education, graduating from Georgetown and Harvard. After a career as a day-trader on Wall Street, Manjiv joined his father at QTrade Teas & Herbs where he currently works as the company’s vice president. Learning from his father and travelling to tea gardens around the world has given him a firm foundation in his pursuit of tea.

Manjiv lives in California.

www.qtradeteas.com

Michael Harney joined his father, John, at Harney & Sons Tea in 1988. He earlier worked with his father and Stanley Mason at Sarum Teas. Michael’s role has been as tea buyer, tea taster, and master tea blender. Michael and his father were first on the scene to hold educational symposiums in the 1990s. They were influential in educating the media on the nuances of tea also. Their company, Harney & Sons Fine Teas started in the garage of his dad’s home in Salisbury, Connecticut, and now is in an enormous warehouse in Millerton, New York. They have even created a variety of blends for England—Historic Royal Palaces. Michael’s travels to tea countries have given him the opportunity to capture all that is tea with his excellent photography. In 2008, Penguin Press published his book, “Harney & Sons Guide to Tea.”

Michael and his wife Brigitte live in New York.

www.harney.com

Stephen Chao is president and owner of Eastrise Tea Company. A Hong Kong native, Stephen moved to the United States in 1964. He started in the tea trade in 1972 in New York City. In the beginning, the Asian community ordered most of his specialty tea, now the non-Asian communities have sought his premium teas. His company now is based in California. Stephen has seen his customers come to appreciate the higher grades of tea. He was and still is instrumental in supplying excellent teas to the U.S. marketplace, due to his belief that learning from the factory and tea garden personnel source is the best way to be educated about tea. His company offers a wide range of teas from popular to lesser known rare teas.

Stephen Chao and his wife Lydia Kung live in California.

www.eastriseteas.com
Chaminda Jayawardana was raised on a 75 acre tea estate in Deniyaya, Sri Lanka that his father still owns. It borders the Sinharaja Forest. He played amongst the tea bushes as a child. He studied bio science in college. Then he had a dream to become a planter. He told his father about his dream, and he was sent to a private tea estate where he trained for 6 months. At the early age of 20 he got an appointment as assistant superintendent at the Kahawatta Plantations. Two years later he worked as an assistant superintendent in the New Vithanakande factory to learn all about manufacturing and processing tea. He trained under Mr. Pilapitya for 6 months then worked for Asia Siyaka Commodities in Colombo as a tea taster.

Chaminda now manages the operations at the Lubmbini Tea Factory and Lumbini Tea Gardens. He has been instrumental in getting his tea represented in Japan and the United States. For the past six years, Lumbini Tea Factory was ranked number one in Sri Lanka.

He and his wife live on the Lumbini Tea Estate near the factory in Deniyaya with their daughter.

www.lumbinitea.com

Eliot Jordan has been selecting and blending the finest premium teas for Peet’s Coffee & Tea since 1990. The Berkeley, California native first fell in love with coffee, and especially tea, while working as a part-time employee at the original Peet’s store on Vine Street in Berkeley’s renowned “Gourmet Ghetto” in 1985.

In his role as tea buyer, Eliot introduced new offerings, like Peet’s Rare Teas, and created new tea blends, most notably Peet’s annual Anniversary and Holiday Breakfast Blends. Eliot’s expertise and commitment to offering only the finest, hand-selected teas have earned Peet’s an international reputation for quality.

Over the years, Eliot has developed strong relationships with the premier tea producers in the world, enabling him to source the finest teas available. He frequently travels throughout Asia’s major tea-growing regions—India, Sri Lanka, China, and Japan.

Eliot speaks frequently at tea industry events and is a member of and teaches classes at the Specialty Tea Institute. He is also a judge at the biannual World Tea Competition based in Las Vegas, Nevada.

