



Tea in the East: Tea Habits Along the Tea Route

Carole Manchester

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There is no more refined ritual than that of tea drinking in Asia. In *Tea in the East*, Carole Manchester, author of *French Tea*, invites you on a journey to the earliest tea-producing countries -- China, Japan, India, Sri Lanka -- to savor the pleasures of the ancient brew.

Lavishly illustrated with beautiful full-color photographs of tea ceremonies and their exotic settings, *Tea in the East* evokes the tranquillity and unique pleasures of the Eastern tea. In China, aged tea leaves are steeped for seconds in a tiny clay pot and poured into doll-sized handleless cups, the earthy taste savored as if it were a rare wine. In a still, silent room in Kyoto, powdered green tea is reverently whisked in a ceramic bowl in preparation for the tea ceremony. On the lawn of a planters' club in India, tea is served in cups covered with tiny beaded doilies to keep the tea free from dust.

Eastern tea ceremonies embody a rare grace in both their gentle choreography and in the decorative and functional beauty of the tea service. In China, the fashion of drinking tea inspired the craftsmanship of exquisite porcelain and ceramic teaware. In Japan, artisans create starkly simple teabowls, whisks, lacquer trays, and boxes. The teas of India are served in teacups made of silver.

As delicate and elegant as the utensils of the Eastern tea ceremony itself are their sweet and savory accompaniments. Dim sum, tiny stuffed delicacies, are served with a Cantonese tea; a bitter Japanese tea is balanced by seasonal bean curd sweets; Indians serve hot and spicy pastries with milky, sugary tea; and Sri Lankans drink their tea with crepe-like pastries called hoppers. Together with the story of tea in the East, you'll find recipes for tempting and unusual tea accompaniments, including a savory Green Tea-Marinated Chicken Sandwich, Marbled Tea Eggs, and the Russian Tea Room Spice Cake.

The varieties of Asian teas are as distinctive as their traditions. Using *Tea in the East* as a guide, you can explore the many satisfying tastes and aromas: the flowery Pai Mu Tan, a rare mix of two white tea plants from China; Japan's finest green tea, Gyokuro; Genmaicha, which is mixed with roasted rice that gives it a popcorn flavor; Darjeelings and robust Assam teas of India; and the exquisite afternoon teas of Ceylon. Also included are recipes for iced teas and tea remedies, as well as suggestions for the many practical uses of tea, storage methods, and a buyer's source guide.

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