

## Tea Ceremony on the Go

The Japanese tea ceremony involves preparing and imbibing *matcha* (powdered green tea) according to rituals developed over centuries. A new tea set in a basket, the Cha-Yu, allows tea lovers to whip up a bowl anytime, anywhere. Cha-Yu was jointly developed by Tankosha, a publisher specializing in books and magazines related to the tea cere-

mony, and designer Yoichi Nagasawa.

The compact, canister-shaped cane wicker basket opens to reveal a drawstring bag. Inside the bag there are all the necessities for the tea ceremony: a small tea bowl for drinking green tea, a bamboo whisk for mixing the tea, a bamboo tea scoop, and a tea container. If all the tea

utensils are taken out, the basket can be used by itself as a handbag.

Matcha is always associated with the difficult traditional forms of the Japanese tea ceremony, but the Cha-Yu gives the chance to enjoy matcha in a more free and easy way. Perhaps the matcha break at work will one day replace the coffee break.



## Wind Power at Home

IT and electronics manufacturer Shinko Electronics has developed a small wind power generation system for home use. This system, which goes on sale in October, allows households to generate their own clean energy, and Shinko Electric has been

flooded with inquiries from interested customers.

The small wind-power generation system has four different models, differing in the radius of the windmill and the lengths of the blades, and comes in a kit that customers assemble themselves. Shinko

Electronics expects the sale price to be between 200,000 and 300,000 yen. The windmill rotates in response to breezes from all directions, and electricity is generated whenever wind speeds top 2 meters per second. With an average wind speed of 7

meters per second, the largest model will be able to generate enough energy to power a household of four. One very attractive selling point of the wind generation system is its low-noise, low-vibration technology, which will allow it to be used in residential areas.

## Sweet Taste of Tradition

Toraya Confectionery, a retailer of traditional Japanese sweets with a history spanning five centuries, recently opened Toraya Café in Tokyo's newest shopping and entertainment complex, Roppongi Hills. Toraya uses *an* (sweet azuki bean paste), which is an essential ingredient of traditional Japanese sweets, in combination with chocolate and other Western desert ingredients. The shop interior is decorated in colors

to match the tea it serves, and there is space for 30 customers. The shop is popular with all age groups, and almost always full.

Toraya opened a Paris branch in 1980, and another branch in New

York in 1993. In addition to introducing Japanese sweets to the West, the company has experimented with adding new ingredients, methods, and food culture to its traditional products. The new cakes and sweets use the experience gained abroad to make a new style of sweet, fusing the tastes of East and West—perhaps they will come to be considered “traditional” themselves one day.



SHINICHI KYTO



## Memories in 3D

Surely everyone has their own collection of sentimental items, such as childhood toys, souvenirs from trips, or favorite pieces of jewelry. Have you ever wished you could display these items on the walls of your room, just like a picture or a photo-

graph? Japanese designer Hiroshi Kajimoto delivers the perfect solution: the 3D Frame.

Objects to be displayed are sandwiched between two sheets of polyurethane film, bordered by a colorful plastic frame. The film is elastic and

very strong. Even if it stretches after being used to display a large object, hot air from hair dryer or hot water will return it to its original shape. The 3D Frame can be re-used any number of times, displaying personal treasures with a unique design accent.