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Cha Dao: The Way of Tea, Tea as a Way of Life

Solala Towler

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In China, the art and practice of drinking tea is about much more than merely soaking leaves in a cup of hot water. The tradition is rooted in Daoism, and emerged from a philosophy that honoured living a life of grace and gratitude, balance and harmony, and fulfilment and enjoyment - what the ancient Chinese called Cha Dao, or the Way of Tea. Cha Dao takes us on a fascinating journey through the Way of Tea, from its origins in the sacred mountains and temples of ancient China, through its links to Daoist concepts such as Wu Wei or non-striving and the Value of Worthlessness, to the affinity between Tea Mind and the Japanese spirit of Zen. Interspersed are a liberal helping of quotes from the great tea masters of the past, anecdotes from the author's own trips to China, and traditional tea stories from China and Japan. The unique health benefits of tea are also explored, and a chapter is devoted to describing the history, characteristics and properties of 25 different tea varieties. This book will interest tea lovers, as well as those who want to learn more about tea culture, Daoist and Zen thought and practice, and Asian history and culture.

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