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**BRAND IDENTITY DESIGN OF "MENGHETANG": A TRADITIONAL
CHINESE MEDICINE WELLNESS BRAND**

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The qualification work contains the results of independent research.

The use of ideas, results, and texts of other authors is properly referenced.



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ABSTRACT

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The thesis is devoted to the study of Menghetang Medical Clinic, which takes Menghe Medical School culture as its research foundation. With the continuous advancement of the "Healthy China" strategy and the growing public awareness of health, the communication value and development potential of Traditional Chinese Medicine culture in modern society have become increasingly prominent. Nevertheless, in the contemporary communication context, problems such as homogenized brand identity, weakened cultural expression and monotonous communication forms have restricted public recognition of TCM culture and its acceptance among young groups. As one of the important representatives of traditional Chinese medical schools originating in Changzhou, Jiangsu Province, the Menghe Medical School boasts profound regional-cultural heritage and distinct academic features. Its cultural concepts of "moderate and gentle therapy", "benevolent medical ethics" and "medicine-food homology" possess high transformation value for modern TCM brand design.

Taking Menghetang Medical Clinic as the practical carrier, this research focuses on its brand identity improvement and product packaging design. By adopting literature research, field investigation, case analysis and questionnaire survey, this paper sorts out the historical origins, cultural characteristics and visual elements of the Menghe Medical School, analyzes the existing defects in Menghetang's current brand identity and product packaging, and puts forward corresponding design strategies in combination with target audiences' aesthetic preferences and communication demands. In the design process, following the principles of consistency, recognizability and cultural significance, cultural

symbols derived from the Menghe Medical School are screened, refined and visually transformed to accomplish a series of design practices covering brand logo, standard colors, auxiliary graphics, brand application system and product packaging.

Taking design as a medium, this study facilitates the modern expression of Menghe Medical School culture. It not only delivers a systematic brand-upgrading solution for Menghetang Medical Clinic and strengthens the cultural recognizability and communication influence of its brand identity, but also provides certain design references for the brand building and communication of local TCM schools. It bears practical significance for deepening public understanding of Menghe Medical School culture and realizing the creative transformation and innovative development of Traditional Chinese Medicine culture.

Keywords: Menghe Medical School; Menghetang; TCM wellness; Brand identity design; Regional culture

INTRODUCTION

Relevance of the research: As Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) has gradually moved beyond conventional clinical settings into everyday health maintenance, dietary wellness, and cultural-tourism consumption, brand visuals are expected not only to identify a brand but also to communicate its cultural background and product information. Many TCM brands still rely heavily on calligraphy, medicinal herbs, seals, and traditional patterns. Although these devices quickly signal a TCM identity, they can also lead to visual homogeneity. Menghetang is rooted in the lineage of the Menghe Medical School and the regional culture of Menghe, yet its existing logo, packaging, and communication materials lack a strong visual connection, and these cultural advantages have not been developed into a stable brand identity. Reorganizing Menghetang's brand image and product packaging from the perspective of Menghe Medical School culture therefore has clear practical value for design.

Purpose of the research: To identify elements of Menghe regional culture and Menghe Medical School culture that are suitable for brand design; to establish a relatively unified visual identity system based on the current condition of Menghetang and the needs of its target audience; and to apply this system to wellness-product packaging and related brand extensions.

To achieve this purpose, the **following objectives** are set:

1. To review Menghe regional culture, the development of the medical school, and its academic characteristics;
2. To analyze Menghetang's existing brand resources and visual problems;
3. To understand the target audience's purchasing needs, brand awareness, and visual preferences;

4. To compare the visual approaches of similar TCM and dietary-wellness brands;
5. To select and transform cultural elements of Menghe;
6. To complete the basic visual identity system, product packaging, and extended brand applications.

Object of the research –the visual identity of a TCM wellness brand within the cultural context of the Menghe Medical School.

Subject of the research –the brand identity and product packaging of Menghetang, together with methods for visually transforming its cultural elements.

Chronological framework of the research –the study draws on historical materials concerning the formation and development of the Menghe Medical School, while taking the present brand and product conditions of Menghetang as the main object of design practice.

Territorial framework of the research – the Menghe area of Changzhou, Jiangsu Province, together with the business, communication, and cultural-tourism collaboration settings related to Menghetang.

Research methods: literature review, field research, questionnaire survey, case analysis, and design practice.

Practical significance of the research: By establishing a unified basic visual identity, packaging system, and extended applications, the study creates a clearer visual relationship among Menghetang’s regional background, Menghe Medical School culture, and existing products, while providing a practical reference for introducing the culture of local TCM schools into contemporary brand design.

Publications on the topic (if any): This study takes the culture of the Menghe Medical School as its point of departure, reviews its regional culture, medical thought, and related visual elements, and applies them to the brand identity and product packaging of Menghetang. On the one hand, it seeks to present the cultural

characteristics of the Menghe Medical School through contemporary visual language and reduce the homogenization of TCM brand expression. On the other hand, it systematically reorganizes the brand visuals around Menghetang's actual products and consumption settings, creating a clearer relationship among regional culture, the characteristics of the medical school, and the brand image. The research also offers a practical reference for applying local TCM culture in contemporary brand design.

Structure and scope of the thesis.

The work consists of an introduction, three chapters, conclusions, a list of references (22 items), and an illustration album (10 items). The main body of the research comprises 30 pages, the total volume with appendices is 40 pages.

CHAPTER 1

HISTORIOGRAPHY OF THE ISSUE. RESEARCH METHODS

1.1.Review of Background

In recent years, the inheritance and innovation of TCM and the development of health services have received sustained attention. TCM has gradually expanded from professional clinical settings into everyday health maintenance, dietary wellness, and cultural-tourism consumption. At the same time, consumers have become more attentive to brand image, packaging experience, and cultural content. When traditional TCM brands rely mainly on familiar symbols such as calligraphy, medicinal herbs, and classical patterns, they may communicate a TCM identity quickly, but they can also produce similar visual impressions and fail to explain where a brand comes from or how it differs from others.

The Menghe Medical School developed over a long period in the Menghe area of Changzhou, Jiangsu Province. Since the late Qing dynasty, the Fei, Ma, Chao, and Ding families have been among its most representative lineages. Its development was connected not only with medical inheritance and clinical practice, but also with Menghe's waterside environment, transport networks, and social life. Academic characteristics such as "mild, balanced, refined, and orthodox" practice and an inclusive approach, together with medical writings, case records, herbal pastes, and medicine-food wellness practices, provide more specific cultural sources for brand design than generic TCM symbols.

