

Shoyoen Garden

This garden dates to the mid-seventeenth century and was the private garden of the imperial prince Shucho (1634–1680) when he was the highest-ranking monk and head of Rinnoji Temple. The garden is designed to resemble the shores of Lake Biwa near Kyoto, where the prince had spent much of his childhood. The garden has been renowned for its beauty since it was built, and many famous people have visited it. Ulysses S. Grant, eighteenth president of the United States, visited in 1871. The garden is particularly beautiful when the maple leaves turn color in autumn.

The Shoyoen Garden is designed so that the visitor can enjoy all of Nikko's natural beauty in one place. The garden's design incorporates the natural beauty of Mt. Nantai in the distance, and the stones that are used throughout the garden were collected from the mountains and rivers of Nikko.