

The Seat of Meditation

A little further along the path to the west of Shitoan can be found a small enclosure of rocks known as the Seat of Meditation (*zazen-seki*). Here, Zen practitioners, including shoguns, sat and meditated. Muso Soseki (1275–1351) also meditated here, and it is from this spot that he is said to have overseen the creation of the gardens and issued instructions to his assistants.

The spring water that gathers here is used for symbolic purification before meditation. The rock arrangement is believed to be the prototype for the *tsukubai* stone wash basins that are traditionally placed at the entrances to tea houses or tea rooms.