



Chinese Glazes: Their Origins, Chemistry, and Recreation

Nigel Wood

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Selected by *Choice* magazine as an Outstanding Academic Book for 2000

Chinese glazes have been admired throughout history for their extraordinary qualities and colors—not least in China itself, where their appearance has been compared variously to jade, to tea-dust, to hare's fur, or to the "color of the sky after the rain." Some Chinese glazes are vibrant and brilliant in tone, while others are deep, complex, and subtle, their properties seeming to change according to ambient light. Chinese glazes have long presented a technical challenge to Western potters, and this book is the most complete account yet of their nature and their reconstruction. The story of Chinese glazes is also the story of Chinese ceramics itself, one of the most fascinating and influential traditions in ceramic history.

Chinese Glazes traces the development of China's great high-fired glaze tradition from its roots in the Bronze Age, through the famous monochrome stoneware glazes of the Song dynasty, to the fine porcelain glazes of southern China. The book also examines in detail the story of China's low-fired glazes, from the time of China's first emperor to the present day. The book shows clearly how the potters of ancient China were able to work their ceramic miracles from the simplest recipes, and how modern potters can use and adapt these principles for their own work. The book contains hundreds of recipes for formulating Chinese glazes with Western materials, simple and advanced calculation techniques, as well as efficient blending procedures with local materials.

The book is lavishly illustrated, with nearly three hundred photographs, one hundred in full color. These depict examples of the Chinese arts as found in pottery ranging from simple earthenware jars excavated at Neolithic sites to exquisitely designed dishes found in imperial tombs. They also show examples of modern Western ware that employ these remarkable glazing techniques.

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