

An illustration of a traditional Japanese street at night. Two geishas in colorful kimonos are walking away from the viewer on a cobblestone path. The street is lined with traditional buildings, some with lit windows and hanging lanterns. In the background, a pagoda is visible against a starry night sky. The overall atmosphere is serene and nostalgic.

# Geisha's Road

## 藝伎之道

RULEBOOK

English

Welcome back to Hanamikoji! Geisha's Road is a 30-minute two-player, competitive strategy game full of implicit intentions, veiled messages, and hidden actions. Players represent friendly but rival patrons supporting Iroha, Tomoyo, Anju, Yoko, and Ruri along their journey from apprentice (maiko) to full geisha (artist), and perhaps even becoming the owner (okaasan) of their own teahouse.

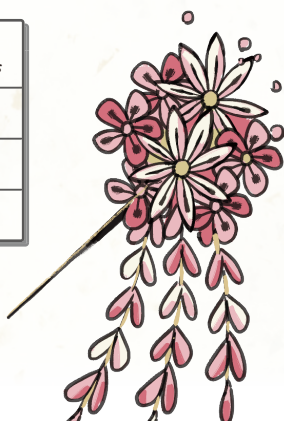
## OBJECTIVE

- In this game, you and your opponent will play and select cards from each other to help the geisha journey across teahouses to showcase their artistic performances to guests. Geisha score Prestige Points when they land exactly on their original "home" teahouse.
- After 4 turns, compare the total influence for each color in each player's tableau to see who wins that Geisha's Prestige Points.
- At the end of a round, if you have enough influence to win at least 4 geisha, you win immediately!
- Otherwise, the player with the most Prestige Points over 2 rounds wins!

## GAME MODES

- Geisha's Road comes with 3 game modes: Introductory, Standard, and Advanced. For new players, we recommend starting with the Introductory Game to understand the core mechanism, while the Advanced Game adds recommended options for players who desire more agency and counterplay.

	<i>Geisha Row Tiles</i>	<i>Guest Tokens</i>	<i>Offer Tokens</i>
<i>Introductory</i>	✓		
<i>Standard</i>	✓	✓	
<i>Advanced</i>	✓	✓	✓



## COMPONENTS

### ◆ 5 Teahouse Cards



### ◆ 20 Item Cards

("1" ~ "4" for each of the 5 colors)



### ◆ 8 Action Markers

(4 for each player)



### ◆ 15 Guest Tokens

(3 each of the 5 colors, for the Standard and Advanced Games)



### ◆ 2 Counteroffer Tokens

### 2 Hidden Offer Tokens

(For the Advanced Game)



### ◆ 5 Geisha Standees

(During your first game, assemble Geisha Standees with their base)



### ◆ 5 Geisha Row Tiles



### ◆ 5 Tiebreaker Tokens



### ◆ 9 Prestige Point Tokens



### ◆ 1 Prestige Point Setting Card



### ◆ 1 Starting Player Marker



# SETUP

Players sit across from each other and set up the game as follows:

- 1 Place the Teahouse Cards in a circle randomly with the matching Geisha Standees on top of each card.
- 2 Shuffle the deck of 20 Item Cards and place them face-down in the center of the circle.
- 3 Set up a row of the 5 Geisha Row Tiles between the two players with the “1-Prestige Point” symbol face-up. The areas next to the Geisha Row are the tableaus where players will place their cards.
- 4 Each player takes a set of 4 Action Markers of one color and places them face-up (unused side).
- 5 Shuffle the Prestige Point Tokens and place them light side face-up into 2 rows next to the Prestige Point Setting Card, one with 5 tokens (Full Geisha Promotion Set) and the other with 4 (Okaasan Promotion Set).
- 6 Deal each player a hand of 6 Item Cards, which should be hidden from the other player.
- 7 The player who has come back home most recently takes the Starting Player Marker.

## A For the Introductory Game:

- Do not use any Guest Tokens.
- Shuffle all the Tiebreaker Tokens face-down. Each player randomly draws a Tiebreaker Token to place face-up on their side of the corresponding Geisha Row Tile, while the rest are placed in the middle of their Geisha Row Tiles.

