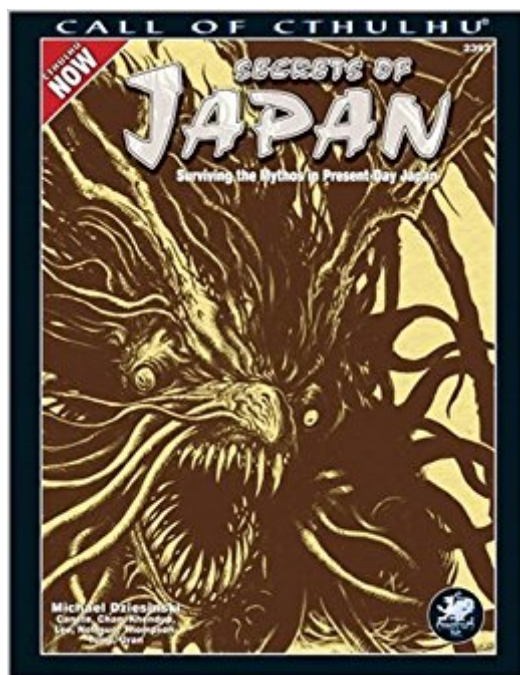


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Secrets Of Japan (Call Of Cthulhu Horror Roleplaying, Modern Era)



Synopsis

Japan is a contradictory nation of ancient traditions and modern high-tech free enterprise. Within its dark shadows and hidden places, Great Old Ones, Outer Gods, and their monstrous servitors lie in wait for the unwary. In the corporate boardrooms and political offices, secret societies carry out their sinister agendas. In hoary shrines and temples, Shinto kami and Buddhist bodhisattvas provide ancient knowledge and alien enlightenment to those who remember the old ways. Cutting-edge corporate laboratories uncover forbidden secrets and create new horrors born of human science and the corrupting power of the Mythos. The mass media bombards the population with escapist entertainment and crass materialism while the madness of cosmic truth slowly seeps through, burrowing into the popular consciousness. Welcome to the Land of the Rising Sun, where you will discover that the horrors of the Cthulhu Mythos are not limited to the West. SECRETS OF JAPAN provides detailed information for playing CALL OF CTHULHU adventures in a modern Japanese setting. This book includes new character occupations, new spells, new monsters, new organizations, and rules for playing Japanese investigators. Also included are three adventure scenarios, two short stories, a glossary of cultural terms, details on Shinto and Buddhism in a CALL OF CTHULHU setting, extensive cultural background notes, and the secret history of Japan!

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Book came fast and was in perfect condition. It will be a while before I can read it but so far the material is really good: giving me a lot of ideas for a campaign.

Chaosium shows why their Call of Cthulhu line is considered to have the best supplements by both

old and young turks in the game industry. This book is exceptionally well-researched and written; any gm interested in running a game in Japan or using Japanese mythology in a rpg would do well to have this book. I'd recommend it to Keepers, period; it encourages you to think about the Mythos and its relationships in a new light the way that the tragically underrated Creature Compendium can. I recommend Secrets of Japan to every Keeper out there without hesitation.

Secrets of Japan is a new supplement for the Call of Cthulhu role-playing game that moves the setting into the present day and to the far east of Japan. This massive supplement is actually larger than the actual Call of Cthulhu game book, which should give you some idea of just how thorough and comprehensive it is. It covers virtually everything that the original book did but slanted towards play in Japan. Author Michael Dziesinski begins with an introduction to Japan, its people and culture. It's this milieu which makes it unique from the original game which while providing information for playing in the modern day, was still heavily slanted towards play in the 1920's. All aspects are revisited including character creation, occupations, which include many new ones such as Bushido "The Way of the Warrior" which certainly gives some punch, or kick, to PC's. There's also many new skills, magic, and of course, being in a modern setting, weapons and vehicles to utilize. Dziesinski goes so far as to provide the scope on how PCs find themselves in Japan to begin their investigations, assuming you're not using characters born and raised there. This is an interesting approach as you do become a stranger in a strange land, which certainly adds even more mystery to the game. There are lengthy sections on religions and cults and other shadowy organizations and how they all interact with the Cthulhu Mythos. It's very well thought out and harkens back to yellow menace pulps of the 30's and 40's. Several new monsters, elder gods, great old ones, etc, are included. In addition, there are new, complete adventures included as well as a couple of dozen adventure hooks and ideas that the Keeper can build on. The depth and scope is quite staggering. That is the book's greatest strength and perhaps its greatest pitfall. There's a LOT to try and absorb and you have to wonder if players are going to want to invest the time to learn this new setting. There are great ideas here and it's certainly possible to run a campaign using just the ideas that fit you and your players, and adding more detail as you go along. Ultimately it will be up to the Keeper to decide how much to use. There's no shortage of source material, that's for sure. Reviewed by Tim Janson

Japan is a natural setting for Call of Cthulhu. It is a place absolutely festering with monsters, beasts, ghosts and horrors of every possible nature. Combined with a long history and an enigmatic culture,

the possibilities for adventures in both modern and past times is boundless. And with Lovecraft's fear of what lies under the sea...why, any trip to a sushi restaurant could be a sanity shattering experience. Michael Dziesinski has put together a tome. "Secrets of Japan" is a thick book, and the author was sure to pack in as much as possible from his considerable knowledge. The first section, Atmosphere, provides a crash-course in Japan both ancient and modern. Politics, social life, technology...everything you need to give your game the appropriate mood. Other sections detail more specifically game-orientated information, including secret societies and power groups, new skills, magic and characters. The final section contains some very short scenarios, and a collection of scenario ideas. Due to the depth of "Secrets of Japan", it would be great to see a companion volume of scenarios for those who don't really have the time to home-cook their own. The format of the book also keeps in mind the various ways people view Japan. He has a tongue in cheek comic strip running through the book called Cthulhu Sushi which is very funny. A certain giant green famous monster of film land makes an appearance, although slightly altered. There is even a short section on running Call of Cthulhu anime-style, which made me do a sanity check when I read it. However, for all of its excellence as a Call of Cthulhu game book, no one should mistake "Secrets of Japan" as anything like an authentic book on Japanese society and folklore. Although Dziesinski deeply mines the rich history of Japanese monster tales, he freely molds them to suit the game, something leaving little resembling the original beast other than the name. He also makes some mistakes in his Japanese translations, specifically in his section titled "Cultural Lexicon", where he attempts to show aspects of Japanese society using the language. This is no terrible error, however, as it doesn't affect game play in any way.

This is the most comprehensive Supplement for Call of Cthulhu...especially for the Secrets of "" line they have. Thicker than the core book and is literally a better reference than my Japanese language books. The scenarios in the book are ok but don't take advantage of the source they draw from. The author takes various different angles to develop styles of play within the game and can expand from the basic Lovecraft style. You can even involve Delta Green type of flavor from this book. Even though it does not come straight out and say Delta Green. I think some players and GM's may be intimidated by conceptualizing a Secrets of Japan game but I found my players quickly picking up things during the game because of how much Japan oriented stuff we are exposed to in the media. The material is for the modern time and not for the 1920's as most of CoC is based in. It's very well put together but is a big read if you don't know too much about Japan. It's well worth the price and invaluable resource for any GM.

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