



Wudang

7/19

A MONTHLY E-NEWSLETTER



From Sifu Paul

Greetings everyone,

The heat is on, so it must be July. I hope you're enjoying the summer so far. In this issue: China travelogue: Beijing—a few more highlights; the Question of the Month talks about a summer Solo Form Practice; and more.

The studio will be closed Thursday July 4th but open for Saturday classes on the 6th. Happy 4th of July.

China Dream Trip 2019: Travelogue

Our trip revolved around learning and practicing Qigong and meditation and exploring some of China's sacred sights, especially those related to Daoism. Beijing is a city with 22 million people in it, so if you're looking for enough solitude for meditative practices, you head for the monasteries and the parks.

White Cloud Temple

The temples in China offer the most solitude, even those in the midst of a large city like Beijing. Most temples are laid out on a



north-south axis with the entrance on the south end. There is a practical aspect to this design, which is simply that there is more sunlight from the south, which promotes activity, and less in the north, allowing more contemplative practice.

White Cloud Temple dates from around the mid-eighth century. In 1220, Genghis Khan summoned the abbot of the temple, Qiu Chuji, known as the Master of Eternal Spring, to give an exposition on Daoism. He was then made the chief of all religions in China, with the headquarters at White Cloud Temple.

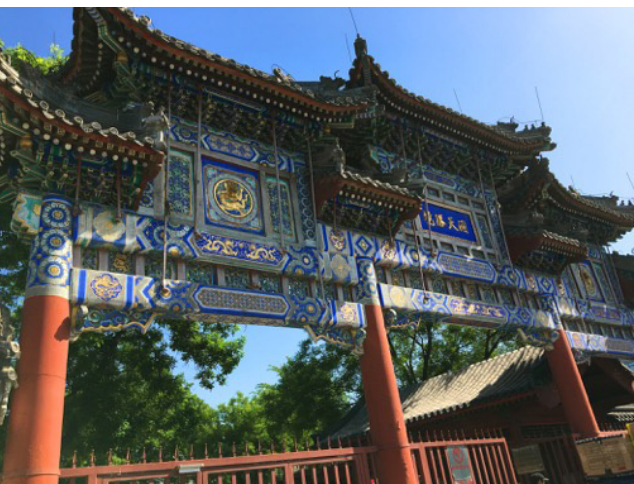
We entered the temple through an ornate gate and crossed a narrow stone bridge into an open courtyard, where lies the first of five main halls devoted to various officials and Daoist deities. Each hall includes its own courtyard and one or more large incense burners, where worshipers come and offer incense and prayers at whatever hall and courtyard suits their intention.

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Happy 4th of July!
The studio will be closed on July 4; classes resume on July 6.

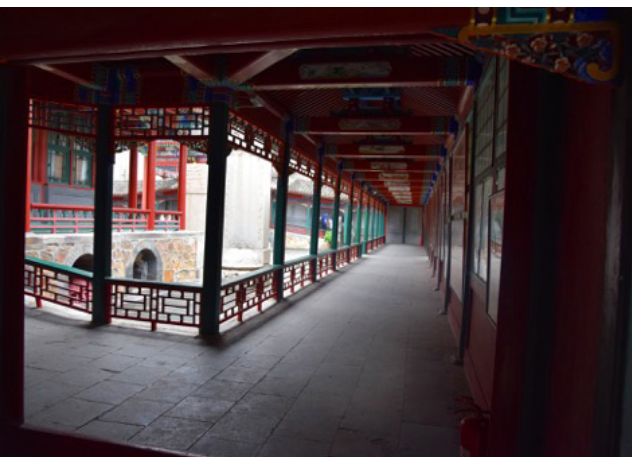
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White Cloud Temple Gate



Various residential and administrative buildings flank the halls and courtyards. Along the way, I discovered a Daoist medicine clinic, many beautiful sculptures, murals, reliefs, gardens, and pagodas.

We headed to the courtyard farthest to the north. A favorite pagoda I remembered from my first trip sat atop a beautiful rock garden, and the long corridor leading to the famous stone stele Neijing Tu (Chart of Internal Passageways), depicting the Microcosmic Orbit meditation, was nearby. We have a scroll hanging at the studio printed from a rubbing taken from the carved rock slab, and I regularly teach this important and healthful meditation practice.



We unpacked our gear and settled into the courtyard. After a brief warm-up and some instruction, we practiced the Wuji Gong Primordial T'ai Chi Form. The weather was sunny and clear, unlike the day before, and produced a powerful round of the form for me.

After some post-form integration time, we had about an hour to wander around and explore the temple. There was always something new to discover in such a large compound, but I went directly to visit an old friend—the Neijing Tu. After spending time there, I found a platform nearby with a roof that got me out of the now-hot sun, and I did my T'ai Chi Ch'uan Form.

I took my time heading back to the South Gate, exploring any little alley or altar that caught my attention and trying not to get lost. After spending what I call slow and deep



time in the temple, I really felt its energy and rich history.

I met up with our group, and we went to lunch before resting up for our afternoon adventure: Qigong on the Great Wall.



Contact Us

For timely updates, follow Twin Cities T'ai Chi Ch'uan on **Facebook**.

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Altar at White Cloud Temple

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The corridor to the Neijing Tu

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The Great Wall

Construction and New Neighbors on Hampden Ave.

This summer, there will be a tear-down of the building across the street on the west side of Hampden, and then a condominium with retail will be constructed in its place. This may disrupt our street parking on Hampden for awhile this summer. Parking is available on Myrtle and in the Wright Building lot across University during evening hours. There may be parking available there during daytime hours for our day classes. We will announce that when we know for sure. Thanks for your patience.



Question of the Month

Question: In hot weather, I don't feel like practicing T'ai Chi, as it makes me feel even hotter. Do you have any suggestions other than waiting for cooler weather to practice?

Answer: Sometimes waiting for cooler weather is a good idea. However, I have discovered a practice I call T'ai Chi Rocking that effectively cools the body down and allows you to still get your daily practice in.

The practice is simple to do providing you know the form well. After performing a posture that ends in a front-weighted bow stance, for example, rock back onto the rear heel then to the front heel, and repeat this two (or more) times. Then proceed to the next posture. If the posture finishes in a back-weighted bow stance, simply reverse the rocking pattern. Wuji stances rock heel to ball of foot or side to side; toe and heel stances flatten the feet and rock heel to heel like a bow stance or heel to ball, depending on what feels more natural.

Rocking slows the form down considerably and changes the flow and rhythm of it, but the level of relaxation is deep and the cooling effect is noticeable. Start with a few postures or a section of the form to get the hang of it and proceed from there. The practice works due to our primal response to rocking as a rhythm that calms and settles the body-mind, which we've responded to since infancy.

Third-Quarter Request

Summer is that wonderful time of year when we all try and get away for awhile. For that reason, it's often a challenging time for the studio. So this summer, please consider keeping your membership dues current in the third quarter, even if you will be gone for part of it.



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New studio record?
Nearly 20 people are
enrolled in the Double
Saber class on Monday
nights.

Summer Classes

Monday Night Weapons Class 7:30–8:30:
Study of the Double Saber Form will run through September.

Wednesday Night Healing Tao Class 7:30–8:30: The Six Healing Sounds and Five Animals Qigong session will run through the end of July.

New classes will be announced in the next issue of the newsletter.