

## The Tea Book Review by Linda Gaylard

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### ABSTRACT

This research is a review and critical analysis of *The Tea Book* by Linda Gaylard, a Tea Sommelier, published in 2015. The book chronicles Linda Gaylard's journey to explore tea, delving into the history of tea from various parts of the world, an introduction to different types of tea, traditional and modern tea practices, tea customs from various cultures, and tea recipes. The book's structure is organized into sections covering an introduction to tea, methods of brewing tea, the history of tea across different countries, tisanes, and tea recipes. It employs a visual and descriptive approach, making it accessible and engaging. One of the key themes of the book is serving as a comprehensive guide to tea for both beginners and experts. This study adopts a content analysis and discourse analysis approach, aiming to explain the ideas presented in *The Tea Book* and provide a critical evaluation of its usefulness. The findings of this review highlight that *The Tea Book* offers a detailed understanding of tea, portraying it as more than just a beverage—it is a lifestyle. Its descriptive and visually rich presentation makes it suitable for a broad audience, including beginners curious about tea and seasoned tea enthusiasts or experts. However, the book has some shortcomings, particularly its limited discussion on the health benefits of tea and the technical aspects of tea production. Despite these weaknesses, *The Tea Book* remains a valuable reference for anyone looking to deepen their knowledge and enhance their experience of drinking tea.

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### INTRODUCTION

Tea is one of the most popular and historically significant beverages in the world. From ancient Chinese tea culture to England's tea-drinking traditions, tea has played a vital role in the social and cultural lives of people across various regions. *The Tea Book* by Linda Gaylard is an engaging work that invites readers to explore the world of tea comprehensively, covering its history, different types, proper brewing techniques, and health benefits.

Linda Gaylard, a tea sommelier and author, not only provides technical information about tea but also connects it to the philosophy and aesthetics of tea-serving traditions. This book is aimed at readers who are interested in tea culture and those seeking to delve into the art of preparing and appreciating this beverage. This study aims to provide a deeper understanding of *The Tea Book* through content and discourse analysis while also evaluating the relevance of tea within the broader context of beverage artistry.

The book is divided into several chapters, each offering detailed insights into tea. These include its rich history, the various types of tea—such as black, green, oolong, and white tea—and the appropriate brewing methods for each type. Gaylard also discusses the health benefits of tea and provides guidance on enjoying tea in the context of specific cultural traditions.

Additionally, the book explores tea-drinking rituals from various countries, such as the Japanese tea ceremony and the English tea tradition, highlighting the significance of tea in social and cultural relationships.

Linda Gaylard places particular emphasis on proper tea-serving techniques to ensure the best flavor and maximum benefits from the tea.

## METHOD

This research employs content analysis and discourse analysis methods. According to Margrit Schreier (2018), content analysis is a research approach that involves coding and categorizing text data to uncover themes, patterns, and meanings within the text. Schreier highlights the importance of maintaining transparency in the coding process to ensure the validity and reliability of qualitative research. In the context of *The Tea Book*, content analysis focuses on the structure of the text, examining how information about tea is presented and how the author conveys key concepts such as the history of tea, types of tea, and tea-serving traditions. This method allows researchers to evaluate the completeness, organization, and clarity of the information, as well as how effectively the text achieves its purpose—whether to educate or inform readers.

Discourse analysis, on the other hand, examines how language is used to shape meaning within social, cultural, and political contexts. According to James Paul Gee (2014), discourse encompasses not only the words and sentences in a text but also the ways language constructs social identity, power, knowledge, and ideology. In this analysis of *The Tea Book*, the researcher investigates how the author uses language to portray tea as more than a beverage—positioning it as a symbol of culture, ritual, and art. The discourse analysis explores how the author crafts a narrative about tea, including its historical and cultural significance, and how this narrative influences or shapes the reader's perception of tea's role in social life. This approach provides valuable insights into how the author communicates deeper messages through word choice, writing style, and the structure of the discourse within the book.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Content Analysis

Content analysis is a method used to objectively and systematically examine the themes, messages, and information in a book. Through this approach, the contents of *The Tea Book* can be categorized into several main sections:

#### 1. History of Tea

The book begins with an introduction to the history of tea, tracing its origins in China over 4,000 years ago and its subsequent spread to other countries. Gaylard discusses how tea evolved into a global commodity through trade, colonialism, and cultural exchange. The narrative highlights the influence of tea on the economic and social histories of England, Japan, India, and Western countries.

