

Eco Living Japan: Sustainable Ideas for Living Green

Deanna McDonald

Tuttle Publishing (Feb 9, 2016)

Hardcover \$29.95 (240pp)

978-4-80531283-4

Accessible and beautiful, *Eco Living Japan* presents concepts of Japanese house design specialized for modern ecological sensibilities. With emphases on the history of Japanese construction and modern building simplicity, this book is likely to appeal to design students, and homebuilders and homebuyers concerned with environmentally mindful design.

The book benefits from excellent layout and organization, and its many large, high-resolution photos make it a joy to flip through. The efficiency of the text is a good complement to the book's secondary thesis of simplicity in design and lifestyle, and numerous cross-sections help to illuminate building designs described in-line. Background in architecture is not necessary for comprehension of this book. In fact, with its easy language and focus on everyday elements, it seems to have been written with the everyman, rather than the scholar, in mind.

The houses presented here do not include active sustainability measures, like gray water recovery, solar power, and rooftop gardens, favoring instead passive tactics like material efficiency and self-cooling spaces. The book tends to focus on aesthetics, which may broaden perspectives on how a space can be green. Ultimately, it will draw many fans from design and householding communities worldwide. While not every design is necessarily feasible for the average homebuilder, the book's ideas on space usage could function as a source of inspiration for builders hoping to satisfy a green market without resorting to expensive or elaborate tactics.

Eco Living Japan is a timely publication that might pair well with both the work of Marie Kondo and literature on tiny houses. Expect it to fuel the growing fandom of home simplicity and efficiency, as well as interest in Japanese traditional design.

ANNA CALL (Summer 2016)

Disclosure: This article is not an endorsement, but a review. The publisher of this book provided free copies of the book to have their book reviewed by a professional reviewer. No fee was paid by the publisher for this review. Foreword Reviews only recommends books that we love. Foreword Magazine, Inc. is disclosing this in accordance with the Federal Trade Commission's 16 CFR, Part 255.