

Chadō: The way of tea

see DVD for additional material

ちゃ の 湯
chanoyu
the tea ceremony

ちゃ どう ぐ
茶 道 具
chadōgu
tea utensils

ちゃ わん
茶 碗
chawan
tea bowl

いち こ いち え
一 期 一 会
ichi-go ichi-e
'for this time only'

left to right:

JAPANESE
Brazier (Furo 風炉)
Shōwa period 1950s, Japan
metal
20.3 x 30.5 cm diameter
Collection of Sachi Roadley, Melbourne

JAPANESE
Pot (Kama 釜)
1950s, Japan
iron
14.5 x 19.1 cm diameter
Collection of Sachi Roadley, Melbourne

JAPANESE
Water ladle (Hishaku 柄杓) (20th century)
bamboo
7.3 x 40.3 x 6.0 cm
Gift of Mr W. P. Wilkinson, 1926 (2777-D3)

JAPANESE
Tea bowl (Chawan 茶碗)
Edo period 江戸時代 1600–1867 Japan
earthenware (*Raku ware* 楽茶碗)
8.1 x 11.9 cm diameter
Felton Bequest, 1921 (2340-D3)

SUGANUMA Michiko 菅沼三千子
Japanese 1940–
Tea caddy (Natsume 棗) 2003
lacquer on bamboo
(a-b) 7.1 x 6.9 cm diameter (overall)
Lillian Ernestine Lobb Bequest, 2004
(2004.51.a-b)

JAPANESE
Tea scoop (Chashaku 茶杓) (20th century)
bamboo
1.3 x 17.9 x 0.9 cm
Gift of Mr W. P. Wilkinson, 1926 (2779-D3)

JAPANESE
Water container (Mizusashi 水指)
Edo period 江戸時代 1600–1867 Japan
earthenware, lacquer on wood
(a-b) 16.3 x 13.7 x 13.0 cm (overall)
Felton Bequest, 1927 (2868B.a-b-D3)

JAPANESE
Whisk (Chasen 茶筌) (20th century) Japan
bamboo, cotton thread
11.6 x 4.5 x 4.9 cm
Gift of Mr W. P. Wilkinson, 1926 (2781-D3)

Cha-no-yu The Tea Ceremony

Cha-no-yu, literally meaning 'hot water for tea', is known in English as the tea ceremony. Its purpose is to create relaxed communication between participants in a serene atmosphere that harmonises our life with nature. Based in part on a ritualised method of serving tea, it also includes aesthetic contemplation of ceramic, lacquer and bamboo tea utensils; calligraphy; paintings; flower arrangement and landscape gardens. Its ultimate aim is to offer a profound spiritual experience through the drinking of tea and silent contemplation.

Origins of tea

Tea from camellia bushes was first cultivated in China thousands of years ago. In early times, some called it the 'elixir of the immortals' and was fabled to have properties beneficial to health, longevity, eternal youth and spiritual wellbeing. Tea was a popular beverage among Chinese aristocrats and scholars. Buddhist monks, who found it spiritually refreshing and congenial to staying alert during long periods of meditation, also favoured it. Tea first arrived in Japan in the seventh century. Buddhist monks brought it with them on their return from studying in China. During these early times of limited supply, it was primarily drunk at ceremonies attended by Buddhist monks, the Imperial family and the aristocracy. During the twelfth century, the Zen Buddhist monk Eisai Myō-an (1141–1215) returned from China bringing with him powdered tea (*macha*), a bamboo whisk to mix the tea powder with hot water, and seeds to expand the cultivation of tea in Japan.

Over the next 200 years, it was primarily the activity of three tea masters that led to the pleasures of drinking tea, transcending all social classes and establishing the tea ceremony as a synonymous part of Japanese culture.

- The Zen Priest Murata Shukō (1422–1502), through his philosophy of simplicity in life, initiated the drinking of tea in small intimate tea rooms of about four and half tatami mats (approximately three meters square) and practised the humble act of serving guests tea himself. This new style was known as *soan-cha* or grass hut tea.
- Takeno Jōō (1502–55) propagated the poetic spirit of *wabi* (the aesthetic of beauty found in imperfection) and its simple, austere beauty that is appreciated in rustic tea utensils and the nostalgic atmosphere of a tiny rustic tea house.
- Sen no Rikyū (1522–91), whose naturalistic and serene approach to tea popularised the tea ceremony among all classes. He emphasised the ideals of harmony, reverence, purity and calm, and is remembered to this day for his simple ideal for the tea ceremony.

Tea is naught but this,
First you make the water boil,
Then you infuse the tea.
Then you drink it properly.
That is all you need to know.

Rikyū prescribed the use of rustic bowls from regional ceramic-producing areas and also collaborated with potters to create the Raku style of tea bowl, hand-moulded and not spun on a wheel thus creating a unique 'one-of-a-kind' bowl each time. He is renowned for personally crafting his own bamboo tea scoops and bamboo flower containers, and encouraged tea practitioners to personally create their own tea utensils or use simple objects close at hand that would emphasise the ordinary, everyday aspect of the tea ceremony.

One time, one meeting

Ichigo ichi-e is a term in the spirit of Zen philosophy linked to Sen no Rikyū's ideal of the tea ceremony. Translated as 'for this time only', 'never again' or 'one chance in a lifetime', the concept prescribes we should concentrate on every moment of our lives as experiences that will never be repeated. In the tea room, we should enjoy the unique, simple experience created for us by our host and appreciate the careful selection of tea utensils (*toriawase*), as pictured on this card. The *toriawase* is made to create a desired mood, complement the season and create a unique occasion.

The tea ceremony is intended to bring pleasure to our senses: sight, fragrance, taste, texture, and sound, and to enhance this experience numerous other utensils and art objects are created and used. To generate a relaxing fragrance in the tea room, incense is always placed in the hearth or brazier, for which small delicate incense containers (*kōgō*) are made. Hanging scrolls (*kakejiku*) usually display a simple black and white image or calligraphic Zen saying, and vases (*hanaire*), often made of rustic earthenware or bamboo, are created to display a simple flower arrangement.

Traditional arrangement, from left to right: kettle lid and lid stand (*futa oki*), bamboo water ladle (*hishaku*), iron kettle (*kama*) brazier (*furo*) and ceramic tile (*shikigawara*), ceramic tea bowl (*chawan*), lacquered tea caddy (*natsume*) with tea scoop (*chashaku*), ceramic water container (*mizusashi*) and bamboo whisk (*chasen*).