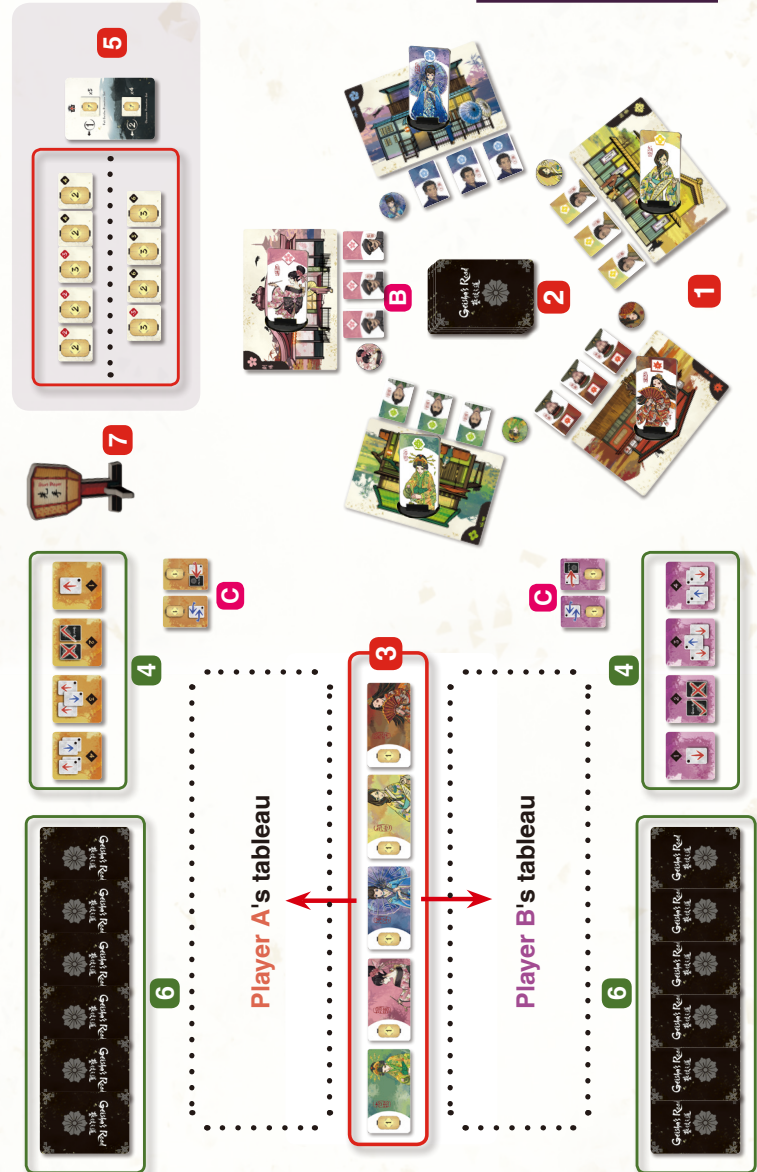
## B For the Standard and Advanced Game:

- Place the 3 Guest Tokens of each color next to the Teahouse Card of the corresponding color.
- Place Tiebreaker Tokens next to the matching teahouse.

## C For the Advanced Game only:

- Deal each player 1 Counteroffer and 1 Hidden Offer Token face-up.

# GAME SETUP



# GAME PLAY

- ◆ Beginning with the starting player, players alternate turns. The active player will **draw an Item Card** from the top of the deck and then **take 1 of the 4 actions** by flipping the corresponding Action Marker face-down.
- ◆ The round ends after 4 turns, when both players have played all 4 actions.
- ★ The 4 actions are:

## 1-Reveal



- Play an Item Card **face-up** immediately into your tableau and move the geisha accordingly.

## 2-Intrigue

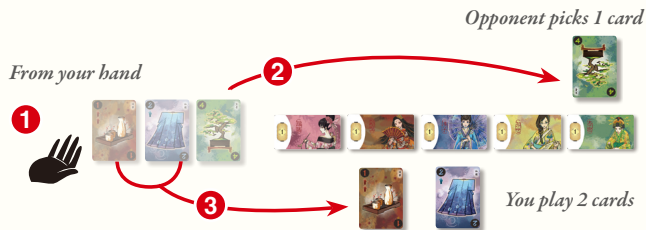


- Play an Item Card **face-down** in the vicinity of your tableau under this Action Marker and discard another card face-down.
- The face-down Item Card under this Action Marker will be revealed and executed at the end of the round.

## 3-Gift



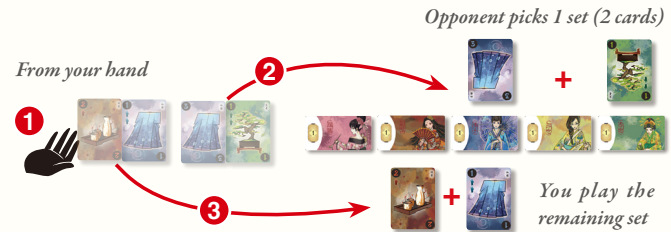
- Pick 3 Item Cards from your hand to place **face-up**.
- Your opponent picks one of the Item Cards to play into their tableau and moves that geisha accordingly.
- Afterwards, you play the remaining two Item Cards into your tableau (in your desired order) and move those geisha accordingly.



