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The Japanese Tea Garden



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Synopsis

"A necessary addition to the library of any serious student."—The New York Times Sunday Book ReviewAlmost every Japanese garden is influenced by the tea garden. Here, Marc Peter Keane describes the history, design, and aesthetics of tea gardens, from T’ang China to the present day, with over 115 stunning photographs, floor plans, and illustrations. The most extensive book on this genre ever published in English, The Japanese Tea Garden is a rich resource for garden lovers, historians, and landscape architects.Landscape architect Marc Peter Keane lived in Kyoto for twenty years and has a design practice in Ithaca, New York.

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Customer Reviews

Marc Peter Keane is the undisputed American master of Japanese garden scholars; he is also an educator and garden designer in his own right. Two of his previous books, "Japanese Garden Design" and "The Art of Setting Stones," are indispensable. His latest, THE JAPANESE TEA GARDEN (Stone Bridge, $59.95), opens with an evocative scene of people arriving for a tea ceremony. "The important thing is that a guest be neat and clean as an expression of respect for the host and of purity of mind. No one wears jewelry or uses perfume or cologne, those being too worldly and distracting." Since tea gardens have had a major impact on the design of Japanese gardens in general, this book is a necessary addition to the library of any serious student. The rest of us will enter with humility -- mindful of the small door through which one must crawl into the tea room -- and sip slowly. The sweeping historical ambition of this work emphasizes the connection

between social and economic change and the development of tea gardens. In the 16th century, for example, moss was a sign of decrepitude and poor housekeeping; that it went on to become a revered element in Japanese gardens represents "a paradigm shift," Keane notes, "as to what constitutes beauty." We learn that stepping stones not only create beautiful patterns on the ground and keep feet dry but also slow the visitor’s pace. It’s impossible to be in a hurry and expect to understand anything about Japanese gardens -- a lesson that holds for understanding life in general. --New York Times, Sunday Book Review, December 3, 2009 by Dominique Browning
--This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

In this richly illustrated volume, designer and author Marc Peter Keane looks at how social, religious, aesthetic, and philosophical influences combined over hundreds of years to produce one of the world’s most transcendent forms of landscape art. The Japanese tea garden today is immediately recognizable for its elegant gates, stepping stones, lanterns, water basins, mossy ground, and other elements in a setting resembling a forest path. Yet in its purest form, the purpose of this path, or roji, is to transport the visitor from the everyday world to the rarified realm of the tea ceremony, chanoyu. The tea garden is thus a physical as well as spiritual space, and its powerful cultural role has led its design and materials to influence almost every other form of garden art in Japan. The Japanese Tea Garden looks first at the background that set the stage for the emergence of the roji: the history of tea drinking, the importation of Chinese culture, including Zen Buddhism, and early architecture and garden spaces in Japan. It then examines Japan from the 15th and 16th centuries, focusing on the rise of military families and wealthy merchants, two powerful classes whose exchange of sensibilities created key aesthetic and artistic tendencies in the development of tea culture and the roji. Also introduced are the efforts of tea masters and artists -- like Murata ShukÃƒÂ´, Takeno JÃƒÂ´ÃƒÂ´, and Sen RikyÃƒÂ», and later Furuta Oribe and Kobori EnshÃƒÂ» -- to foster lasting, rigorous standards of design and practice. The last third of the book shows how the roji has continued to evolve. It introduces many of the other garden types influenced by the tea garden, such as imperial gardens and expansive stroll gardens of wealthy individuals, and the smaller gardens of inns and modern residences. Finally, it looks at all the elements of the tea garden, from pathways to plantings, as evidence of how the simple roji has become ever more sophisticated and complex. The most extensive treatment of its subject yet published in English, The Japanese Tea Garden contains detailed notes and references with primary-source Japanese transcriptions, as well as a glossary, bibliography, and index. Over 115 full-color photographs and line drawings accompany the text. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this

title.

Subtly builds your perspective on Japan at the time, and provides an understanding of the garden path. Recreates certain themes in a way that they 'stick' in your mind.Frankly, there is very little on the actual flora involved, and you almost understand why when you are finished. Memorable and enriching.

Keane has done a great service to both those who are interested in gardens and those who are interested in the Way of Tea. This is a beautifully designed and illustrated book that will fulfill every requirement for proud display on your coffee table. At the same time, it is a serious look at the history of the tea garden, where it came from, its forms and purposes, its influence on other types of gardens and architecture. Keane is particularly to be commended for tracing the history of the tea garden and the development of its design throughout history. This is something that has been missing from the English literature about tea gardens and is a great help in understanding the function of the garden and the goals of its designers. This book is to be highly recommended for anyone with an interest in the Way of Tea or the development of garden design in Japan.

Will be if not already a Classic.

Besides having beautiful pictures, I was pleasantly surprised to find that this is a serious scholarly work about the history of tea gardens. It is very thorough, easy to understand even though it's scholarly (although the writing style isn't the most captivating -- this isn't pop lit), organized, and very useful for a student of tea or Japanese gardens.

Anything Keane has done about Japanese Gardens is great. I'm a Volunteer Guide at Portland's beautiful Japanese Garden, so am most interested in JG. Part of our Garden is a tea house and tea garden. Keane does a fine job of explaining and illustrating both. As in all his books, Keane includes beautiful photos and clear, well-written explanations. The book is essential for any library on the subject.

Wonderful book, with great pictures and info

Wonderful, beautiful book!

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