

The Origins and History of Singing Bowls

The knowledge of singing bowl production would have spread throughout Asia along established trade routes. Many believe that the Buddha, Padmasambhava, crossed the Himalaya mountains from India into Tibet. He brought the teachings of the Buddha into the country and also the knowledge of singing bowls. Contrary to popular belief, singing bowls were not used during any religious practices but were used instead as begging bowls and for food. During this period monasteries only used the singing bowl as a chalice.

If the singing bowl was not produced for religious practice then the obvious question is: what were they used for? There are accounts of travelling smiths who would make the bowls with materials gathered during their travels. Other theories suggest it was the monks themselves that produced the bowls. If so though, why were they used for eating and not meditation? What was the reason for having the bowls 'sing'? The fact is no one can be entirely sure who produced the earliest singing bowls as there is no concrete evidence to support either theory.

Ancient singing bowls were traditionally made of seven various metals, each one symbolising a different planet in the solar system. The sound produced by the singing bowls would vary depending upon how the different quantities of metals were mixed together. The metals would be combined to form an alloy which would be left to cool before being beaten into the familiar bowl shape. However, each of these ancient bowls varies and can have more or less than the seven traditionally used metals. This would support the theories that it was the travelling smiths who produced the bowls as, during their travels, not all the metals would have been available which explains why each bowl might be of a different composition.

About the Author

Gary Mullen from [Tibetan singing bowls](#). You may reproduce the content of this article onto your own website. However, to do so you must include a link back to HandcraftedUK. Thank you.

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