

Jane Pettigrew's World of Tea Looks At Tea Regions Around the World

In the Forward of *Jane Pettigrew's World of Tea: Discovering Producing Regions and Their Teas*, by foremost tea expert Jane Pettigrew, Nigel Melican of Teacraft, Limited, states, "Tea growers, established or new, are largely hidden from the tea-consuming world, but they fully deserve the recognition that Jane's book accords them." He says that he has, over the years, considered writing a book that discussed tea growers, but that it seemed too difficult a task. He gives Pettigrew full credit for so patiently and diligently writing just such a book.

As both a tea and a coffee drinker, I consider how much we've learned in recent years about these beverages. We know more about the different types of teas and the different coffee beans. We've learned about some of the growing regions. We often have our favorite companies who mix, dry, roast, and distribute our teas and coffees. And we pay a lot of attention to the best preparation of both beverages.

But how many of us can point to the specific growers and growing regions of these favorite beverages? This is something we don't look at and yet it's a fascinating topic.

Let's return only to tea. I was immediately drawn into the premise of this book and the tea growers' stories.



Jane Pettigrew, A Foremost Tea Authority

Jane Pettigrew is a foremost authority on tea and the author of 16 books on many different aspects of tea. She is also a writer, tea historian and consultant to those in the tea industry. Ms. Pettigrew is the Director of the new United Kingdom Tea Academy. She teaches Master classes and gives tea

tastings, writes on tea-related topics for magazines and journals, and appears as a guest on radio and tv. She has worked in the tea industry since 1983 and has received many honors for her work. As a consultant, she works with tea companies, and tea- and tableware companies.

The Origins of Tea

The initial section of Pettigrew's book covers general history, as well as tea harvesting, components and categories of tea, and aspects of processing, storage, and tea brewing.

All tea is made from one plant; *Camellia sinensis*, a species of an evergreen shrub or small tree, that is of the genus *Camellia*. Tea first started growing in tropical forests, although the exact location isn't definitively agreed upon. It's very difficult to place the first origins of tea, although it's clear that China was the first to fully develop production.

A Companion Guide to Tea Around the World

Initially, I perused the book by taking a look at Pettigrew's coverage of regions I've lived and regions in which I've traveled and will be traveling soon. You can also pick out a tea you enjoy and learn more about where it's grown, about the growers, the tea conditions, the flavors, and more.

There's a wide variety of terroir for tea growing and this perhaps surprised me the most. Today, teas are grown in most tropical areas of the world, but also in such challenging conditions posed in places like Canada and the northern states in the US, as well as in Chile, Italy, and Switzerland. (I did not know that tea is being grown where I live, in the Pacific Northwest of the U.S.)



After the initial Origins of Tea section, the rest of the 434 pages are devoted as a guide to the different areas and the tea growers in each. Each section begins with county and regional maps that depict (with tea leaf markers for each) the locations of the tea growers. Seeing where and how many producers there are in each of these various areas is great. Pettigrew then tells readers about the tea gardens in the area, including where the tea is grown, altitude and land use, and information about the production, the varietals and types of teas produced, and more.

The maps are clearly drawn and informative in and of themselves. The book design is very smartly done. It's also quite beautiful, with plenty of accompanying high-quality color photos. Pettigrew's writing is informative and well researched, but also always interesting and entertaining.

A Renaissance of Interest in Tea

Jane Pettigrew started in the tea industry in 1983. As she learned more, she started traveling to tea gardens (or tea farms or plantations, as we might call them in the U.S.) The 1990's saw a renaissance of interest in how tea is grown, where it's grown, the various and the quality of tea.

In the 1990's, Westerners knew more about growing areas like Sri Lanka, India, Malaysia, and Japan than we did about China because China wasn't as open to Westerners. This makes China an especially exciting area to learn more about today. Not surprisingly, China, India and Japan are awarded the largest sections. The development of looking closer at the growers and growing regions is a welcome one.



