

Noike Park

Noike Park, opened to the public in 1873, was one of the first three public parks in Japan, along with Ueno Park in Tokyo and Arashiyama Park in Kyoto.

For many years before the area became a park, Noike was the site of a sacred shrine dedicated to a water deity. The shrine remains an important aspect of the park. At the entrance to the park, there is a *torii* (shrine gate) flanked by two giant cedar trees.

The pond in Noike Park is fed by the clear waters of the area's volcanic springs. An area with volcanic rock aquifers, pure spring water wells up to form ponds and other freshwater environments such as here at Noike. Noike is fed by two separate springs, one to the left and one to the right of the area, to form a unique freshwater habitat. Noike naturally remains at around 12–13°C throughout the year. Its water is 6–7°C cooler than that of the surrounding lowland areas, due to the park's relatively high altitude on the Kuju Plateau.