#### 2. Types and Production Processes of Tea

In this section, Gaylard categorizes tea into five main types: black tea, green tea, white tea, oolong tea, and pu-erh. She also explains the unique production processes associated with each type. The section delves into tea processing techniques, such as fermentation, drying, and other steps that significantly impact the flavor and characteristics of the final product.

### 3. Tea Culture

Another key theme is the relationship between tea and culture. Gaylard examines tea's role in various cultural traditions, including the Japanese tea ceremony (*Chanoyu*) and England's afternoon tea ritual. Through the author's analysis, tea is portrayed not merely as a beverage but as a social symbol imbued with cultural and spiritual values.

### 4. Tea Serving and Brewing Techniques

Gaylard provides detailed guidance on brewing tea properly, covering aspects such as the ideal water temperature and brewing times for each type of tea. The book also introduces various tea brewing tools and elegant serving techniques. Readers are encouraged to appreciate tea as an art form, combining skill with meticulous attention to detail.

#### Discourse Analysis

Discourse analysis examines how language and visuals in *The Tea Book* construct narratives and shape perceptions of tea. Gaylard employs several effective communication strategies to influence how readers view tea—not only as an everyday beverage but also as a cultural symbol rich with philosophy and meaning.

#### 1. Visual Language

The book makes extensive use of visual elements, including vivid photographs of different types of tea, brewing tools, and tea-drinking traditions from around the world. These images complement the text, reinforcing its messages and offering readers a more immersive experience. Within this analysis, the photos and illustrations serve as visual discourses that interact with the narrative, highlighting the beauty of tea and the complexity of its cultural significance.

#### 2. Historical and Cultural Narratives

In Gaylard's discourse, tea is presented as more than just a commodity or consumer product—it is depicted as a bridge between cultures, laden with profound historical and social significance. This narrative fosters an understanding of tea ceremonies as more than just matters of taste; they are celebrations of global cultural and historical heritage. Gaylard emphasizes the symbolic importance of tea in various cultural contexts, from fostering friendships to expressing spirituality.

#### 3. Modern Consumer Discourse

Gaylard also frames tea within the context of modern consumer culture, portraying it as part of a healthy and sophisticated lifestyle. Discussions about contemporary tea culture include recipes for cold teas, tea blends, and tips for enjoying tea in modern settings. This narrative emphasizes that while tea is deeply rooted in history, it continues to remain relevant and valuable in the context of modern life.

#### Historical Focus of the Book

In Linda Gaylard's *The Tea Book*, the historical aspects of tea are discussed comprehensively, covering its origin and journey, from its discovery to how it became an important part of various cultures worldwide. Gaylard describes how tea was first discovered in China over a thousand years ago, and how it has a major impact on the history of global trade. Tea became a highly valuable commodity, with trade routes involving various countries and civilizations, including India, England, and Japan. The book provides an in-depth look at how tea was not just a drink, but also a symbol of power, colonialism, and cultural exchange.

The author also explores the development of tea in the European context, specifically England, where tea became a very popular drink in the 17th and 18th centuries. Gaylard explains the role of tea in English society, including the habit of drinking tea as part of their social and political culture. The book explores how tea influenced social class and became a symbol of status, as well as the important role of tea in social events, such as tea parties, which were an integral part of English tradition. Gaylard also highlights how the lucrative tea trade had a major impact on the economic and political development of major countries such as England and the Netherlands.