Eliot still lives in California.

www.peets.com

Christian J. Justus is an award winning inventor of several internationally patented products. He is the managing partner and CEO of a German based company, Reinsch & Held BmbH & Co. KG (founded in 1845). The company develops and manufactures filters and accessories for tea, coffee, and electrical appliances under the finum® brand. Their products are contemporary in style and practical in design. He was asked in an interview recently what was the inspiration behind the design and functionality of some of his products. He said that as an avid tea drinker of full-leaf teas he looked for an easy way to keep control over the brewing process by monitoring the expansion of the leaves and the spreading of the color. By simply screwing in the lid of their newly patented tea Traveler Zita™, the tumbler is closed and the tea is contained.

Made from titan, this new product is BPA free.

Christian received his MBA from the Universität Hamburg.

He lives in Hamburg, Germany with his wife Benita and their three three children.

www.finum.com
N.B.H. Pilapitiya. “Pila,” as he is affectionately known amongst his friends, is the present chairman cum Managing Director of New Vithanakande Estate and Tea Factory in Delwala, Via-Ratnapura, Sri Lanka. He is immensely proud of his 6000 small holder farmers and over 400 strong factory workforce with whom he has built a close relationship.

The estate is in the heart of the low country, near the “city of gems” Ratnapura with the factory on a hilltop overlooking the world famous Sinharaja Rain Forest. For over 15 years Mr. Pilapitiya worked as an assistant superintendent and superintendent on Tea and Rubber Estates managed by M/S. Carson Cumberbatch & Co. Ltd., and the Sri Lanka State Plantation Corporation before taking over New Vithanankane in 1981. His late father, Mr. P.B.H Pilapitiya, founded the company in 1940. Under Pila’s guidance New Vithanakande Tea Factory has evolved through a continuous process of modernization and carefully combines state-of-the-art equipment with time-honored, fine tea producing skills. New Vithanakande is recognized as the centerpiece of quality tea production in the low country tea growing region.

Pila and his family live on the New Vithanakade Estate in Delwala, Sri Lanka.

www.vithanakandeteas.com

Sudhir Prakash was born into a third generation of tea planters. His grandfather had started the family business of acquiring tea plantations during the 1940s from the British who were leaving India on the eve of India’s independence. The business was to expand as to have plantations in nearly every tea growing area of India. Sudhir after completing his management studies was inducted into the tea business and in the course of the next two decades was given responsibility to manage tea gardens in Assam, Darjeeling, Dooars, Dehra Dun, and Kerala.

He was involved in tea exports to most of the major tea importing countries in the Middle East and Europe. More than half a dozen trips were made to USA, particularly the west coast. Sudhir has been a member of the US Tea Council.

Owing to the size of the business the family divided its responsibilities. Presently Sudhir is directly looking after Khongea Tea Estate in Assam which is known for its best liquoring CTC teas (cut, tear, and curl – an industry description of teas used in tea bags), as well as some Orthodox teas. He also looks after Glenburn Tea Estate in Darjeeling. He launched the Darjeeling single estate brand at the World Tea Expo in June 2011. Retailers may now purchase small quantities direct from the garden.

Sudhir is a member of the National Committee of the Indian Tea Association, which has most of the producers of northeast India as its members and has also served as member of the Tea Board of India. He is closely associated with Tea Research Association (TRA), which is the oldest and largest research institution for tea in the world. He served as Chairman of TRA and has only recently demitted office. He continues to take an active interest in the research activities.

The family business is run jointly with his two sons and nephew. He has one grand-daughter and grand-son and so potentially the family is looking for continuity into the fifth generation. This is as it should be as tea is a long term investment and requires time and patience to grow and prosper.

Sudhir and his family live in India.

www.glenburnteadirect.com
**Devan Shah** is the creator and owner of International Tea Importers (ITI) and Chado Tea Rooms. ITI is one of America’s leading importers of specialty teas from around the world and Chado Tea Room ranks among the country’s foremost tea shops, now with three locations in greater Los Angeles. Chado recently opened its second Chado Tea Kiosk in India. Overseas, he has been International Juror at India’s first-ever tea competition, the Golden Leaf India Awards in his old summer-time home in Conoor in the Nilgiri hills. ITI was established in 1990 when America’s specialty tea market was at its infancy and Devan has been a major contributor to its growth. He is a staunch supporter of tea education of every sort at every level. Devan had the foresight to realize the need for a reliable standard reference work on tea, therefore, he became the publisher of James Norwood Pratt’s Tea Dictionary. James Norwood Pratt wrote an extensive profile on Devan in an earlier issue of TEA, “He is today one of the country’s leading importers of high-end specialty tea…. …Devan has given hundreds of tastings, talks, and interviews promoting tea around the country. …If the tea gods have favorite sons, Devan Shah was surely fated from birth for his success.”