Existing research on the Menghe Medical School mainly concerns medical history, physician lineages, clinical experience, prescriptions, materia medica, and herbal paste traditions. The formation of the school, its representative physicians, and its academic characteristics have been examined relatively systematically. Research from a design perspective is more limited and has mostly approached the subject through sense of place, cultural visualization, regional symbols, and cultural-creative design. These studies help establish the sources of cultural content, but a

clearer transformation process is still needed between cultural materials and a coherent brand system.

1.2. Domestic and Foreign Research Status

The number of Chinese studies on the Menghe Medical School has continued to grow, indicating sustained academic interest. Although a substantial body of research has accumulated, it remains concentrated in medical history, textual studies, and academic inheritance. Findings across disciplines are relatively separated, and interdisciplinary research remains insufficient.

In TCM theory and clinical research, scholars have systematically reviewed the Menghe Medical School's academic thought, diagnostic and therapeutic methods, and characteristic prescriptions. Studies of its herbal-paste tradition note a development from an emphasis on supplementation toward a combination of disease differentiation and syndrome differentiation. Other studies emphasize the guidance provided by treatment principles adapted to the individual, season, and locality for dietary wellness. From a design perspective, only a small number of studies have combined sense of place with information visualization to organize and translate cultural elements of the school. Overall, these studies remain largely at the level of cultural display; systematic discussion is still lacking on how the school's culture can become a brand's core value, visual identity system, and product-design language.

Interest in TCM wellness culture within brand design has risen since 2006 and became especially noticeable after 2023. Related studies suggest that wellness concepts can give tea brands distinctive meaning, that the idea of “medicine and food sharing the same origin” provides a value basis for functional tea products, and that contemporary Chinese-style design can make herbal wellness more approachable to younger consumers. Motion graphics and short videos have also been used to reconstruct wellness content visually and increase participation among Generation Z. However, existing studies are often concentrated on packaging, visual style, or communication. They seldom construct brand core values and cultural narratives systematically, rarely treat the academic thought of a specific TCM school

as a brand gene, and in some cases remain focused on product functions rather than an integrated relationship among medical principles, culture, and consumption.

Overall, existing work tends to emphasize surface-level visual devices such as herbal symbols, traditional patterns, calligraphic type, and contemporary Chinese-style aesthetics, while paying less attention to medical thought, regional identity, and the distinctive characteristics of individual medical schools. In the branding of local TCM schools in particular, few studies construct core brand values from the academic system of a specific school. Concepts associated with the Menghe Medical School, including mild and balanced treatment, adaptation to the individual, and medicine-food homology, have considerable potential for design transformation, yet research remains concentrated on medical history and clinical practice. Their systematic application to branding and packaging is still limited.

Health industries developed relatively early overseas and have grown to a considerable scale, with wellness markets often dominated by supplements and an emphasis on technical development and functional claims. Japanese Kampo medicine, for example, has built its reputation partly through strict production standards. Among TCM brands expanding overseas, Tongrentang is a representative example, while the overseas brand WTHN presents Chinese medical therapies in a service model comparable to a spa. Eastern wellness products remain relatively uncommon in Western supermarkets, and related design research is limited. In brand communication, however, international studies have examined how traditional graphics and color influence brand perception and purchase intention, and have proposed pathways from brand contact to cognition, image, and preference, which provide useful references for this study.

1.3. Research Methods

This study first uses literature research to review materials on Menghe regional culture, the development of the Menghe Medical School, representative physicians, herbal-paste culture, and brand visual design. The purpose is not simply to list historical information, but to verify whether later design elements have authentic

sources and to distinguish characteristics specific to the Menghe Medical School from general TCM culture.

Field research is then used to document Menghetang's store environment, logos, packaging, product displays, and related collaborative materials. On-site observation reveals practical problems in brand use, including the coexistence of different logo forms, substantial stylistic differences among product packages, and weak connections between cultural information across different media. Field materials also prevent the brand's current condition from being judged only through online images.

The questionnaire survey focuses on the target audience's basic characteristics, purposes for purchasing wellness products, purchase factors, brand awareness, awareness of the Menghe Medical School, and visual-style preferences. A total of 230 questionnaires were collected, of which 200 were valid. The results are used to help determine design priorities rather than to represent the entire TCM wellness market. The case analysis compares traditional TCM brands and contemporary dietary-wellness brands in terms of core identity, regional culture, product series, and packaging language.

Finally, design practice transforms the preceding findings into a brand logo, standard type, color system, auxiliary graphics, product packaging, and extended applications. The process follows the sequence of cultural prototype identification, core-semantic extraction, form simplification, visual reconstruction, and systematic application. Practical use across different media is then used to examine the extensibility of the visual elements. Together, these methods form the research chain: literature establishes the cultural basis, fieldwork identifies brand problems, questionnaires and cases help determine the direction of expression, and design practice provides the final verification.

The study also uses cross-checking between questionnaire findings and case analysis to control the design direction. For example, the questionnaire can show respondents' preferences for broad styles such as contemporary Chinese or modern minimalist design, but it cannot directly determine specific graphics. Cases can show

how comparable brands handle product series, but they cannot replace Menghetang's own cultural sources. The final proposal therefore does not simply apply the most popular survey style. Instead, it considers the audience's preference for lighter visual expression together with the brand's existing cultural resources and the systematic experience of comparable cases. Where a claim cannot be directly supported by the survey, it is presented only as a design decision rather than as a general conclusion about consumers.

Conclusions to Chapter 1

Chapter 1 clarifies the origins of the research problem and the methods used. Existing studies provide a foundation for understanding the history of the Menghe Medical School, regional culture, and visual transformation in branding, but the systematic design of brands associated with specific local medical schools still requires further discussion. The following chapters therefore focus on Menghetang's current brand problems, target-audience needs, and the practical transformation of its cultural resources.

CHAPTER 2

ANALYSIS OF DESIGN THEORY AND PRACTICE

2.1. Theoretical Basis of Menghe Regional Culture and Menghe Medical School

Regional culture is a cultural complex gradually formed through a particular natural environment, historical development, and social life. In design research, it includes both directly observable material forms, such as architecture, objects, and landscapes, and less tangible aspects such as habits, cultural memory, values, and local identity. Menghe lies within the Jiangnan waterside region, where waterways, bridges, ancient-town spaces, white walls with dark tiled roofs, and traditional dwellings form recognizable regional features. Former residences of physicians, clinics, medical writings and case records, and TCM instruments further connect local culture with medical tradition.

