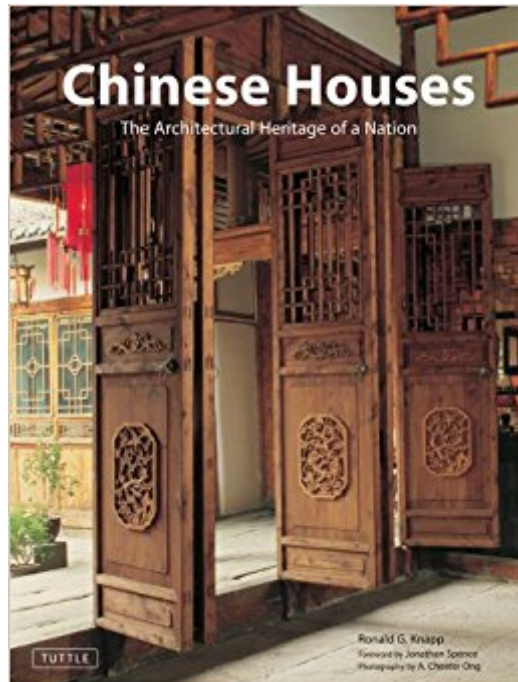


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# Chinese Houses: The Architectural Heritage Of A Nation



## Synopsis

Winner of ForeWord Magazine's Architecture "Book of the Year" Award! Exquisite examples of traditional dwellings are scattered throughout modern-day China. *Chinese Houses* focuses on 20 well-preserved traditional Chinese homes, presenting examples from a range of rural and metropolitan areas throughout China. The photographs of each are accompanied by extensive background information and historical content. An introductory essay examines the different types of Chinese homes and provides an overview of the rich regional variety of Chinese dwelling forms. It also provides insights into little-known design concepts that emphasize the flexibility, adaptability, and versatility of traditional building forms and the work of traditional craftsmen. Richly illustrated with photographs, woodblock prints, historic images, and line drawings, *Chinese Houses* portrays an architectural tradition of amazing range and resilience.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"Chinese Houses examines traditional dwellings from a Ming dynasty manor to Mao's boyhood home." [Elle Decor blog](#)"When a house is used as a museum or tourist site, it loses its vitality, and with no chance to grow and develop, it becomes fossilized. Judging by the eagerness of officials at every level of the government to 'regenerate' the cities...this could be the only way to preserve the old dwellings of China. This book, illustrated with many beautiful photographs and drawings, could serve as the best guide for preserving China's heritage." [Orientations magazine](#)"This scholarly, detailed work, beautifully illustrated with historic black-and-white photos,

contemporary color photos, floor plans, and elevations, is recommended for large collections." *Library Journal*"Ronald G. Knapp—based this exhaustive book on 40 years of research in the Chinese countryside." *Icon World Monuments*"Packed with color photos of both interior and exterior decor, Chinese Houses also presents an in-depth survey of the rituals, culture, ornamentation influences, and floor plans of homes across China, from urban to rural dwellings. If it's a strong in-depth history of Chinese home architecture which is desired, look no further than the gorgeous Chinese Houses: it's much more than the coffee table picturebook it appears a first glance." *Midwest Book Review*

The migration of Chinese from southeastern China to the Nanyang--the peninsular and insular region known today as Southeast Asia--is a significant component of the world's major cultural diasporas. After many of these migrants and their descendants became successful, they built architecturally eclectic homes--shophouses, bungalows, villas, and mansions--that combined Chinese, European, and local influences. It is the story of these hybrid architectural forms, built under different social and geographical environments than had been known at home in China and thus the products of cultural fusion, that is the focus of this book. While most of these old buildings have disappeared, scattered throughout Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, and Vietnam, there still remain; fine examples worth studying, documenting, and explaining. Over a three-year period from 2007 to 2009, Ronald G. Knapp and A. Chester Ong made; five; field excursions to Asia in search of the old homes of Chinese sojourners and settlers. "Chinese Houses of Southeast Asia, " a fascinating account of architectural multiculturalism in the pre-modern world, presents the results of their research. An introductory essay portrays the historical circumstances that gave rise to Chinese houses overseas, and includes historic images, color photographs, paintings, and line drawings. At the core of the book are stunning color photographs of nearly forty residences built from the late eighteenth into the early twentieth century. For each residence, background information about the individual and his family who built and then lived there is given. These tales reveal the entrepreneurial spirit of the immigrants as well as the social and economic circumstances in which they lived. Images and drawings from southeastern China help clarify similarities and differences, and, in several cases, related family residences in China are also presented. "Chinese Houses of Southeast Asia" complements Knapp and Ong's 2005 award-winning "Chinese Houses: The Architectural Heritage of a Nation, " which highlighted more than twenty of China's most significant historic residences. --This text refers to an alternate Hardcover edition.

Gorgeous book; beautifully-illustrated.

I bought this book for work, it is amazing! Great references of Chinese architecture & designs. Beautiful pages of photographs, it makes my life a lot easier than googling poor quality online images.

Very beautiful book, all buildings are so familiar, because I came from one of those country :))

Fascinating book about old Chinese houses. The pictures are great and the text is in depth. Too bad that most Chinese don't appreciate these houses anymore. If you are interested in the topic I can also recommend *Chinese Houses of Southeast Asia: The Eclectic Architecture of Sojourners and Settlers*

I can't imagine there being a better book out there on Chinese houses as this book has history and expert photographs. What's more it also has well-drawn sections and plans. Most books on this subject will use old diagrams or ancient drawings that are a hassle to decipher. Here the diagrams are purpose-drawn, clean, and add a great deal to the understanding. About a third is dedicated to a general history of the form, construction methods, social life, and geographical variety; and about two-thirds to about 8 pages each on specific houses. Just enough info on each. The one gripe I would have is that, in the part of the book where he gives a general introduction of the elements and history of Chinese houses, he uses photos from the twenty or so houses that he discusses individually. It would have given a bit more breadth (and reduced a bit of redundancy later on) if he had used that opportunity for photos of houses that were not given an individual focus.

Not really a collection of different examples of architecture. Just a few specific sites are shown. They are not that different, there are no details, really unhelpful book.

This book exceeded my expectations. It has informative text and abundant photographs including many vintage images. For anyone interested in Chinese architecture, this is the book for you.

Hanoi, Malacca, Singapore all these towns, and many others, are (or at least were) filled with Chinese old houses, which often are called shop houses. A better word would be town houses. The

cover of the book shows a Singaporean town house, which is now a museum. It is situated next to a very big ugly modern road, but once this street was millionaire's row in Singapore - just some stone throws to the train station with regular service to Kuala Lumpur. How time change. The houses presented in this book are stunningly beautiful and probably never looked as good as they do today, but most of these houses have been reduced to rubble in the name of modernisation. The text is pretty interesting. We get an introduction to why the Chinese houses in the South-East Asian region all look so similar. We also get a description of the houses, but we do not really get a deeper understanding of how these houses were designed or how (if) they assimilated any of the local culture present at the time. This book could also be interesting for people interested in interior design. I would also recommend the author's *Chinese Houses: The Architectural Heritage of a Nation* describing old houses in China. Staying within the SE Asia region Davison's *Black and White: The Singapore House 1898-1941* looks at the Singaporean (and Malaysian - but not covered in the book) British colonial architecture around the same time.

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