## 4-Competition



- Pick 2 sets of 2 Item Cards from your hand to place **face-up**.
- Your opponent picks a set to play into their tableau (in their desired order) and moves those geisha accordingly.
- Afterwards, you play the remaining set (in your desired order) into your tableau and move those geisha accordingly.



**Note:** Each action must be played once and only once during the round, but in the order the player chooses.

**Note:** A geisha moves clockwise by as many spaces (Teahouses) as the number shown on the Item Card.

## COLLECTING GUEST TOKENS AND TIEBREAKER TOKENS

(For the **Standard** and **Advanced Games**)

Each time a player plays an Item Card into their tableau with:

- ◆ A value of 1: they will move the corresponding geisha 1 space and collect **2 tokens** (Guest Tokens and/or Tiebreaker Token) from the teahouse that the moved geisha lands on.
- ◆ A value of 2: they will move the corresponding geisha 2 spaces and collect **1 token** (Guest Token or Tiebreaker Token) from the teahouse that the moved geisha lands on.
- ◆ A value of 3 or 4: they will move the corresponding geisha 3 or 4 spaces, respectively, but will **NOT** collect any tokens.

- When a player plays an Item Cards into their tableau, move the geisha accordingly.



- The player plays a Green Item Card ①, then the Green Geisha (Anju) moves 1 space clockwise and collects 2 Yellow Guest Tokens by the Yellow Teahouse that Anju lands on.

## COUNTEROFFER AND HIDDEN OFFER TOKENS

(for the Advanced Game)

- ◆ Once per round, each player may choose to use their Counteroffer and Hidden Offer Token during I-Cut-You-Choose actions (3-Gift, 4-Competition).

\*An I-Cut-You-Choose action (Gift, Competition) is any action where 1 player selects cards for another player to pick from.

- ◆ If unused, these tokens will provide players with 1 point each.



To use the Counteroffer Token (when offered I-Cut-You-Choose):

- 1 Flip your Counteroffer Token face-down.
- 2 Remove a card offered by your opponent and replace it with a card from your hand.
- 3 Shuffle the removed card back into the draw deck.
- 4 Draw a new card from the draw deck to replenish your hand.
- 5 Allow your opponent to choose first.



To use the Hidden Offer Token (when offering I-Cut-You-Choose):

- 1 Flip your Hidden Offer Token face-down.
- 2 Place one of the cards of your choosing in the offer face-down instead of face-up.
- 3 The hidden card is only revealed immediately before a player places it into their tableau.

**Note:** One Counteroffer can be countered with another.

**Note:** The Counteroffer and the Hidden Offer can be used in tandem (i.e., place a face-down card as a Counteroffer), though this will exhaust both tokens (costing 2 points).

## RETURNING HOME

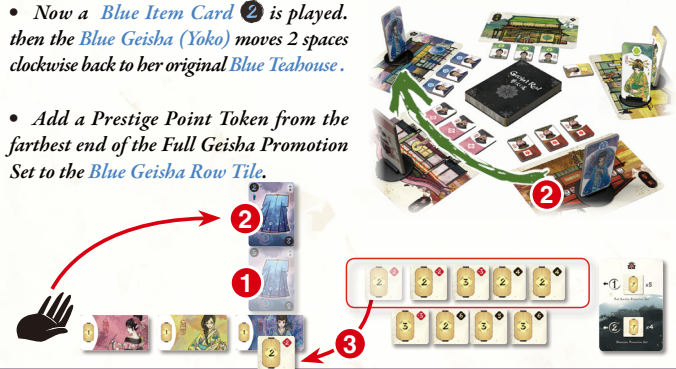
When a geisha lands exactly on its original Teahouse (returns home) after an Item Card is played:

- ◆ If this is the geisha's first time, place the farthest Prestige Point Token from the Full Geisha Promotion Set to the matching color Geisha Row Tile.
- ◆ If this is that particular geisha's second time, add the farthest Prestige Point Token from the Okaasan Promotion Set to the matching color Geisha Row Tile.



- A Blue Item Card ⑤ was played on the first turn.

- Now a Blue Item Card ② is played, then the Blue Geisha (Yoko) moves 2 spaces clockwise back to her original Blue Teahouse.