Menghe's medical tradition developed over a long period. Hereditary medical families gradually rose during the Ming and Qing dynasties, and the Fei, Ma, Chao, and Ding families flourished from the late Qing dynasty into the early Republican period. Some physicians later moved to cities such as Shanghai to practice and establish medical education, extending Menghe medicine from a local hereditary tradition into modern urban networks. The four families were not isolated; they were connected through teacher-student relationships, exchange, and academic influence. Fei Boxiong was known for internal medicine and emphasized a mild, balanced, refined, and orthodox approach; Ma Peizhi practiced both internal and external medicine and was especially skilled in surgery; Chao Chongshan stressed clinical practice and external techniques; Ding Ganren drew on multiple traditions and expanded the school's influence through medical education. The rise of the four families also shows that the "locality" of the Menghe Medical School did not imply cultural closure. Learning, exchange, and mutual influence existed among them, and

physicians who moved to Shanghai encountered new medical environments and educational systems. For this study, this is more meaningful than simply stressing the school's long history. It shows a tradition capable of absorbing influences through inheritance and adjusting through practice. Brand design therefore need not equate "tradition" with retro styling. Cultural origins can be retained while using cleaner typography, geometric graphics, and contemporary packaging structures, which is consistent with the school's inclusive and open cultural character.

From the perspective of brand design, the significance of the four families lies mainly in showing that the Menghe Medical School was not a single, closed body of knowledge, but an inclusive tradition formed through long-term exchange. This study therefore does not turn the four families into four separate visual symbols, which would reduce complex cultural relationships to superficial icons. Instead, it selects elements from their shared medical culture that are more suitable for brand transformation. Medical writings and case records, herbal-paste culture, the idea of mild and balanced treatment, syndrome-based health maintenance, and medicine-food homology are more directly related to Menghetang's actual products and services.

Among these ideas, the concept of "mild, balanced, refined, and orthodox" treatment provides useful inspiration for visual design. The intention is not to mechanically convert medical terminology into geometric symbols, but to extract qualities of moderation, stability, balance, and order. These qualities can be expressed through gentle curves, stable geometric structures, appropriate negative space, low-conflict color relationships, and clear information hierarchy. Together with ideas of harmony and the pursuit of balance, the study further summarizes four design semantics: harmony, gentleness, balance, and order. These guide auxiliary graphics, layout rhythm, and relationships within product series. This four-part formulation is a design-oriented extraction rather than a replacement for the original academic terminology of the Menghe Medical School, and it should not be understood as a fixed historical doctrine. In this research, the traditional concept functions primarily as a basis for visual character rather than as a packaging slogan.

“Harmony” refers to coordination among architecture, medicinal materials, and text; “gentleness” is reflected in the rhythm of curves and the use of negative space; “refinement” calls for a pure visual language that does not depend on excessive decoration to prove its traditional character; and “orthodoxy” corresponds to typographic structure, information order, and layout stability. The later formulation of harmony, gentleness, balance, and order is used only as a design tool.

Architecture and waterways in Menghe regional culture provide more direct visual sources. Buildings such as the former residences of Fei Boxiong and Ding Ganren, Ding’an Gate, and Dongyue Temple have distinctive rooflines, entrances, walls, and window patterns that can be geometrically simplified while retaining recognizable structures. Menghe’s waterways are more suitable as a continuous and flowing linear language, contrasting with the stable structure of architecture. Water is therefore not only a landscape element but also a visual metaphor for connection, continuity, and transmission.

The range of architectural elements also needs to be controlled. White walls, dark tiled roofs, gateways, and lattice windows are common throughout Jiangnan; extracting only generic Jiangnan silhouettes may still lack a specific Menghe identity. The design therefore gives priority to structural features from buildings closely related to the medical school, such as the former residences of Fei Boxiong and Ding Ganren, supplemented by local landmarks including Ding’an Gate and Dongyue Temple. Complex brick carvings and realistic perspective are omitted, while the basic shapes of eaves, doorway proportions, lattice windows, and walls are retained. This supports a unified graphic language and prevents the architectural graphics from becoming tourist illustrations.

Accordingly, this study understands cultural resources at three levels. The first consists of directly observable material forms, including architecture, waterways, medical writings, and medicinal materials. The second includes behaviors and ways of life such as physician inheritance, clinical consultation, prescription compatibility, herbal-paste preparation, and medicine-food wellness practices. The third consists of conceptual values such as mild and balanced treatment,

inclusiveness, harmony, and the pursuit of equilibrium. Not every level needs to become an icon. Depending on the content, culture may enter the brand system through graphics, color, layout, or design rules. This layered approach clarifies how Menghe regional culture and the traditions of the Menghe Medical School are transformed into design resources.

2.2. Brand-related Theories and Current Situation of "Menghetang" Brand

Brand image is the overall impression consumers form through a brand's name, logo, typography, color, packaging, products, services, and communication. Visual identity is its most immediate component, but a brand image is not equivalent to a logo. For a TCM brand with a traditional cultural background, cultural origin, professional attributes, and product experience all affect consumer judgment. The visual system therefore needs to organize these elements into a relatively stable relationship.

When regional culture enters brand design, the key is not to place local architecture directly on every product, but to identify cultural cues that can represent the brand over time. Architecture can be transformed into silhouettes and geometric structures, waterways into continuous curves, medical concepts into visual order, and medicine-food ingredients into identifiers for individual products. Each level has a different function. Only by establishing priorities can the design avoid overcrowding packaging with architecture, instruments, herbs, patterns, and text at the same time.

Menghetang is a TCM institution rooted in the culture of the Menghe Medical School, integrating TCM diagnosis and treatment, constitution-based health management, and medicine-food products. The brand has a genuine lineage connection with the medical school, and its premises retain Chinese medicine cabinets, diagnostic facilities, and spatial characteristics of a traditional clinic. As its business has expanded, Menghetang has developed teas, herbal pastes, dietary-wellness products, and herbal sachets, and has collaborated with cultural-tourism

settings such as Xiaohuangshan Health Town. Consumers therefore encounter the brand not only through physicians, treatment, and the clinic environment, but also through packaging, online communication, displays, and gift products.

