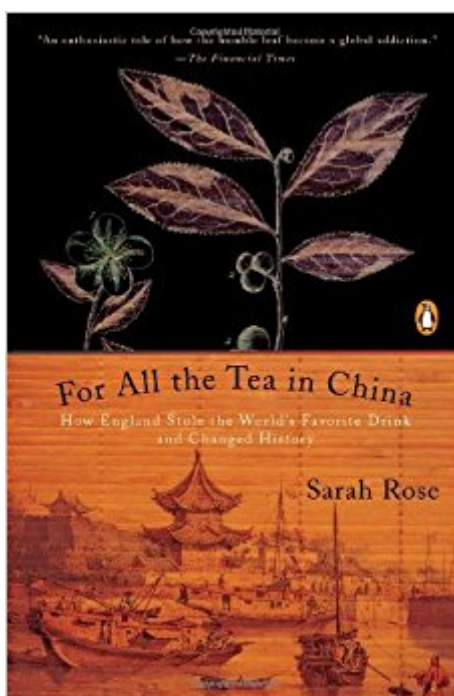


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# For All The Tea In China: How England Stole The World's Favorite Drink And Changed History



## Synopsis

"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.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

**\*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

gathered to 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 --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

"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 steps 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.

Delightful read for those of us addicted to tea and prone to enjoying history. I am not inclined to believe or disbelieve her reportage, but am inclined to enjoy her point of view. Her writing style is engaging and the bottom line from my experience is I am now passionate about finding more information about "The John Company," Mr. Fortune and the history of the East India Company from Elizabeth 1 forward. Now That's something!The impact of such a simple thing as importing tea and the history and social impact are compelling, whether or not her dialogue or empathic comments are accurate. The net-net is, this is a good read. Other reviews critique the scholarly issues and miss the point entirely. This is a book about a frame of reference, of time and place, and the footnotes and accuracy of conversations are unimportant.Methinks the reviewers who attack the book on scholarly grounds have no concept of the Journalistic license popularized, but not invented, by Truman Capote ["In Cold Blood"] in the non-fiction novel genre. [The non-fiction novel is a literary genre which, broadly speaking, depicts real historical figures and actual events narrated woven together with fictitious allegations and using the storytelling techniques of fiction. The non-fiction novel is an otherwise loosely-defined and flexible genre. The genre is sometimes referred to as or faction, a portmanteau of "fact" and "fiction".]I only hope Ms. Rose has another book in the writing. I am thrilled with the doors opened to other historical adventures.

Well researched and insightful history of an interesting time. I learned a great deal about botany and its major role in 18th century history. The author also did a great job of providing interesting background on major historical figures.The most surprising part I learned was how long it took to "steal the tea".

I'm only half way through but this a wonderful book on so many levels: history, natural history, scientific history, economics, botany and not the least of all, a must for any tea lover. It reads like an adventure set in a time when botany and discovering new plants was the Internet and fortunes were made on "programing" the tea to grow in a new place. Plus, it's written like a historical novel of adventure full of rich characters and conflicts.If you are a tea lover, you will love this book and it will give you many insights to the modern history of tea and clarify many things you may have wondered about. In passing it also explained the mysteries of now obscure and unused tea names like Bohea and Congou.

China guarded its tea plants and technology. Attempting to steal these could lead to one's death. The British wanted to trade opium for tea. Chinese leaders, intelligently, declined the offer. This

book tells the story of a botanist who traveled through portions of China digging up tea plants, learning how best to cultivate them and how to make the best tea. This information (and the plants) was transported to India, then a British colony, and to the mother country. The book is well-written and interesting reading. There are many stories that enlighten us on how the world we now know got to be the way it is. This work tells an interesting portion of human interaction.

I liked the fact that this book had two titles, for the sole reason to advertise and appeal to United States verses European audiences. That set the tone for the whole book, this is a British history told from the point of view of the British. I studied in a British school and enjoyed history classes that dealt with the issues that intertwine with Fortune's story while he was in India and China. However, the book managed to educate me about the East India Trading Company as well as botany.

This is an entertaining book which covers botany, tea, and the history of the English "theft" of tea. My main issue with it is that the first half of the book is very well researched and has a cohesive narrative, but then the last section just skims through a large portion of very interesting material with no more than "Yup, that's how they got black tea!" Even with that let down, it's still entertaining, and with how short it is, makes an excellent plane read.

I did enjoy this book, things I never knew. I drink a cup of tea w/new respect and knowledge. Wish book was longer. Another must read.

This book was one of my favorites. It gave me a sense of history regarding the tea industry, and more understanding of why countries guard their treasures like tea plants, etc. and a greater appreciation of each cup of tea I drink.

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