Devan and his family live in Diamond Bar in Southern California.

www.teavendor.com

**Andrew Wertheim** has been in the tea business for over ten years. His company, Tea Importers, Inc. is located in Westport, Connecticut and has been importing and selling tea around the world since 1958. Today, it is one of the major tea trading companies with customers in the United States, Canada, UK, Ireland, Europe, and the Middle East. It was founded by his father, Joseph Wertheim, who still active at 90 years young, is the senior member of the international tea trade.

Besides supplying loose leaf teas for specialty tea packers and tea bag types for large packers and blenders, Tea Importers also is the majority shareholder of a Fair Trade and Rainforest certified tea factory in Rwanda that produces 3 million kilos per year of high quality CTC and orthodox black and green teas for export and regional markets. Andrew travels to Rwanda at least twice a year, and has visited tea plantations in Kenya, China, and India. Prior to transitioning to the tea industry, Andrew was a lawyer in New York City litigating securities and other financial services industry matters in private practice and for the SEC.

Andrew and his family live in New York.

www.teaimporters.com

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**Thomas Shu** is vice president of ABC Tea in California. He is a third-generation tea specialist from Taiwan, where his family has been in the tea business for more than sixty years. He works with many major tea companies and premium tea importers from Asia, Europe, and the United States. With his extensive knowledge in the industry, Thomas Shu is one of the professional instructors for Specialty Tea Institute, as well as a popular speaker at many conventions and educational institutes throughout the United States. In April 2007, Mr. Shu received an honorary title from the Taiwan Tea Manufacturers’ Association, “Ambassador of Taiwan Tea.” Since 2008, Thomas has been conducting an extensive educational field trip for international tea professionals (Taiwan Oolongs Study Tour Program). He also manages his own tea blog: www.PonFonCha.blogspot.com.

Thomas and his wife live in California.

www.abctea.com
John Chaffey has worked for Canadian company, Metropolitan Tea for nearly twenty years. Out of business school in 1985, he mentored with two of the top men of tea, Jim and Bill Scandrett.

John has travelled to most of the tea-producing regions of the world, sourcing some tea direct from single estate gardens. He readily shares his knowledge of tea with his customers. John and all Metropolitan Tea employees take pride in continually learning about their product, tea. The company has produced several “College of Tea” videos. In his nearly three-decade career, John Chaffey has built invaluable relationships with leading personalities in the global tea community.

John lives in Canada with his family.

www.metrotea.com
www.metropolitantea.com

Jim Harron, Sr. was a representative for large home textile companies. After waking up in Memphis one morning he realized that he had not spent much time with his family. He went home and asked his wife Joan to be his business partner. Together they purchased the company, Simpson & Vail, in 1978. Jim studied tea under the tutelage of David Walker.

Jim later moved the company from Park Place in New York City to Pleasantville, New York in the early 80s, then in 1990 two of his children—Cyndi and Jim, Jr. joined the business. They relocated again in 1997 to a tranquil setting next to an old rock quarry surrounded by pine trees in Brookfield, Connecticut. This is a family business where Joan designs the tea catalog, that produces 50% of their sales, while the other 50% is derived from their wholesale customers. Cyndi is the person who has developed and maintains the internet site, along with creating all the herbal blends; (most recently the new line of Tulsi teas). Jim, Jr. is the master tea blender.

