

Golden Pond

The pond at the center of the lower garden is known as Golden Pond (Ogonchi). It is also commonly referred to as a “heart character pond” (*shinji-ike*) owing to the likeness of its four sections taken together to the shape of the Japanese character for “heart” (*shin*). Walking around the garden, or around the “heart,” is said to cleanse both body and mind.

The first part of Golden Pond that the visitor encounters features two straight lines of rocks, which are said to resemble a fleet of ships moored at night. The final destination of these vessels is held to be Mt. Horai, a legendary place where great treasure and the elixir of life can be found.