The brand already possesses substantial resources. At the cultural level, these include the Menghe Medical School, physician lineages, the principle of mild and balanced treatment, and medicine-food homology. Professional resources include TCM diagnosis, constitution-based regulation, and herbal pastes. Regional resources include Menghe Ancient Town, its waterways, and physicians' former residences. Existing products include teas, herbal pastes, sachets, and dietary-wellness products, while usage settings extend across the clinic, home, gifting, and cultural tourism. The problem is that these resources have largely existed independently rather than forming stable visual correspondences. A consumer seeing a particular tea may not associate it with the Menghe Medical School, while the clinic logo may not help them recognize collaborative products. The design task is therefore to organize the relationships among existing resources rather than add unrelated cultural elements.

The current visual identity first shows instability in its core identification. Logo forms used at different stages are not fully consistent in color, structure, or style, making it difficult to build stable recognition. Second, product packaging lacks common rules: teas, herbal pastes, and collaborative products use separate systems of typography, color, graphics, and layout. Third, although the existing visuals suggest traditional Chinese medicine, Menghe regional culture and the Menghe Medical School have not yet become distinctive proprietary identifiers.

The existing packaging also shows that the brand is moving from a primarily clinical service toward a more product-oriented model. Some gift boxes use strong red-and-gold combinations to emphasize tradition and gifting, while some tea products use lighter colors and contemporary packaging structures; collaborative products are also influenced by the context and media of partner organizations. Individually, these designs are not necessarily inappropriate, but together they lack shared rules for layout, typography, and graphics. As the product range expands, such differences increase future design costs and weaken continuity in consumer

memory. The basic visual system therefore needs both fixed and variable components: the logo, typography, and information framework should remain relatively stable, while product colors and ingredient graphics may change by category.

For this reason, the adjustment of Menghetang's brand cannot be limited to redesigning one package or replacing one logo. A basic visual system must first be established, allowing individual products to vary within a common framework. The foundation should include the logo, typography, standard colors, and auxiliary graphics. At the product level, ingredient graphics and individual product colors can be selected according to teas, herbal pastes, and cultural-tourism products. At the application level, regional architecture, water-line motifs, and brand patterns can extend to gift boxes, office materials, and cultural-creative products. This maintains recognition without making every medium look identical.

2.3.Target Audience Demand and Similar Brand Case Analysis

A total of 230 questionnaires were collected, of which 200 were valid. Women accounted for 64.0% of respondents; 42.0% were aged 20–35 and 31.0% were aged 35–50. Enterprise employees formed the largest occupational group, and bachelor's degree holders were the largest educational group. The sample suggests that the design should pay particular attention to young and middle-aged consumers engaged in everyday wellness. Because the survey was conducted specifically for this project, however, the findings are not treated as representative of the entire market.

Regarding purchase purpose, 54.0% of respondents purchased products for personal use, 29.0% for gifting, and 17.0% for both. Among purchase factors, product practicality accounted for 66.0%, packaging aesthetics for 59.0%, price for 43.0%, brand image for 39.0%, and cultural meaning for 27.0%. These results suggest that consumers first consider whether a product is useful in practice, while packaging and overall brand impression also matter. For Menghetang, the design therefore needs to accommodate everyday settings such as home, office, and travel, as well as gifting and cultural-tourism consumption.

The balance between personal use and gifting also shows that the packaging should not be handled exclusively as either a premium gift box or an everyday fast-moving product. Products for personal use require direct information, convenient opening, and visuals that are not overly ceremonial, while gift products need greater completeness in material, combination, and cultural content. The Four-Season Wellness series therefore uses lighter individual packaging within a unified framework, while combination gift boxes add architectural and auxiliary graphics. Herbal-paste products retain a more stable relationship between bottle and outer box. Hierarchical variation within one visual system can support both contexts without creating a separate brand style for gifting.

In terms of brand awareness, 41.0% of respondents had never heard of the Menghe Medical School and 48.0% had heard of it but knew little about it. For Menghetang, 41.0% were unfamiliar with the brand, 29.0% considered its image relatively traditional, and 23.0% regarded it as professional and trustworthy. Rather than simply concluding that the brand lacks trust, it is more accurate to say that it has not yet formed a clear advantage in brand recognition. Contemporary Chinese and modern minimalist styles attracted greater attention in the visual-style survey, so the brand direction is summarized as professional, local, refined, and modern.

These findings also influence how cultural information is communicated. If consumers have limited knowledge of the Menghe Medical School, placing numerous historical figures, book titles, and specialist terms directly on the packaging will not automatically create effective recognition and may instead raise the barrier to understanding. Core packaging therefore first uses readily perceived ingredients, colors, and regional forms to establish an initial impression, while deeper stories of the medical school are introduced gradually through gift boxes, product cards, promotional materials, and cultural-tourism content. A progressive approach to cultural communication is more consistent with actual reading habits than concentrating all information on the front of a single package.

The selected comparable cases include both traditional TCM brands and contemporary dietary-wellness brands. Tongrentang has maintained its core logo

and brand assets over time while allowing different product lines to vary in packaging, showing that renewal of a traditional brand does not require abandoning its established identity; instead, a stable core should be defined first. Leiyunshang incorporates the Wumen Medical School and Suzhou regional culture into its brand visuals, connecting typography, regional graphics, and brand narrative. This provides a direct reference for Menghetang in emphasizing the identity of a local medical school.

The three cases offer different kinds of reference. Tongrentang is useful for observing how a long-established brand maintains a stable core identity over time. Leiyunshang demonstrates a relatively clear relationship among a medical school, an urban region, and a visual system. Wugumofang is closer to everyday dietary-wellness consumption and shows how ingredient graphics and series packaging can reduce the distance often associated with traditional wellness products. Comparing the three prevents the study from seeking answers only within the category of traditional TCM brands and also reveals Menghetang's dual character: it has a professional medical background while extending toward everyday wellness products.

Wugumofang represents a more lifestyle-oriented direction in dietary wellness. Its packaging relies less on complex traditional patterns and instead builds series relationships through ingredient graphics, fixed layouts, and category colors. Individual products may vary visually, while the brand name, information structure, and overall character remain consistent. This approach is suitable for Menghetang's teas, herbal pastes, and dietary-wellness products because consumers need to distinguish products quickly while still recognizing them as belonging to the same brand.

