

TEA AND TEAPOTS

Tea is one of those cultural items, which has a strong connection to ceramics - thanks to the teapot and the tea bowl. It is a very pervasive drink, not only in Eastern societies, but also in the West. The same thing can be said of tea utensils, such as the teapot, which is also a collectors item in both the East and the West -- one need think only of the coveted [Yixing Teapot](#).

The west now also has a tradition of [contemporary teapots](#). A good example of a well known English teapot maker is [Josiah Wedgwood](#). Modern artists have been fascinated by this cultural object, as can be seen in Leslie Ferrins new book [Teapots Transformed: Exploration of an Object](#), which traces the transformation of the contemporary American teapot from its functional, traditional origins in the early 1960's to its present status as a sculptural object. Garth Clark's publication [The Eccentric Teapot, Four Hundred Years of Innovation](#), takes a look at the more gregarious manifestations of that humble but universal domestic appliance, the teapot. Far from the simpler examples, as may be found in your average Chinese restaurant (ever seen one with the lid attached with fishing line?), this survey of teapots of the past four centuries covers everything from Yixing pots to the Japanese Book of Tea, the Boston Tea Party to the famous "Suprematist Teapot" by Kasemir Malevich.

Chanoyu, The Japanese tea ceremony:

The essence of the Japanese tea ceremony is harmony. Every move or every component about the ceremony brings out the serenity of the whole. The host tries to keep to the natural state of things as much as possible. For example, she might place some leaves in the garden stones in order to preserve the natural beauty of the garden.

The Japanese tea ceremony had its origins 700 years ago when Zen Buddhist monks began to explore this art form. However, this was only the rudimentary beginning. It was only 500 years ago that founder Sen No Rikkyu began to hone the simple tea ceremony practiced by the monks into a ritual. He transformed the ceremony to one of humility, simplicity, rusticness as well as self-cultivation. This is epitomized by the simple setting of the tea house e.g. a two mat tea space, chashitsu.

The guests kneel down on the mat and wait to be served by tea. They face the kama or the kettle and the brazier. The decoration of the room is in simple taste with some basic flower arrangement or calligraphy. The host arranges the tea tools in a ritualistic manner that reflects tea values of harmony or wa. The calligraphy scroll may also expound some values of the tea ceremony such as simplicity.

Leaving their worries and other worldly affairs aside, the participants in the tea ceremony began to drift into the spirit of the tea ceremony itself. When the host cleans the tea tools, the guests began to be aware of the serene setting.

Then the ritualistic and prescribed movements starts. The bamboo whisk then starts to mix the contents i.e. tea powder and water in the tea bowl. The same bowl is shared by everyone. The guests raises the bowl and then take sips from it and drinks all the liquid. The last sip is a definitive strong one and then he uses his fingers to wipe the edge of the mouth of the bowl where he/she had placed his/her mouth. The guests also compliments, ask questions and admire the tea tools/ tea bowls.

GOOGLE DOC ADDRESS [goo.gl/mdXd90](https://www.google.com/docs/d/1mDx90)

QUESTION 1.) WHY IS THE TEA POT SO UNIVERSAL AS AN OBJECT?

QUESTIONS 2.) FIND ONE EXAMPLE OF A CONTEMPORARY TEA POT AND GIVE YOUR OPINION OF IT, LIST THE NAME OF THE ARTIST OR TAKE A PICTURE OF IT AND SHOW ME?

QUESTION 3.) WHAT IS THE PURPOSE AND MOOD CREATED IN THE TRADITIONAL EASTERN TEA CEREMONY?

QUESTION 4.) WATCH THE VIDEO OF THE TEA CEREMONY AND LIST THE ITEMS USED IN THE PROCESS AND DESCRIBE THE VISKUAL QUALILTY OF THE CERAMIC UTENSILS.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5-rZ5StcgnI>