

# Booklist

Advanced Review – Uncorrected Proof

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

Rose, Sarah (Author)

Mar 2010. 272 p. Viking, hardcover, \$25.95. (9780670021529). 382.

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 "change[ed] the fate of nations."

— *Brad Hooper*