Based on the research and case analysis, three design judgments are established. First, Menghe regional culture and the culture of the medical school should be the primary source of brand differentiation. Second, visual expression should reduce overly heavy traditional decoration and enter everyday wellness settings in a simpler form. Third, product series should use a fixed layout and brand-information

framework, with ingredients, colors, and local graphics providing variation. These judgments are carried directly into the design practice in Chapter 3.

Conclusions to Chapter 2

Chapter 2 brings the cultural foundation, current brand condition, user needs, and case experience into a single analytical framework. The analysis shows that Menghetang does not lack cultural or product resources; the main problem is that these resources have not yet formed stable visual relationships. The subsequent design therefore needs to establish a distinctive identity through Menghe regional and medical-school culture, solve recognition problems through a unified basic visual system, and then create product differences according to settings such as tea, herbal pastes, and cultural tourism.

CHAPTER 3

DESIGN PROPOSAL

3.1. Concept of the Design Proposal

The brand identity improvement of Menghetang is based on three ideas: clear cultural origins, a stable visual system, and an everyday mode of product expression. The design begins with the brand's existing Menghe regional and medical-school resources rather than searching for unrelated traditional elements. Menghe architecture, waterways, medical writings and case records, herbal-paste culture, and medicine-food ingredients perform different levels of visual function, while concepts such as mild and balanced treatment, harmony, and equilibrium are translated mainly into curves, negative space, order, and color relationships.

Cultural elements are selected according to cultural authenticity, brand relevance, visual transformability, and systematic extensibility. Architectural prototypes include the former residences of Fei Boxiong and Ding Ganren, Ding'an Gate, and Dongyue Temple. Their rooflines, entrances, walls, and window patterns are retained and geometrically simplified. Waterways are not represented as maps but as continuous curves. Medical writings and case records are expressed through page structures, ruled frames, and vertical arrangements, while herbal-paste culture and medicine-food ingredients are used in relation to specific products.

Regional and TCM elements do not operate at the same level. Architecture and waterways mainly answer "Where does the brand come from?" Medical writings, herbal pastes, and medical principles answer "What medical culture is the brand connected to?" Medicine-food ingredients answer "What is this product?" If all three levels become primary visuals at the same time, the image becomes crowded and the cultural hierarchy becomes confused. The basic brand layer therefore focuses on the logo, water-line motifs, and architectural structures; product packaging places ingredients at the visual center; and medical principles are expressed mainly through

composition and order. This layered relationship allows the three product series to remain unified without becoming repetitive.

The visual transformation follows the sequence of cultural prototype identification, core-semantic extraction, form simplification, formal reconstruction, and brand application. Architectural elements avoid realistic detail and are reduced to a limited number of color blocks and contours. Medicinal materials are not drawn as complete botanical plates; instead, the most recognizable parts of flowers, leaves, fruits, and roots are extracted. Water-line curves serve as a connective auxiliary language for packaging borders, gift boxes, and office materials. By reducing the number of elements, different cultural contents are given distinct positions within the brand system.

The overall aesthetic is summarized from the cultural character of the Menghe Medical School as gentleness, balance, and restrained order. Gentleness is expressed through rounded transitions, relaxed curves, and appropriate negative space. Balance emphasizes stable relationships among text, graphics, and color blocks rather than mechanical symmetry. Restrained order uses clear geometric structures, consistent line weights, and information hierarchy to maintain a professional quality. Instead of relying on extensive antique textures or complex “Guochao” decoration, the brand retains an Eastern cultural character within a modern minimalist framework.

In its formal language, the design deliberately reduces the imitation of aged paper, repeated seal motifs, and large areas of calligraphy commonly seen in traditional TCM packaging. This does not mean such forms are unusable; rather, Menghetang first needs to establish its own identity. Geometrically simplified architecture, continuous water lines, and large-scale botanical graphics are easier to keep consistent across media and better suit the brand’s increasingly youthful and portable products. A sense of tradition is created mainly through structure, color relationships, and authentic cultural sources rather than artificial aging effects. This allows the brand to retain an Eastern character without falling into the same visual conventions as many comparable TCM brands.

The product system is reorganized according to actual usage settings. The Four-Season Wellness series serves everyday tea and dietary-wellness use, using spring, summer, autumn, and winter as organizing cues. The Menghe Herbal-Paste Wellness series emphasizes herbal-paste culture and professional health maintenance. The Menghe Cultural-Tourism series is linked to settings such as Xiaohuangshan Health Town and focuses on portable teas and gift products. These three directions are not separate sub-brands but variations within the same basic visual system according to product content.

The product plan does not create separate series for the Fei, Ma, Chao, and Ding families. Although the four families are important to research on the Menghe Medical School, their personal and lineage relationships do not correspond directly to Menghetang's existing products, and forcing such a classification could result in arbitrary cultural association. By contrast, seasonal wellness, herbal pastes, and cultural-tourism consumption are more directly connected with existing teas, paste products, and collaborative products, and are easier for consumers to understand. Physician lineages are therefore retained in the brand's cultural narrative and research section, while products are classified according to modes of use and wellness settings.

3.2. Structural, Plastic, and Graphic Solution of the Design Concept

The brand logo is centered on the Chinese character “Meng”. Compared with common TCM symbols such as medicine jars, gourds, or acupuncture imagery, the character has a more direct relationship with the Menghetang name, the Menghe region, and the Menghe Medical School. The design is based on the traditional structure of the character, with “zi” (子) above and “min” (皿) below. Its strokes are geometrically simplified, with controlled line weight, terminals, and turns, producing a compact and stable form while retaining a degree of traditional typographic character. The outer contour approaches a rounded square so that the mark remains legible at smaller sizes.

The logo structure also considers later applications. Clinic signage, bottle labels, tea bags, staff cards, and refrigerator magnets vary greatly in size, and excessive internal detail would be lost at small scales. The number of strokes and negative spaces is therefore controlled so that the mark remains recognizable in monochrome. On packaging, reversed or tonal versions may be used according to the series color. The logo forms a fixed combination with the English wordmark “MENGHETANG,” avoiding the repeated use of inconsistent typefaces and proportions across materials.

The Chinese logotype follows the structural logic of the logo. The characters are slightly wide, with extended horizontal strokes, stable vertical strokes, and a limited influence from clerical-script forms, giving the typography an Eastern character without making it overly retro. The English wordmark uses uppercase “MENGHETANG” and is coordinated with the Chinese in weight and spacing. Brand type is used mainly for names and headings, while longer text uses clear, readable conventional typefaces to maintain legibility on packaging and office materials.