- Add a Prestige Point Token from the farthest end of the Full Geisha Promotion Set to the Blue Geisha Row Tile.



## ROUND END

- ◆ The round ends when each player has completed each of their 4 actions.
- ◆ Beginning with the starting player, each player reveals the Item Card they kept from the *2-Intrigue*   action, plays that card into their tableau, and moves the geisha accordingly. If the geisha returns home, score the geisha by placing the next available Prestige Point Token on their Geisha Row Tile.
- ◆ Both players add the numbers on all the cards in their tableau for each color to determine their total influence **over** that geisha. The Tiebreaker Token counts as a ½ point of influence.
- ◆ Whoever has the higher influence for each color wins the favor of that geisha (and all her Prestige Point Tokens, including the base point printed on the Geisha Row Tile). Move the Tiebreaker Token to the winning player's side along the Geisha Row.
- ◆ If there is a tie for a geisha, no one wins that geisha's Prestige Points. Leave the Tiebreaker Token where it is at.

### SCORING AND WINNING

- ◆ At the end of any round, if a player has won 4 out of the 5 geisha, they win the game immediately, regardless of the score.
  - ◆ Otherwise, each player scores by adding the following together:
    - 1 Prestige Points they won from the Geisha Row.
    - 2 For the **Standard** and **Advanced Game**: Prestige Points from Guest Tokens:
      - For each set of 1/2/3 Guest Tokens of the same color, score 0/1/4 points.
      - For each set of 1/2/3/4/5 Guest Tokens of different colors, score 0/1/3/6/10 points.
- Note:** Each Guest Token can be counted in only one set (either same or different color).
- 3 For the **Advanced Game**: 1 Prestige Point for each unused Counteroffer and Hidden Offer Token.
- ◆ The player with the most Prestige Points wins the round. If there is a tie, the player with the most Tiebreaker Tokens wins. If there is still a tie, the starting player wins.

At the end of Round 1, *Yosbi* has won the **Pink** (1 Prestige Point), **Red** (1+2), and **Yellow** (1+2) Geisha for a total of 3 geisha (7 Prestige Points).

*Zara* has won the **Blue** (1+3) and **Green** (1+3+3) Geisha for a total of 2 geisha (11 Prestige Points).

Because no player has won at least 4 geisha, there is no immediate winner, and the difference (11 - 7 = 4 Prestige Points) is carried over to *Zara's* Round 2 score.



### PREPARING FOR THE SECOND ROUND

- ◆ If there is no immediate winner at the end of the first round, carry the difference in score over to the second round. Prepare for the second round as follows:
  - 1 Flip all the Action Markers face-up.
  - 2 Shuffle all of the Item Cards to form a new draw deck.
  - 3 Reset the Prestige Point Tokens by randomly placing them into a row of 5 (Full Geisha Promotion Set) and a row of 4 (Okaasan Promotion Set)
  - 4 Flip all the Geisha Row Tiles to the other side, showing 2 Prestige Points.
  - 5 For the **Standard** and **Advanced Game**: Reset the 3 Guest Tokens of each color back to the Teahouse Card of the corresponding color.
  - 6 For the **Advanced Game**: Flip any used Counteroffer and Hidden Offer Tokens back to their unused side.
  - 7 Do **NOT** reset the Tiebreaker Tokens and the Geisha Standees - keep them where they are currently to seed the second round.
  - 8 Deal 6 Item Cards to each player.
  - 9 The prior round's losing player chooses the new starting player.

## END OF THE GAME

- ◆ At the end of any round, a player immediately wins if they control 4 of the 5 geisha.
- ◆ Otherwise, the player who has the higher total Prestige Points over two rounds wins. If there is a tie, the player with the most Tiebreaker Token at the end of the second round wins. If there is still a tie, the player who starts the second round wins.

*The group of geisha the winning player supported across time has been widely recognized and praised for their beauty, charm, and skill, reflecting prestige back to their primary patron.*



## CREDITS

**Game Design:** Jerry Chiang, Eros Lin

**Graphic Design:** EmperorS4

**Illustration:** Maisherly Chan

**English Proofreader:** Harry John

**Producer:** Eros Lin

Shephard

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Geisha's Road is inspired by Hanamikoji, designed by Kota Nakayama. The designers wish to thank all the playtesters of the game, as well as all the support from backers on Kickstarter.

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Tel: +886-2-2732-6972

Email: [Boardgamelove@bgl.com.tw](mailto:Boardgamelove@bgl.com.tw)

Website: [www.EmperorS4.com](http://www.EmperorS4.com)