



The Modern Japanese Tea Room

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The Modern Japanese Tea Room showcases *chashitsus*, traditional Japanese tea ceremony salons, as reconceived by contemporary architects and designers. The formal tea ceremony developed in the fifteenth century, and its ritual is closely defined, as is the space for it: traditionally, *chashitsus* include windows, an alcove (*tokonoma*) with flowers and painted parchment, bamboo beds (*tatami*), and a fireplace on the floor (*ro*); they do not include furniture, in part because they are spaces for meditation. More recently those traditions--as closely associated with the upper class as "high tea" is in England and its colonies--have been rediscovered by architects and designers as a perfect match for their contemporary work. *The Modern Japanese Tea Room* includes projects from renowned Japanese names including Kengo Kuma, Terunobu Fujimori, Shigeru Uchida, Arata Isozaki, Chitoshi Kihara, Yasujirou Aoki and Hisanobu Tsujimura. Their work in a wide variety of materials--paper, wood, plastic, aluminum, glass, concrete--represents the latest and most inspiring in Japanese architecture and interior design, from a tree house in Nagano to a portable space in black lacquer.

The Modern Japanese Tea Room opens with an introduction to the history of the tea ceremony, identifying its physical elements and going over to the ceremony itself, and then moves on to more than 35 projects gathered together in 250 of Michael Freeman's powerful color images. A tribute to contemporary Japanese culture and a taste of its future.

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