

Chanoyu (the Art of Preparing Tea) (Web Text)

Chanoyu is a Japanese tradition centered on the preparation and serving of *matcha*, powdered green tea. It is often translated as “tea ceremony.” The procedure of making and serving tea follows a formalized flow designed to express the principles within the tradition and create an enjoyable experience for both guest and host.

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The culture of tea drinking developed over centuries following the first arrival of tea from China. Powdered tea was introduced to Japan in the twelfth century and was used primarily for health benefits, but drinking *matcha* for pleasure became a pastime of the elite. The “way of tea” (*sado* or *chado*), a discipline for refining the self through *chanoyu*, took shape in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. Sen Rikyu (1522–1591) is considered the tea master who established the “way of tea” as we know it today, incorporating the aesthetics of *wabi* (cultivated simplicity) and the principles of harmony, respect, purity, and tranquility. There are now various schools of the “way of tea” with hundreds of thousands of practitioners worldwide. During the presentation, *matcha* is prepared by a tea master from the Urasenke tradition of tea.