In the context of Asia, *The Tea Book* explores the profound cultural significance of tea, particularly in China, Japan, and India. Gaylard underscores tea's rich traditions, such as the Japanese tea ceremony, which embodies Zen philosophy, and examines how tea became integral to daily life and religious practices across numerous Asian societies. The book offers a historical perspective on the evolution of tea, not merely as a beverage but as a symbol of spirituality, harmony, and the celebration of life, weaving together diverse cultural, religious, and traditional elements.

### **Critical Review of the Book**

*The Tea Book* by Linda Gaylard is a comprehensive guide that covers everything from the history of tea to its various types and preparation methods. It offers a wealth of information for both beginners and seasoned tea enthusiasts seeking to better understand the world of tea. Gaylard provides clear, well-structured explanations on how to select, brew, and enjoy tea correctly. The illustrations and images throughout the book further enhance the reader's ability to grasp the concepts presented.

While the book excels at explaining the technical aspects of tea, it falls short in exploring the broader cultural and social dimensions. Discussions on tea's role in specific traditions and cultures—such as its significance in Japan or its impact during colonial history—are underdeveloped. Additionally, while herbal teas are addressed, their coverage is less extensive compared to traditional teas. The book also tends to avoid critical perspectives on the tea industry, such as issues of sustainability and environmental impact, which would be valuable for readers interested in the more critical aspects of the industry.

Overall, *The Tea Book* is an excellent resource for those seeking to learn about tea in a practical way. Despite some shortcomings in its discussion of cultural aspects and its lack of critique on the tea industry, the book remains a valuable reference for readers who wish to deepen their knowledge of tea, its proper preparation, and the various types that exist.

### **Tea's Relevance with Mixology**

Tea has a strong relevance to the world of mixology, as more and more mixologists are incorporating tea into their cocktail creations. In *The Tea Book* by Linda Gaylard, readers are invited to understand the various types of tea and how they are prepared, which can be used to create complex and unique flavors in mixed drinks. Tea, with its various flavor characteristics such as sweet, bitter, floral, or herbal, provides a great opportunity for mixologists to experiment with these ingredients. In addition, tea can be a base or complement to cocktails, whether in the form of hot tea, iced tea, or even fermented teas such as kombucha. The use of tea in mixology allows for the creation of drinks that are not only refreshing but also offer a depth of flavor that is difficult to find in other beverage ingredients.

Additionally, tea can enhance the cocktail-drinking experience by introducing deeper elements of culture and tradition. Gaylard's book explores the role of tea in various cultures, such as the Japanese tea ceremony, which is rich in philosophy and tradition. By incorporating these elements into mixology, tea offers mixologists the opportunity to add a new dimension to their creations. As a cocktail ingredient, tea also enables the creation of healthier drinks, thanks to its antioxidant content and other medicinal properties. For

instance, green tea and herbal teas can be used to boost the health benefits of cocktails, offering a lighter and more health-conscious option for consumers. Thus, tea opens the door to innovation in mixology, adding unique flavors and enriching the overall drinking experience.

**Comparison of *The Tea Book* by Linda Gaylard with Other Books on the Same Theme**

**1. The Story of Tea: A Cultural History and Drinking Guide by Mary Lou dan Robert J. Heis**

This book explores the history and culture of tea, tracing its origins in China and its global influence. It also includes a guide to tea tasting and quality assessment. What sets this book apart is its in-depth exploration of the tea-making process, from garden to cup. Compared to Linda Gaylard’s book, *The Story of Tea* offers more detail on the historical and cultural dimensions of tea.

**2. The Art and Craft of Tea by Joseph Wesley Uhl**

Focusing on the art and craft of tea, this book covers how to create your own tea blends and experiment with recipes. It also delves into the philosophy behind tea rituals. Its unique strength lies in its philosophical and creative approach, encouraging readers to view tea as an art form, rather than just a beverage.