The color system is based on warm off-white and botanical green, with ochre red, orange, pale cyan, and blue added as supporting colors according to product needs. Off-white provides a stable background and sufficient negative space, while botanical green relates to natural wellness and TCM attributes. Ochre red and orange are used for warmer, nourishing product directions, while pale cyan and blue are used for refreshing or cultural-tourism products. The system follows the principle of one dominant color per product, avoiding excessive use of multiple highly saturated colors on a single package.

Product color follows the principle that the brand’s base colors remain stable while series colors provide differentiation. Warm off-white and botanical green recur in office materials, gift boxes, and basic applications as the brand foundation. The Four-Season series uses clearer dominant colors such as magenta, orange, green, and blue for individual products. To prevent the series from becoming four unrelated packaging systems, the warm-beige information area, logo position, and typographic

relationships remain consistent. Herbal-paste and cultural-tourism products follow the same method, adjusting overall color according to product character rather than establishing a separate color logic.

The auxiliary graphics develop along two main paths. The first comes from Menghe architecture and waterways, simplifying rooflines, entrances, lattice windows, and water patterns into continuous geometric units. The second develops from the design semantics of harmony, gentleness, balance, and order, using a square framework, softly concave curves, and repeated arrangements to form a unified motif. Auxiliary graphics do not become the main subject of the packaging; they are used mainly in backgrounds, borders, gift boxes, shopping bags, and office materials to maintain brand recognition without repeatedly enlarging the logo.

The proportion of auxiliary graphics varies by medium. Information-oriented materials such as letter paper and prescriptions use only a small amount of water-line patterning at the edges to preserve writing and reading space. Gift boxes and shopping bags may enlarge continuous patterns to strengthen recognition from a distance. Cultural-creative products allow architectural units to become primary graphics because they have a stronger cultural-display function. This “same element, different intensity” approach prevents repetition from becoming mechanical and adapts the system to settings ranging from medical service to cultural tourism.

The purpose of the basic visual system is not to make every item look identical, but to establish repeatable rules. The logo and standard type remain stable, the base colors control the overall character, and auxiliary graphics connect different media. Individual products then adjust their dominant colors and graphics according to ingredients and context. This avoids the existing problem in which each product appears to belong to a different brand and leaves room for future product additions.

3.3. Technical Support and Testing

The Four-Season Wellness series is organized around adaptation to seasonal change and wellness in accordance with the seasons, while drawing on Menghetang’s existing tea and dietary-wellness products. Spring is represented by

mulberry and rose tea; summer uses refreshing herbal teas; autumn emphasizes moistening ingredients such as lily bulb, Chinese yam, and poria; and winter focuses on warming ingredients such as codonopsis, red dates, and goji berries. The seasonal division primarily serves product organization and visual expression and does not equate each season with a fixed prescription. Ingredient combinations emphasize the measured use of multiple components, echoing the Menghe Medical School's syndrome-based treatment and its mild, balanced approach to medication.

The Four-Season series does not simply assign a color to each season; instead, seasonal sequence, product ingredients, and visual variation are organized within the same structure. In spring, the distinct fruit and petal forms of mulberry and rose support full magenta color blocks. Summer ingredients are represented by flowers, leaves, and more open branches, producing a lighter image. Autumn uses botanical green and more stable leaf structures for moistening ingredients, while winter is differentiated through root and fruit forms together with a more restrained blue-and-orange relationship. These colors primarily support series recognition and seasonal atmosphere and do not replace factual ingredient information.

The packaging uses a unified layout framework with large botanical graphics as the main visual content. Ingredients such as mulberry, rose, honeysuckle, chrysanthemum, lily bulb, Chinese yam, codonopsis, red dates, and goji berries are reduced to recognizable petals, leaves, fruits, and root forms, then enlarged, cropped, and reorganized as geometric color blocks. The four products are differentiated by dominant colors including magenta, orange, botanical green, and blue, while the brand logo, product name, and information area remain relatively fixed. Gift boxes and shopping bags additionally incorporate architectural features from the former residence of Fei Boxiong and the brand's water-line graphics, creating a layered relationship between individual ingredients and Menghe regional culture.

In the layout, brand information, product names, and specifications remain in relatively fixed positions across the four individual packages, while botanical graphics are allowed to extend beyond the frame through enlargement and cropping to create visual tension. This is simpler than arranging complete medicinal plants

across the front of the package and is closer to the contemporary food-packaging character used as a design reference. The combination gift box does not repeat the enlarged plant graphics of the four products; instead, it uses architectural features from Fei Boxiong's former residence and the brand's water-line graphics, allowing the gift box to carry more regional cultural content. Individual packages help consumers understand the product, while the gift box introduces the brand culture; the two therefore have different functions.

The Menghe Herbal-Paste Wellness series places greater emphasis on professional health-maintenance attributes. Taking Neijin Paste as an example, the packaging uses chicken gizzard lining as the main ingredient graphic and adds partial silhouettes of Menghe regional architecture, connecting the product content with the cultural source of the brand. The outer box uses the brand's water-line auxiliary graphic in a continuous repeated pattern around the package, coordinated with the logo and inner container. The series uses a more restrained color character than the tea products, while retaining an off-white ground and clear information hierarchy to avoid the heaviness often associated with traditional herbal-paste packaging.

For Neijin Paste, chicken gizzard lining is the most direct ingredient cue and therefore becomes the main graphic on the bottle label. Rather than rendering the medicinal material as a realistic specimen, the design combines its simplified form with architectural silhouettes, preventing the package from appearing overly pharmaceutical. The water-line graphic on the outer box reduces specific ingredient information and uses a quieter relationship of beige, orange, and pale cyan to create a gift-oriented character. The inner and outer packages have different visual priorities, but remain connected through the logo, typography, and auxiliary graphics, providing a consistent framework for future herbal-paste products.

The Menghe Cultural-Tourism series is developed mainly for consumption settings such as Xiaohuangshan Health Town, represented by portable products including Yuanqi Black Tea. While emphasizing tea and drinking attributes, the packaging incorporates regional elements such as Jiangnan rooflines, gateways, and water patterns. Architecture is not rendered as a complete ancient-town landscape

but simplified into large geometric silhouettes. Water-line curves continue around the cup so that the image changes as the package is rotated. This allows the product to retain a recognizable Menghe regional origin in tourism, leisure, and gifting settings.

