Unless you heed the voices of those who know the state in which Russia finds herself ... the result will be utter despair. Thus was Tsar Nicholas II advised in 1913, to no avail. The decent but pathetic and none too brilliant monarch was brutally murdered in the summer of 1918, along with his nervous wife, Alexandra (who had fallen under the spell of the wild-eyed peasant monk Rasputin), and their five children. On the cover of this ambitious--and completely successful--book is a formal portrait of the ethereally beautiful royal family, in delicate finery and pearls; on the back, a shot of their mass grave, a bleak field in the middle of nowhere. As the catalog of a huge exhibition drawn from the State Hermitage Museum and the State Archive of the Russian Federation, this book is filled with color plates of the sumptuous trappings of court life in turn-of-the-century Russia: jeweled Fabergé eggs, coronation paintings, Russian icons, satin ball gowns, soldiers uniforms, crowns, and other treasures. But the soul of the book is the archival material: royal-family photos, political documents, telegrams, letters between Nicholas and Alexandra, locks of royal baby hair, and grisly eye-witness accounts of the Romanoffs murders, as told by those who did the deed. More than 100 curators, historians, and art historians have created this lengthy, comprehensive book detailing the beginnings of what Mikhail Piotrovsky, director of the State Hermitage Museum, calls the tragedy of 20th-century Russia. Yet it reads like a fatal thriller, one with opulence, evil, and error at its core. --Peggy Moorman

My Personal Review:
For those who love reading about the Romanov's, Nicholas and Alexandra: The Last Imperial Family of Tsarist Russia is one of the most beautiful and thrilling books available. This book was originally compiled as the exhibition catalog for the prestigious Nicholas and Alexandra Exhibit put on by the Broughton Company in Wilmington, Delaware. This 408 page tabletop book, is filled with incredible photos (most in color) of the close to 700 imperial items that were on display from the State Hermitage Museum and the State Archive of the Russian Federation.
Nicholas and Alexandra contains fabulous paintings, letters, gowns, diaries, photos, icons, Faberge' eggs, frames, jewelry, dishes, sculptures, flags, uniforms, military decorations, weapons, porcelain, toys, and gifts given to the royal family. It also includes a reproduction of Nicholas' library in the Winter Palace, as well as Tsarina Alexandra's grand piano, the throne from the Winter Palace and the coronation carriage originally designed for Empress Catherine II. The paintings of the royal wedding and Nicholas' coronation are especially impressive, while photos of items from their murder will leave you with a lump in your throat.

While this book is short on giving any kind of in-depth history about the Romanov family, it goes a long way in showing just how they lived. It's amazing to look at the dresses and uniforms and to realize that for positions larger than life, the Tsar and Tsarina were actually very small people. Nicholas was a rather short man at approximately 5 feet 7 inches tall. More than anything, you get a glimpse of the tragedy of their fates and the things they gave up because of Nicholas' misguided leadership. No wonder this story still haunts us--even after 87 years.

For More 5 Star Customer Reviews and Lowest Price:
Nicholas and Alexandra by George Sergei Vilnbakhov - 5 Star Customer Reviews and Lowest Price!