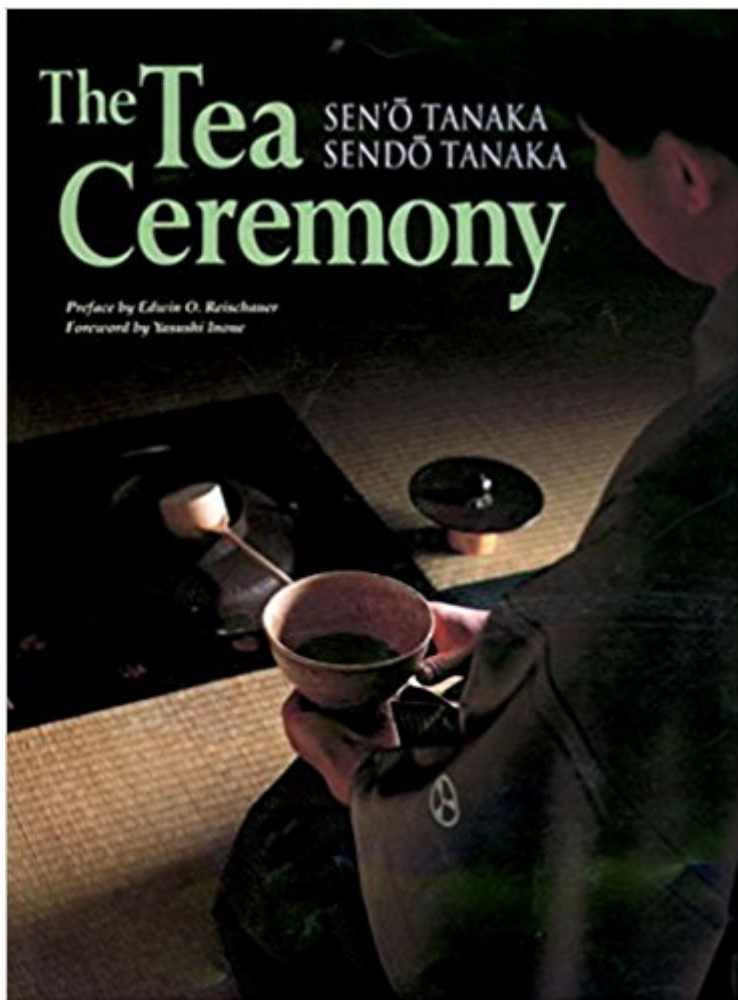


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The Tea Ceremony



Synopsis

In Japan, serving tea is an art and a spiritual discipline. As an art, the tea ceremony is an occasion to appreciate the clean lines of the tea room's design, the feel of the bowl in the hand, the company of friends, and a simple moment of purity. As a discipline, it has roots in the twelfth century and intimate connections to architecture, landscape gardening, ceramics, painting, flower arrangement, and, of course, Zen Buddhism. Written by contemporary tea masters, *The Tea Ceremony* takes a clear and comprehensive look at the sources and inspiration of this ancient discipline. The authors trace the practice from its earliest origins to the present day, considering in detail the individuals who helped it evolve. They discuss all the elements of the ceremony—including art, architecture, incense, flowers, and the influence of Zen—and show how readily the study of tea can serve as a spiritual path to greater insight and calm. Originally published in 1973, *The Tea Ceremony* has been revised extensively. Along with a rewritten and updated text, entirely new photographs and line drawings have been selected. Over 75 step-by-step stills of the tea ritual itself, featuring a number of close-up shots, give the reader a fuller visual understanding of the ceremony. Numerous line drawings illuminating the more important elements of the ceremony have been inserted for the first time, and for those readers wishing to delve further into the subject, bilingual charts of tea terms have been appended. This lavish new edition of *The Tea Ceremony* adds an important dimension to the literature of tea, capturing the aesthetic spirit that lies at the heart of the ritual. Includes:

- o More than 330 photographs and illustrations of tea houses, gardens, prize tea utensils, and scenes from the ceremony.
- o An extensive photographic sequence illustrating the tea ceremony.
- o Appendices of famous tea houses, tea terms with their equivalents in English, line drawings of the numerous shapes for tea utensils, and a lengthy glossary.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

SEN'Ō TANAKA was born in 1928, the grandchild of Sensho Tanaka, founder of the Japan Association of the Tea Ceremony (Dai Nihon Chado Gakkai). A graduate of the Tokyo Higher Mercantile Marine School, he studied Chinese literature at Nisho Gakusha University, and did graduate work in Oriental philosophy at Waseda University, where he earned a master's degree. Mr. Tanaka became the president of the Dai Nihon Chado Gakkai in 1961. In 1990, he became the senior executive director of the Santoku-an Foundation, the nonprofit arm of the tea association. He is the publisher of the monthly magazine Chado no Kenkyu (Studies in the Tea Ceremony) and regularly contributes articles to the journal. He is the author of several books on the tea ceremony, including Chado Nyumon Handobukku. SENDO TANAKA was born in 1958, the eldest son of Sen'ō Tanaka. After receiving a master degree in sociology from the University of Tokyo, he went abroad to study at Université Laval in Quebec. In 1988, he became vice president of the Dai Nihon Chado Gakkai and the following year became a lecturer at Nihon University. He now teaches the art of tea at the association and lectures at Keio University. He has published several works, including the book Usucha no Temae.