Compared with products sold inside the clinic, cultural-tourism products need to communicate a sense of place more quickly. Yuanqi Black Tea uses a portable cup format suited to sightseeing, rest, and immediate consumption, so the packaging avoids excessive medical terminology and instead creates a direct image through tea leaves, architecture, and water patterns. The architectural silhouettes derive from Menghe's regional visual vocabulary, while the continuous water pattern corresponds both to the waterside environment and to the brand's existing auxiliary graphics. Even consumers unfamiliar with the Menghe Medical School can first form an impression through regional forms, with deeper cultural information later provided through product cards or the tourism setting.

Brand office materials include envelopes, letter paper, business cards, prescriptions, staff cards, notebooks, and workwear. These applications focus on basic identification and reduce complex decoration, using mainly the logo, standard type, off-white and botanical green, and water-line curves to establish consistency. Information-oriented materials such as prescriptions and letter paper prioritize readability, with auxiliary graphics confined to edges or lower areas. Notebooks and staff cards may use somewhat more architectural and water-pattern elements so that office and clinical settings remain visually connected.

The office system primarily tests whether the basic visual identity can function independently of product packaging. Business cards, envelopes, and staff cards do not use medicinal-ingredient graphics, retaining only the logo, standard type, base colors, and water-line pattern. If these materials are still recognizable as belonging to the same brand, the visual system demonstrates a degree of stability. Workwear reduces decoration further, using only small areas of brand color and pattern at the collar, cuffs, and back to avoid excessive commercialization in a medical-service

context. Notebooks allow more complete regional graphics and serve as a relatively relaxed office application.

Cultural-creative products increase the proportion of regional elements. The design takes the former residence of Fei Boxiong, Ding'an Gate, the former residence of Ding Ganren, and Dongyue Temple as architectural prototypes, simplifying their eaves, entrances, walls, and window patterns and combining them with water-line graphics and brand colors on products such as canvas bags and refrigerator magnets. The graphics retain the most recognizable structural features without pursuing realistic detail, allowing the products to function as carriers of local culture while remaining consistent with the brand's contemporary Chinese visual style.

The canvas bags and refrigerator magnets use architectural prototypes as their main visual content, which differs from the treatment of packaging. Packaging must first explain the product, while cultural-creative items can make local culture itself the subject. After the former residence of Fei Boxiong, Ding'an Gate, the former residence of Ding Ganren, and Dongyue Temple are simplified within a common geometric language, the most recognizable features of eaves, entrances, walls, and window patterns are retained and organized as a series through brand colors. This avoids directly copying architectural photographs and keeps different buildings consistent within the same visual language.

Across the overall design practice, the brand system establishes a relationship of stable basic identity, variable product graphics, and continuous regional culture. The Four-Season series focuses on medicine-food ingredients and seasonal colors; the herbal-paste series emphasizes ingredients and professional attributes; and cultural-tourism and cultural-creative products use a greater proportion of regional architecture and waterways. Although different media have different visual priorities, the logo, typography, color logic, and auxiliary graphics remain connected, extending the brand from a single clinic image to products, office applications, and cultural-tourism consumption settings.

Conclusions to Chapter 3

This chapter built a Menghetang brand visual system spanning teas, herbal pastes, cultural-tourism products, office materials, and cultural-creative merchandise. By keeping the identity stable and varying product graphics through a shared language of seasonal ingredients and regional architecture, it extended the brand from a single clinic image into broader products and cultural-tourism settings.

CONCLUSIONS

This thesis takes the culture of the Menghe Medical School as its research background and reorganizes the brand identity and product packaging of Menghetang. The study argues that the brand's real source of differentiation is not generic TCM symbolism, but the specific relationship among the Menghe region, the medical-school lineage, and existing products. Cultural resources are therefore screened first, after which architecture, waterways, medical writings and case records, herbal-paste culture, medicine-food ingredients, and the principle of mild and balanced treatment are assigned to graphics, color, layout, and series rules according to their roles. Brand research shows that Menghetang's current problems mainly concern an unstable core identity, weak visual relationships among products, and insufficiently clear expression of Menghe Medical School culture. In response, the design adopts "professional, local, refined, and modern" as its overall direction, establishing a logo, standard typography, color system, and auxiliary graphics, and developing the Four- Season Wellness, Menghe Herbal-Paste Wellness, and Menghe Cultural-Tourism product lines within the same visual framework. Each series varies according to ingredients, mode of use, and setting while maintaining a consistent basic identity. The practical focus of this research is not to place as many traditional cultural elements as possible on the packaging, but to determine which cultural contents are suitable for core identification and which are better used as product information or auxiliary graphics. Architecture and waterways provide regional cues, medicine- food ingredients identify specific products, and medical-school concepts are translated mainly into curves, negative space, balance, and order. This reduces the accumulation of elements commonly seen in traditional TCM packaging and makes the relationship between cultural origin and actual products clearer. Because of limitations in research time and practical conditions, the current design focuses mainly on visual identity and packaging, with less attention to materials and production techniques, manufacturing cost, actual sales feedback, and long-term

communication effects. Future work can continue to test the packaging through Menghetang's real operations and extend the existing visual system to online communication, clinic space, and cultural-tourism activities. The culture of the Menghe Medical School is rich, and further forms of expression suited to contemporary lifestyles can be explored without increasing visual burden. The research process shows that introducing Menghe Medical School culture into brand design is not well served by a simple path of "finding a traditional symbol and placing it directly on the package." A more effective method is to distinguish levels of cultural content first and then assign information according to different brand touchpoints: the basic visual identity supports long-term recognition, product packaging communicates ingredients and categories, gift boxes and cultural-creative products carry more regional culture, and medical principles influence the overall aesthetic and design rules. This layered method allows cultural expression and product function to coexist while reducing visual accumulation created merely to emphasize tradition.

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This appendix contains:

1. Images of logos, packaging and application cases of comparable brands including Tongrentang and Wugumofang.
2. Current-status materials of the Menghetang brand, such as photographs of brand stores and product-packaging pictures.
3. Questionnaire results





Existing Logos of Menghetang



Display of Existing Product Packaging of Menghetang

3.Questionnaire results

TABLE 3-3 / SURVEY RESULTS

Purchase Purposes and Influencing Factors

Sample size: 200

Survey item	Response option	Respondents	Percentage
Purchase purpose	Personal use	108	54.0%
	Gifts (for family and friends / local specialties)	58	29.0%
	Both	34	17.0%
Purchase factors (multiple responses)	Practical usefulness	132	66.0%
	Attractive packaging	118	59.0%
	Price	86	43.0%
	Brand image	78	39.0%
	Brand reputation	72	36.0%
	Cultural significance of the brand	54	27.0%

Note: Multiple-response percentages may total more than 100%.