Jim and his wife Joan live in Brookfield, Connecticut.

www.svtea.com

Jim Harron, Jr. joined his parents’ tea and coffee business in 1990. His sister Cyndi brags about his amazing palate. He is the point man for selecting teas and purchasing direct from single estate gardens. Unlike his father, Jim’s early career has been steeped in tea. His whole career has mainly been about tea. As one of the few specialty tea businesses of the early 90s, the Harrons have maintained the family approach, yet grown in their outreach to the next generation. As the master tea blender, Jim has created blends not only for Simpson & Vail but also for both retail and wholesale customers. Jim Jr. is responsible for importing both the tea and herbs from all over the world and is on the pulse of all that is tea for the American market. Their packaging is simple and wholesome, appealing to the fast growing organic and green minded culture of our society.

Jim and his wife Monica, and their two children, Paulina and James, live in Brookfield, Connecticut.

www.svtea.com
Hartley E. Johnson, a premium tea importer and purveyor, is co-owner of Mark T. Wendell Tea Company and Grace Tea Company with his father Elliot Johnson. They are based in Acton, Massachusetts. When he joined the company over 15 years ago he recognized the emerging power of the internet and worked with his customer base to understand their buying needs. Hartley has helped to establish a significant e-Commerce presence for these storied tea firms. He implemented the tools for customers to buy online and get quick delivery, while maintaining the personal buying relationship they had always known.

Hartley’s commitment to quality and customer service has helped the 107 year old Mark T. Wendell Tea Company to expand to offer over 75 estate grown specialty loose leaf teas, including the famous smoky Formosan Lapsang Souchong tea, Hu-Kwa, as well as dozens of unique tea blends. He also established US distribution rights for several packaged tea brands, including Boston Harbour Tea, Lifeboat Tea, and Indar Tea.

Hartley and his family live in Massachusetts.

www.marktwendell.com
www.gracetea.com

Dan Robertson is the founder and owner of The Tea House and World Tea Tours in Naperville, Illinois. He was born in New Haven, Connecticut, raised primarily in the Midwest and is a graduate of the College of Wooster, Ohio. Before venturing into the world of tea, in 1985 Dan established FRAMEWORK Video & Sound, a video production company specializing in documentary and educational programming. It was his career as a filmmaker that took him to China in 1994 and again in 1995 to produce a documentary on tea. He travelled extensively across China for two months filming tea gardens, factories, teahouses, hospitals, universities, museums, and historical sites interviewing tea experts in all areas. As an unexpected result, in 1995 he began his own tea business, drawing upon the resources and knowledge he had developed during his travels. Since then he returns to China nearly every year either to meet with suppliers, discover new teas, study, or research. Since 1996 he has been organizing and leading the China Tea Tour, where tea lovers from around the world get first-hand experience in tea making, history, culture, and business. Now expanding beyond the Far East, he launched World Tea Tours in 2007 offering tours to tea producing and cultural areas around the globe.

Dan Robertson as an importer, wholesaler, blender, and purveyor of premium teas, and accessories, is involved with many levels of the tea industry. He is a regular contributor to various tea publications, web blogs, and tea news services. Known for his informal and engaging style, Dan shares his passion for tea, lecturing around the world for businesses, educational and private groups, recently presenting at the India Tea Forum in Darjeeling, India. An authority on tea culture, history, production, and trade, Dan conducts professional tea tastings classes and instructs courses in the Chinese tea ceremony. His DVD The Art of Chinese Tea – The Tea Ceremony, is a demonstration and tutorial on the gongfu style of tea making.

Dan and his family live in Naperville, Illinois.

www.theteahouse.com
www.WorldTeaTours.com
Bruce Richardson is a tea blender, author, photographer, and publisher who has been at the forefront of America’s tea renaissance for over two decades. He enjoyed a long career as a choral conductor before he put down his baton in favor of a teacup to establish with his wife Shelley, Elmwood Inn, next Elmwood Inn Fine Teas, and later Benjamin Press.

Bruce spends much of his time educating Americans in the art of celebrating the communal cup of tea. He can often be found appearing on television and radio talk shows, or as a guest speaker. He has served on the Advisory Committee for STI (Specialty Tea Institute of America) and is a longtime member of the Editorial Board for Fresh Cup magazine, and has contributed articles to TEA A MAGAZINE®.

In 2003 Bruce was a member of the STI trade mission to Sri Lanka and the STI mission to India in 2004. His photographs of tea workers and tea gardens in those two countries are featured in a traveling photography exhibit and the accompanying book Looking Deeply into Tea.