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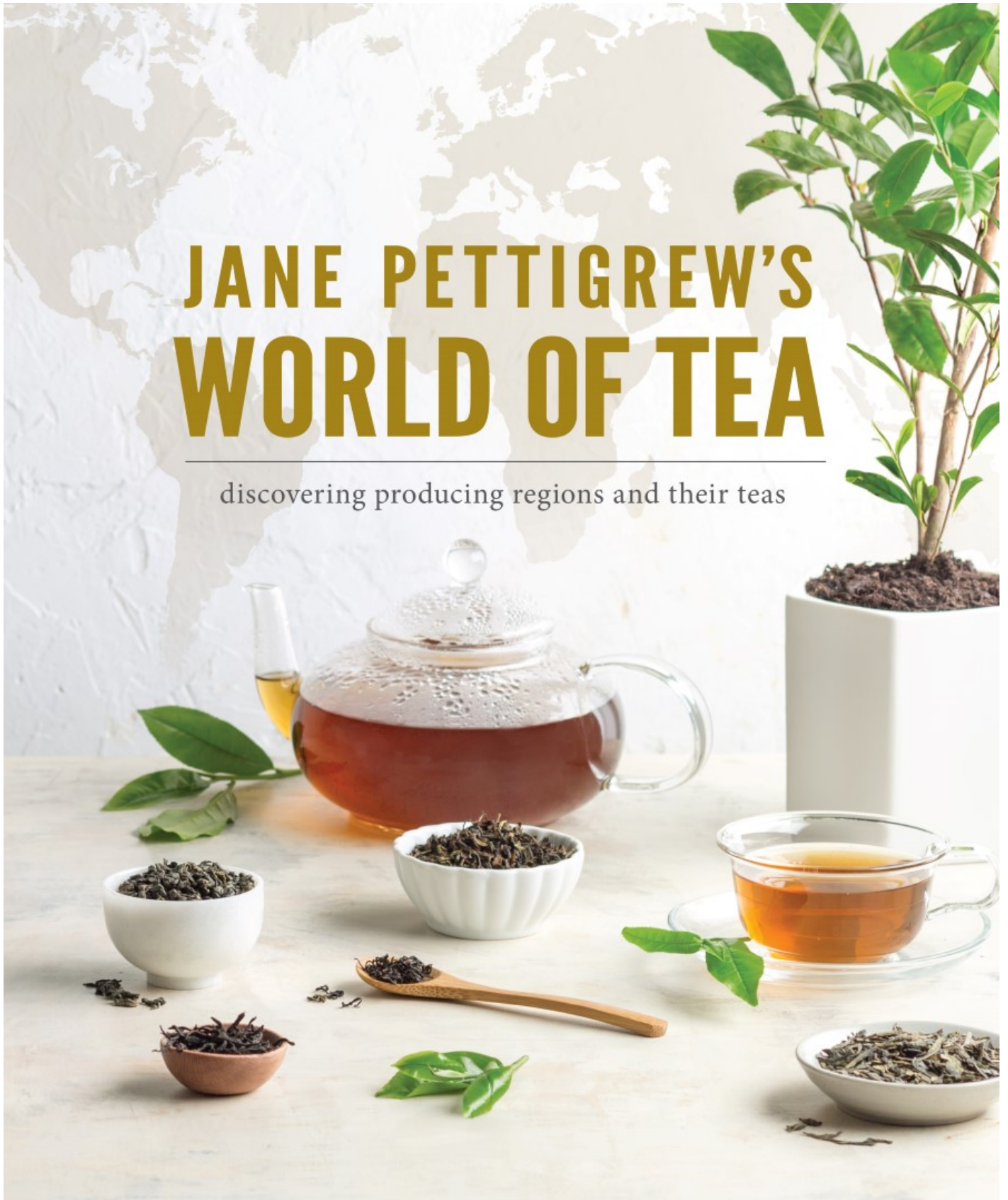
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A Versatile, Essential Guide to the World of Tea

The hardcover book's size, quality and comprehensiveness qualify the book as a coffee table gift book. But for even the most casual tea lover as well as those employed in the tea industry, the book will be used again and again as a reference and in general interest. I highly recommend the world of tea as the perfect gift for yourself or for friend or both. This is a book I know I'll turn to again and again.

JANE PETTIGREW'S WORLD OF TEA

discovering producing regions and their teas



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