TABLE 3-4 / SURVEY RESULTS

Brand Awareness and Perceptions

Sample size: 200

Survey item	Response option	Respondents	Percentage
Channels for discovering wellness brands (multiple responses)	Social media	126	63.0%
	Recommendations from family and friends	88	44.0%
	E-commerce platforms	62	31.0%
	Physical stores	54	27.0%
	Other	18	9.0%
Familiarity with the Menghe medical school	Very familiar	22	11.0%
	Have heard of it, but know little about it	96	48.0%
	Have never heard of it	82	41.0%
Impression of MENGHETANG	Professional and trustworthy	46	23.0%
	Traditional and dated	58	29.0%
	Unfamiliar; no particular impression	82	41.0%
	Other	14	7.0%

Note: Multiple-response percentages may total more than 100%.

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	Unfamiliar; no particular impression	82	41.0%
	Other	14	7.0%

Note: Multiple-response percentages may total more than 100%.

TABLE 3-5 / SURVEY RESULTS

Preferred Brand Visual Styles

Sample size: 200

Survey item	Response option	Respondents	Percentage
Visual style preference	Contemporary Chinese style	68	34.0%
	Modern minimalist style	48	24.0%
	Natural botanical style	38	19.0%
	Traditional Chinese style	28	14.0%

APPENDIX B

This appendix contains:

- 1.Extracted regional and TCM visual symbolic elements
- 2.Refined logo, typeface and brand visual- identity system
- 3.Brand product packaging
- 4.Brand application system

1. Extracted regional and TCM visual symbolic elements

Traditional Chinese Medicine
Cultural Elements and Visual Symbol Extraction

Category	Source Elements	Extracted Visual Symbols
Classical Medical Literature	Medical writings (Yichun Shengyil), prescription sheets and case records.	
Medical Tools and Utensils	Herbal scales, medicine grinders, mortars, decoction pots, herbal medicine cabinets and herbal medicine packets.	
Medicinal Herbs	Ginseng, astragalus, Chinese yam, goji berries, chrysanthemum, lotus leaves and mugwort.	
Medical Philosophy	Harmony, gentleness, purity and integrity; yin-yang balance; individualized treatment; the shared origins of food and medicine.	 Individualized Care Pattern-Based Treatment Harmony, Gentleness, Purity and Integrity Yin-Yang Balance

Menghe Regional Cultural Resources

Category	Representative Examples	Photographs	Extracted Visual Symbols
Former Residences of the Four Great Physicians	Former residences of Fei Boxiang and Ding Ganren		
Public Buildings	Dongyue Temple		
Historic Fortifications	Dingchang Gate and the old city wall		
Religious Buildings	Jiulong Chan Temple		

2. Refined logo, typeface and brand visual- identity system

MENGHETANG

Logo Proportions & Clear Space

01

01 Proportion Grid & Alignment

02 Standard Lockup

03 Minimum Clear Space (Recommended)

Proportions	Symbol W x H	Lockup W x H	Symbol / Wordmark Gap	Recommended Clear Space
	20u x 19.7u	30.1u x 23.75u	1.55u	≥ 2u

Measured from the original black contours at grayscale threshold 128; boundary uncertainty is approx. ±1 px. Unit u is a reference, not a mandatory redraw dimension.
Original raster artwork with vector annotations. Curves are not reconstructed; radii and minimum reproduction size are unverified. Prepare a calibrated vector master before production.

MENGHETANG

VISUAL IDENTITY SYSTEM

MENGHE MEDICAL HERITAGE
CONTEMPORARY EASTERN AESTHETICS

01 CORE IDENTITY

A distinctive emblem rooted in the character "Meng".
Herbal imagery and paper texture connect the identity to its cultural setting.

02 DESIGN FOUNDATIONS

Three sources form one visual language.

SEAL-SCRIPT HERITAGE
The historical form of "Meng" informs the emblem's balanced structure.

JIANGNAN ARCHITECTURE
Rooflines, eaves and bridge arches are distilled into a flowing geometric curve.

MEDICAL PHILOSOPHY
Rounded geometry expresses harmony and gentleness, echoing individualized care.

03 MODULAR CONSTRUCTION

The reference unit "a" organises the bilingual wordmark.
Supplied construction study - retain the artwork's proportions when scaling.

04 COLOUR PALETTE

Digital colour references - RGB / HEX

05 SUPPORTING GRAPHICS

A shared rhythm of curves, repetition and continuity.

OFFSET ARC PATTERN
Alternating curves translate architectural rhythm into a repeatable motif.

DOUBLE-WAVE PATTERN
Paired waves extend the identity with a calm, continuous movement.

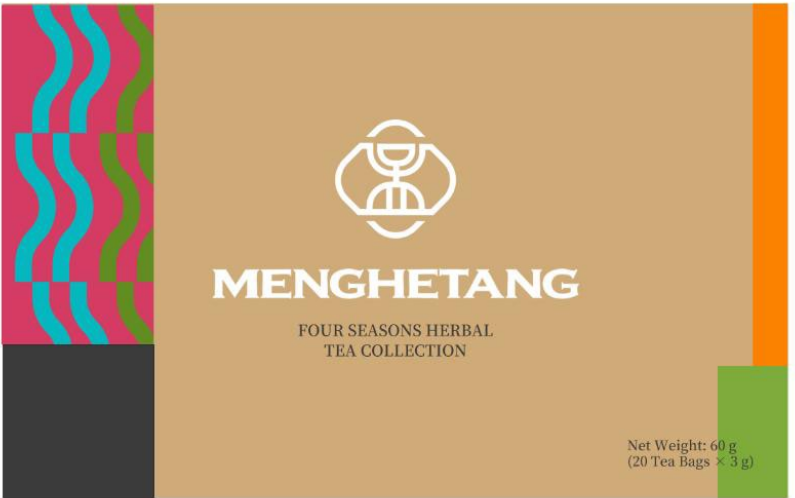
MENGHETANG / BRAND VISUAL LANGUAGE

IDENTITY · FORM · COLOUR · PATTERN

41

2. Brand product packaging

3.







4. Brand application system