This book is a fairly good intro to the Japanese tea ceremony for the absolute neophyte. Covering history, gardening and a very basic overview of the utensils and ceremony. For anyone wishing to know more about the actual procedures of the ceremony, the book falls short (however, I'm not aware of any books widely available that do a good job of explaining these procedures). As tea ceremony is best learned under the tutelage of an instructor, anyone more serious about tea would do best to seek out a teacher.

A few years back I participated in a tea ceremony in Japan as a tourist with little idea of what was going on besides that it was cool and elegant. Reading this book filled in for me what I missed -- and it was a lot. This is a wonderful introduction to that most Japanese of ceremonies.

The book was delivered in terrific condition. It was sent on time. The Tea Ceremony provides a terrific explanation of how a tea ceremony is performed and the utensils used.

Readers enter this book as if a guest at a tea ceremony itself. The experience begins with admiring the cover, the letters almost an abstract composition on the subtly pale gold, the figure of a kneeling lady in a kimono shaded like a cherry petal, left hand supporting the celadon incense cup, right covering it, gazing down. We are invited to enjoy this quiet beauty, then turn to the opening pages. On the left page, an extraordinarily skillful photograph showing textures & shadings: a single pink hibiscus, with yellow stamens arising from the cup, against the green star-galaxy of a moss garden, the lichened tree trunk aligned with the blossom, the blossom placed at the verge of moss and brown forest floor. Pause: feel the coolness, hear the faint sound of water, of leaves barely moving. "The Tea Ceremony," published in 1977 by Harmony Books, can be in itself an exemplar of the art, values, and aesthetic of this ceremony. Like a No play, the ceremony has ancient roots. It intentionally moves slowly, permitting fullest admiration of each exquisite presentation in what Edwin Reischauer in his Foreword calls a different space and time. Reischauer's Foreword, three wise pages on what a Westerner might experience and needs to be diffident about, is followed by Yasushi Inoue's three page preface bringing us closer to the significance of the ceremony in Japanese culture, and by author Sen'ō Tanaka's two page poem-prose on the integration of Takeshi Nishikawa's photographs and the text. "I always," Tanaka writes, "feel a joyous beating in my heart on seeing the greenness of the moss glistening in the rain, and I feel as though my heart and soul have been washed clean, like the moss." The eight chapters of this art-size book include--Cha-No-Yu (about the tea ceremony)--Early History of Tea--Tea Masters and Tea Styles--Aesthetics of Tea--Temaie (correct or proper procedures)--Performance of the Tea Ceremony--Tea Architecture and Tea Gardens. There are an admirable section of notes to the beautiful plates, a Guide to classic Tea Houses, an excellent glossary, a Chronological Chart, a fascinating section on the Plan of Tea Rooms, and an Index, 215 pages in all. The details required for a perfect performance as host and guest seem innumerable, yet are but different paths to purification and tranquility shared with friends. I read this before travelling in Japan to help gain insight on the aesthetic values of Japan that might be a hidden river nourishing the more contemporary worlds of skyscrapers and bullet trains. The book proved to be in itself a door to a world of living in the now, of appreciating each element including the fragrance of the tea, the harmony between the seasons and every aspect of the ceremony, that was wondrous even without Japan travel ahead. But it also helped greatly in appreciating what I was seeing in the monasteries, palaces, and the austere beauty of a tea room. This is not an inexpensive book but it is, for the quality and wisdom, almost an invaluable one. The copy being reviewed is paperback and although much read, is in excellent condition, attention having been paid to layout, paper quality, and

binding.READER ALERTS? This book is almost 40 years old. Much seemed unchanged in the great gardens and legendary tea houses to which admission must be sought months ahead. Yet time moves on; values change; there may be new Tea Masters, new approaches. More recent books on the tea ceremony would be helpful reading.Also, as another reviewer has pointed out, even a book as mindful & beautiful as "The Tea Ceremony" is an introduction for those new to the tradition, and readers may carry their knowledge humbly...grateful however that this book exists and opens the garden gate for us.OVERALL: Enthusiastically recommended and enjoyable indeed with a cup of fine tea.

Very interesting intro on Japanese tea ceremony. Love it!

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