Bruce and his wife Shelley live in the Civil War village of Perryville, Kentucky.

www.elmwoodinn.com

Ben Richardson began his study in journalism as a young boy when he accompanied his father on photo shoots to tea rooms in England, Wales, Canada, and The United States. His first photo credit appeared in USA Today when he was still a high school student. He learned the family business by accompanying his parents to trade shows where he learned the fine art of making large quantities of tea for customers to sample.

An avid cyclist, his love of the sport afforded him a scholarship and spot on the Lindsey Wilson College cycling team as he worked toward a degree in journalism. Upon graduation, he joined the family business where he learned several basic skills from blending and packaging tea to designing books and catalogs.

He now serves as associate editor for Benjamin Press and customer service representative for Elmwood Inn Fine Teas. Ben and his wife Megan live in Kentucky.

www.elmwoodinn.com

Den Shirakata is President and CEO of Shirakata Denshiro Shoten, Inc.—a 90-year-family-owned business, manufacturing tea in his birthplace of Shizuoka, Japan. He is the third generation to head up the family business. Den has worked in all positions of the company and is a Japanese Tea Instructor certified by the Japan Tea Association.

He studied at Temple University in Philadelphia in the late 80s. Several years later he established Den’s Tea in California, importing Japanese green tea directly from Shizuoka. He has spoken internationally on tea, and is active with educational programs to enlighten consumers about Japanese green tea.

Den and his family live in California.

www.Denstea.com
Joseph Simrany is president of the Tea Association of the USA, Inc., the Tea Council of the USA, Inc., and the Specialty Tea Institute (STI). In this capacity, Mr. Simrany tracks trends, disseminates information, and represents the interests of the wholesale and retail tea industry on a broad spectrum of issues. As president of the Council, he leads the industries educational and public relations’ efforts relative to communicating the many attributes of tea to consumers.

Joe first came to the tea industry in February of 1991 after 25 years in the biscuit industry, most recently as vice president of marketing for Sunshine Biscuits, Inc. Prior to Sunshine he worked for 20 years as a product Group Director at Nabisco.

Joe has travelled extensively to many tea-producing countries. He has taken part in global meetings with the tea leaders of the world that contribute to the ethics and sustainability of this product, tea. He represents the United States at tea conferences and symposiums nationally and internationally.

Mr. Simrany believes that education is the key to empowering the tea business community. That is why under his leadership, the Specialty Tea Institute (STI) was established in 2002. It has certified thousands of tea specialists from all over North America and has given entrepreneurs starting or established in the tea business a firm foundation in the knowledge of tea.

Joe and his wife Carol live in New Jersey.

Kyohei Sugimoto was born as a second son of Japanese tea master, Hiroyuki Sugimoto. Kyohei dreamed of being a teacher until he visited Seattle with his father when he was 22. During the trip, he was shocked to realize that the green tea he took for granted in Japan was nowhere to be found. This radically changed his awareness of the importance of quality green tea. Back in Japan he entered the family business and acquired green tea knowledge by working in his father’s factory in Shizuoka, Japan. His father trained him to taste a variety of green teas, which developed and enhance his skill as a tea taster of Japanese teas. In 2008 he was certified as a Japanese Tea Adviser and now, with his father, introduces authentic Japanese green tea to American consumers as an element of a quality lifestyle online, and in ten states across America. Their specialty is Shizuoka green tea.

David Tavares is the North American representative for his family’s eco-friendly tea estate in the Azores. He got interested in tea, while spending the majority of his summers on the island of São Miguel where his uncle Hermano Mota grows tea in Portugal’s oldest tea garden—Gorreana Tea Estate. Hermano and his wife Margarida are 5th generation owners of Gorreana. David said, “I always hoped that one day I would be able to be involved with the family tea business which has such deep roots in Portuguese history. Portugal being the first European country to encounter tea, import it, and Gorreana has been producing tea for over a century!”

David has been working closely with his cousin Madalena in bringing their brand to the North American market.

David Tavares studied at Queens University in Canada and now lives in California.