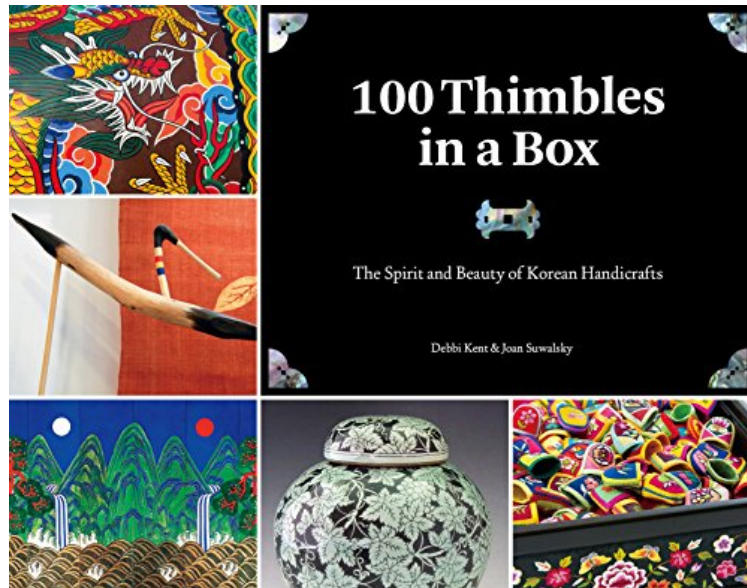


100 Thimbles in a Box: The Spirit and Beauty of Korean Handicrafts (Seoul Selection Guides)

Debbi Kent, Joan Suwalsky

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#918200 in Books 2014-03-21Original language:EnglishPDF # 1 8.75 x 11.25 x .751, 1.84 #File Name: 1624120261168 pages | File size: 37.Mb

Debbi Kent, Joan Suwalsky : 100 Thimbles in a Box: The Spirit and Beauty of Korean Handicrafts (Seoul Selection Guides) before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised 100 Thimbles in a Box: The Spirit and Beauty of Korean Handicrafts (Seoul Selection Guides):

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. A gorgeous book to keep foreverBy Ma-belleI'm heading to Korea in a couple of months and this book has inspired my shopping when I get there. Even if I wasn't going, the photos are so gorgeous and it is so beautifully laid out. I pretty much have only looked at the pictures so far but for that alone, it is worth it. But I did read the story about the thimbles 'cuz I was curious. This is a lovely book and a lot of thought was put into it.1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. A Visual FeastBy Thomas B. AllenBy Scottie Allen on May 13, 2014This book is beautiful. it is a visual feast. i can't believe anyone will read this book without first looking at all the intriguing illustrations. The photos are a perfect introduction to the story. The soul, the culture, the daily life of the Korean people are all described through the diverse crafts of the nation. Everything has another level of meaning. i understand Korea so much more after reading this book. My favorite story is about kites. A Korean kite is built with a big hole in its center. The hole makes the kite fly very well. And the hole can help you get rid of your bad luck!1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. 100 Thimbles in a Box: The Spirit and Beauty of Korean HandicraftsBy RockvillenanaThis book is unusually beautiful. The photography and layout rivals the best of National Geographic. The descriptions and explanations are in my view a step above that! I believe the book would make a unique gift for friends and relatives who enjoy handicrafts or are fascinated by crafts of other cultures or appreciate the beauty of handiwork too little seen these days.I believe this book should be added to the featured collections of public libraries and museum shops around the country.

Korean handicrafts are often overshadowed by those of China and Japan, preventing them from being recognized for their unique charm and cultural value. Frustrated with this widespread ignorance of Korean crafts, two American authors set out to write *100 Thimbles in a Box: The Spirit and Beauty of Korean Handicrafts*, hoping that an English-language book on the topic would help bring some deserving global attention to Korea's strong crafting history. The book's title draws from a tradition dating back to the Joseon Dynasty in which a bride would present handmade thimbles to her husband's female relatives to wish them good fortune and a long life. The stunning beauty of 44 of Korea's traditional crafts sorted into ceramics, fiber arts, paper, inlay, metal, wood, and painting is presented in detail with over 400 pictures found in the book. While other publications have focused on one or two of these handicraft categories, this is the first English-language guide that brings these diverse genres together in a single volume.