**3. The Book of Tea by Kakuzō Okakura**

A classic in tea literature, this book explores the relationship between tea, Japanese art, culture, and philosophy, particularly within the tradition of chanoyu (tea ceremony). Its uniqueness lies in its focus on the spiritual and aesthetic dimensions of tea. Rather than just teaching how to make tea, it explores how tea reflects cultural and artistic values.

**CONCLUSION**

*The Tea Book* is a comprehensive work by Linda Gaylard, including a wide range of information about tea, from its long history, types of tea to its artistic presentation. Through an analytical approach to content and discourse, this book successfully describes tea not only as a drink, but also as an integral part of a rich culture and tradition. Gaylard conveys technical knowledge and the history of tea in an easy-to-understand and interesting way, complete with images that enrich the reader's experience. In this book, readers are invited to understand that serving tea is an art that involves technique, attention to detail, and respect for existing cultural traditions.

However, although this book provides in-depth insight into tea, there is a tendency to focus too much on the technical and historical aspects, which may not provide enough space for readers to explore tea in a more dynamic modern context. Even so, this book remains relevant for anyone interested in tea, both beginners and experienced tea lovers. Thus, *The Tea Book* is a very useful reference in getting to know more about tea as a timeless art and culture.

**MANFAAT**

This book provides great benefits for readers who want to explore the world of tea more comprehensively. hrough detailed explanations of various tea types and brewing techniques, Gaylard guides readers in appreciating every aspect of tea, from selecting the finest leaves to mastering the art of proper steeping. The book also offers deep insights into the numerous health benefits of tea consumption and its role in enhancing social and cultural experiences across the globe. For those new to the world of tea, this book serves as a highly useful source of information to begin their tea exploration.

Di sisi lain, buku ini juga memberikan pemahaman yang lebih dalam tentang teh sebagai simbol budaya yang lebih besar. Gaylard menggambarkan teh bukan hanya sebagai minuman, tetapi juga sebagai bagian dari tradisi, seni, dan filosofi dalam kehidupan sosial. Hal ini mengajak pembaca untuk melihat teh dari perspektif yang lebih luas, yakni sebagai media untuk menciptakan hubungan sosial, merayakan kehidupan, dan menghormati budaya tertentu. Dengan demikian, pembaca tidak hanya memperoleh pengetahuan praktis mengenai teh, tetapi juga pemahaman tentang peran teh dalam mempererat hubungan sosial dan sebagai simbol spiritualitas dalam budaya-budaya tertentu.

On the other hand, this book also provides a richer perspective on tea as a broader cultural symbol. Gaylard portrays tea not merely as a beverage but as an integral part of tradition, art, and philosophy in social life. This encourages readers to view tea from a wider perspective—as fostering social connections, celebrating life, and honoring cultural heritage. Thus, readers not only gain practical knowledge about tea but also a deeper appreciation of tea's significance in strengthening social bonds and serving as a symbol of spirituality in diverse cultures.

## SUGGESTIONS

While this book provides highly comprehensive information about tea, several aspects could be further explored. It could delve deeper into the social and economic issues related to the tea industry, such as the impact of the tea trade on communities and the environment in tea-producing countries. Sustainability in tea production, as well as its effects on tea farmers and ecosystems, is a highly relevant topic in today's world, yet it is not extensively discussed in this book. Readers interested in a more critical perspective on the tea industry may find this aspect lacking.

Additionally, while the book does cover herbal teas, this topic is not explored as thoroughly as traditional tea. More information on the various types of herbal teas—whose popularity is growing among health-conscious consumers—would be a valuable addition. A discussion on the differences between herbal and traditional tea in terms of health benefits, preparation methods, and accompanying traditions would further enrich the book. By expanding its scope and incorporating contemporary issues within the tea industry, this book could become a more holistic and relevant reference for modern readers.

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