Mahjong

There are few games whose history is shrouded in quite as much myth as Mahjong. While some contend the game is over 2,500 years old, records can only verify it dating back to the mid nineteenth century (at the very earliest), in the provinces around Shanghai, China. In less than 40 years, the game went from being a local craze to creating a worldwide shortage of ivory and bone which was used for making the tiles during the 1920s.

Mahjong roughly translates as "chattering sparrow". One of the many myths claim it was so named because Confucius liked birds and used the game as a teaching tool as he travelled across China. However, a great many games in China claim to have been invented by Confucius, so coupled with the lack of even a single ancient tile, this theory seems unlikely. In fact, the oldest artefact identifiable as a Mahjong tile dates to the 1880s. Ya-Pei, one of China's oldest card games, resembles Mahjong and is known to have been played as early as the 10th century.

This particular set is very special and comes from China. Please enjoy the game but do take care of it and replace all the pieces and the rules of play booklet when you have finished. Thank you.