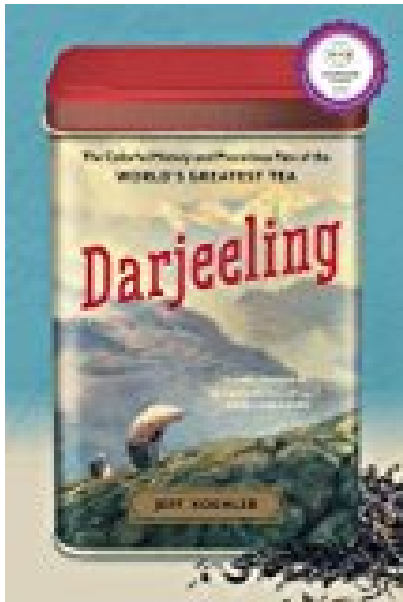


Darjeeling The Colorful History and Precarious Fate of the Worlds Greatest Tea



BOOK DETAILS

- Author : Jeff Koehler
- Pages : 304 Pages
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- Language : English
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BOOK SYNOPSIS

Darjeelings tea bushes stretch across a picturesque landscape steeped in religious, sacred and mythical history. Planted at high elevation in the heart of the Eastern Himalayas, in an area of northern India bound by Nepal to the west, Bhutan to the east and Sikkim to the north, the rows of brilliant green, waist-high shrubs that coat the steep slopes and valleys around this Victorian hill town produce only a fraction of the world's tea, and less than one per cent of India's total. Yet the tea from this limited crop, with its characteristic bright, amber-coloured brew and muscatel flavours – delicate and flowery, with hints of apricots and peaches – is generally considered the best on the globe. This is the story of how Darjeeling developed its prodigious tea industry under Imperial British rule and eventually came to produce some of the highest-quality leaves in the world. It is a fascinating portrait of the region from the days of the Raj to that of the voodoo farmers of the present day, who get world-record prices for their fine teas, all set against the backdrop of the looming Himalayas and drenching monsoons. It is a story rich in intrigue and empire, full of adventurers and unlikely successes in culture and religion, ecology and terroir, and one that began with one of the most audacious acts of corporate smuggling in history. It is also the tale of how the industry had spiralled into decline by the end of the twentieth century, and how this paradisiacal spot in the high Himalayas seethes with union unrest and a violent struggle for independent statehood. It is on the front line against the devastating effects of climate change and decades of harmful farming practices, a war that is being fought in some tea gardens – and, astonishingly, won – using radical methods.

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