



For All the Tea in China: How England Stole the World's Favorite Drink and Changed History

By Sarah Rose

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"If ever there was a book to read in the company of a nice cuppa, this is it."
-The Washington Post

In the dramatic story of one of the greatest acts of corporate espionage ever committed, Sarah Rose recounts the fascinating, unlikely circumstances surrounding a turning point in economic history. By the middle of the nineteenth century, the British East India Company faced the loss of its monopoly on the fantastically lucrative tea trade with China, forcing it to make the drastic decision of sending Scottish botanist Robert Fortune to steal the crop from deep within China and bring it back to British plantations in India. Fortune's danger-filled odyssey, magnificently recounted here, reads like adventure fiction, revealing a long-forgotten chapter of the past and the wondrous origins of a seemingly ordinary beverage.

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Editorial Review

From [Booklist](#)

Starred Review Through the adventures of Robert Fortune, a nineteenth-century plant hunter, the reader learns a delicious brew of information on the history of tea cultivation and consumption in the Western world. Rose's book is certain to draw the attention of history buffs, foodies, avid travel-literature fans, followers of popular science, and perhaps even business-interest book consumers as she reconstructs what she posits as the "greatest theft of trade secrets in the history of mankind." Tea was grown in China. Great Britain wanted tea. But trying to trade with the Celestial Empire was like pulling teeth. So the East India Company sent hunter Fortune, undercover (dressed in mandarin robes), to penetrate the depths of China and surreptitiously gather—steal, in other words—seeds and young plants and send them to India, where they would flourish in soil that was part of the British Empire. The author's bold conclusion to this remarkably riveting tale is that Fortune's "actions would today be described as industrial espionage," but nevertheless he "changed the fate of nations." --Brad Hooper

Review

"A wonderful combination of scholarship and storytelling"

-Guy Raz, NPR host *All Things Considered*.

"With her probing inquiry and engaging prose, Sarah Rose paints a fresh and vivid account of life in rural 19th-century China and Fortune's fateful journey into it...if ever there was a book to read in the company of a nice cuppa, this is it."

-*Washington Post*

"The plot for Sarah Rose's *For All the Tea in China* seems tailor-made for a Hollywood thriller...a story that should appeal to readers who want to be transported on a historic journey laced with suspense, science and adventure."

-*Associated Press*

"An enthusiastic tale of how the humble leaf became a global addiction."

-*The Financial Times*

"A delicious brew of information on the history of tea cultivation and consumption in the Western world...a remarkably riveting tale."

-*Booklist*, (starred review)

"In *For All the Tea in China*, the most eventful era of the tea plant gets the inspired treatment it deserves."

-*Minneapolis Star Tribune*

"Sarah Rose steeps us in the story of Robert Fortune."

-*National Geographic Traveler*

"Pause to reflect that the tea you are enjoying is totally hot - as in, stolen! Nabbed! Ripped off! Nothing more than the subject of international corporate espionage!"

-*Chicago Sun Times*

"In this lively account of the adventures (and misadventures) that lay behind Robert Fortune's bold acquisition of Chinese tea seedlings for transplanting in British India, Sarah Rose demonstrates in engaging detail how botany and empire- building went hand in hand."

-Jonathan Spence, author of *The Search for Modern China*

"As a lover of tea and a student of history, I loved this book. Sarah Rose conjures up the time and tales as British Legacy Teas are created before our eyes. We drink the delicious results of Robert Fortune's adventures every day."

-Michael Harney, author of *The Harney & Sons Guide to Tea*

"*For All The Tea In China* is a rousing Victorian adventure story chronicling the exploits of botanical thief Robert Fortune, who nearly single- handedly made the British tea industry possible in India. Sarah Rose has captured the thrill of discovery, the dramatic vistas in the Wuyi Mountains, and the near-disasters involved in Fortune's exploits. For tea-lovers, history buffs, or anyone who enjoys a ripping good read."

-Mark Pendergrast, author of *Uncommon Grounds: The History of Coffee and How It Transformed Our World*.

From the Inside Flap

In 1848, the British East India Company, having lost its monopoly on the tea trade, engaged Robert Fortune, a Scottish gardener, botanist, and plant hunter, to make a clandestine trip into the interior of China-territory forbidden to foreigners-to steal the closely guarded secrets of tea horticulture and manufacturing. *For All the Tea in China* is the remarkable account of Fortune's journeys into China-a thrilling narrative that combines history, geography, botany, natural science, and old-fashioned adventure.

Disguised in Mandarin robes, Robert Fortune ventured deep into the country, confronting pirates, hostile climate, and his own untrustworthy men as he made his way to the epicenter of tea production, the remote Wu Yi Shan hills. One of the most daring acts of corporate espionage in history, Fortune's pursuit of China's ancient secret makes for a classic nineteenth-century adventure tale, one in which the fate of empires hinges on the feats of one extraordinary man.

Chosen as BBC Radio's Book of the Week.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Laverne Jackson:

This *For All the Tea in China: How England Stole the World's Favorite Drink and Changed History* book is absolutely not ordinary book, you have it then the world is in your hands. The benefit you get by reading this book is usually information inside this guide incredible fresh, you will get info which is getting deeper you read a lot of information you will get. This specific *For All the Tea in China: How England Stole the World's Favorite Drink and Changed History* without we know teach the one who studying it become critical in contemplating and analyzing. Don't end up being worry *For All the Tea in China: How England Stole the World's Favorite Drink and Changed History* can bring when you are and not make your case space or bookshelves' turn into full because you can have it inside your lovely laptop even cell phone. This *For All the Tea in China: How England Stole the World's Favorite Drink and Changed History* having fine arrangement in word in addition to layout, so you will not truly feel uninterested in reading.

Sharon Hafer:

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Rachel Daniels:

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