100 Thimbles in a Box is a charming introduction to a great range of Korean handicraft, from the tiny thimbles an old-fashioned woman's intimate companion to the once ubiquitous lattice and paper doors of traditional Korean homes. The authors have tacked down popular accounts of each handicraft, as contemporary Koreans now understand and appreciate them, and abundant photographs that convey the feel and appeal of ceramics, stone, paintings, masks, clothing, and furniture. Spending time in these pages is an enticement to visit Korea for a first-hand encounter with these things themselves. --Laurel Kendall (Division Chair and Curator of Asian Ethnology, American Museum of Natural History) As they explore the hidden symbolism and unique uses of Korean handicraft, the two authors trace connections between Korea's past and present. Offering abundant visual material, this book illustrates how Koreans have enjoyed art and culture in every moment of their lives. --Hyonjeong Kim Han (Associate Curator for Korean Art, Asian Art Museum of San Francisco) This thoroughly researched and elegantly photographed book is more than a source of knowledge; it is itself a piece of art. Debbi Kent and Joan Suwalsky have seamlessly blended culture, art, and history to offer readers an extensive overview of Korean handicraft, tradition, and identity. --Jai-Ok Shim (Executive Director, Fulbright Korea) *100 Thimbles in a Box* is a labor of love in every sense of the term. Its authors were first introduced to Korea through their adopted Korean children; they naturally developed an interest in their children's native land and, after a visit to Korea, fell in love with its handicrafts as well. This book is their way of sharing the world of Korean handicrafts with readers who might otherwise have never known of them. Vibrant and colorful photographs grace every page, accompanied by informative and well-researched text. The book begins with an introduction to the handicrafts, traditions, and history of Korea; it is necessarily brief, but sufficient to give the reader a proper frame of reference for what will follow. The second chapter is perhaps even more helpful: a mini-encyclopedia of symbols found in Korean art and handicrafts. These are largely plants and animals, but include natural phenomenon and a few conceptual symbols as well. The bulk of the book introduces the reader to a variety of handicrafts roughly divided into seven categories: ceramics, fiber arts, paper, inlay, metal, wood, and paintings. Some of the categories, like ceramics, are self-explanatory, while others, such as fiber arts and wood, cover a wide range of arts. Those familiar with Korean arts will recognize some perennial favorites, such as celadon, but there are several gems that many readers might not have encountered before; ox horn carving, a uniquely Korean art, and funerary figures are examples of art forms that have not received as much attention as their more famous cousins. A number of themes quickly become apparent while reading the book. The connection to nature, for example, is emphasized in the second chapter, and the vast majority of symbols is indeed rooted in nature. The authors explain that the function of these symbols is to foster harmony between humanity and nature, presenting specific examples in each of the arts covered. The authors also lament the decline or disappearance of certain art forms as they are replaced by modern equivalents. The embroidered thimbles that give the book its name, for example, remain mostly as a curiosity in this era of sturdy modern thimbles. But new is not always better. Perhaps the most brilliant thread that runs through this tapestry is the concepts of preservation and revitalization. There are mentions throughout the text of how certain art forms have seen a revival in recent years, and the last chapter, *Handicrafts Today*, looks forward to the future of handicrafts in Korea. At one point in the last chapter, the authors draw on the etymology of the English word *tradition*, which means something that is handed over, delivered, or entrusted. The Korean word *jeontong* has a similar meaning, incorporating the connotation of something handed down, that is, from one generation to the next. Traditional Korean handicrafts continue to seek to bridge generations and flourish in the modern world; *100 Thimbles* is a chronicle of and itself another step in this quest. --Charles La Shure (Department of Korean Language and Literature, Koreana) This thoroughly researched and elegantly photographed book is more than a source of knowledge; it is itself a piece of art. Debbi Kent and Joan Suwalsky have seamlessly blended culture, art, and history to offer readers an extensive overview of Korean handicraft, tradition, and identity. --Jai-Ok Shim (Executive Director, Fulbright Korea) About the Author Debbi Kent and her husband Bill have three children their son Justin and their two daughters adopted from Korea, Whitney and Melanie. Debbi's professional career has included work as a writer, editor, public speaker, marketing representative, and designer. In her free time, Debbi enjoys travel, photography, interior design, and fabric arts. Joan Suwalsky and her husband Al adopted two Korean-born children, April and Ted. Joan is a developmental psychologist by profession and studies child growth and family functioning, including in adoptive families, at the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development in Bethesda, MD. In her spare time, she is an avid potter

and gardener.