

Tuk-tuk travels to trace tea

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Tuk tuk

A tea-mad Isleworth man is preparing to hit the road in a tiny tuk-tuk to trace the popular beverage's long history.

Mike Hasler, of Worton Road, has just set off on an incredible journey that will see him spend almost seven months travelling 15,000km across eighteen countries in three-wheeled auto-rickshaws with a top speed of 31mph.

Along with his three friends he will trace tea's ancient trading routes from Darjeeling, India to London and help produce 'Tracing Tea', an eight-part documentary celebrating the 350th anniversary of tea's introduction to Britain.

As he passes through the Indian Sub-Continent, China, Central Asia, Iran and Europe, Mr Hasler, 34, hopes to encounter stories of espionage and warfare, philosophy and medicine centred on our nation's favourite brew.

He said: "We're travelling without a political, religious or social agenda. The Tracing Tea team and I will take time to discover, record and, ultimately, present the stories of ordinary people in extraordinary places.

"In doing so we hope to showcase the rich cultural heritages, varying religious traditions and fascinating social practices lived each day by people along the route. We hope to also enrich our audience's global understanding and challenge the dominant stereotypes that so often impact upon our relations with other people, other religions and other nations."

To find out how he's getting along you can track Mr Hasler and his team online at www.tracingtea.com