

## **Toju-en**

Toju-en dates back to 1931 and strives to make bonsai accessible. Japan's very first bonsai school opened at Toju-en in 1969 and is still going strong today. The roughly 2,000 trees at Toju-en are of the evergreen *shohaku* variety (such as junipers and Japanese white pine), which are strong and sturdy enough for beginners to own and cultivate. The desire to open up the world of bonsai extends internationally as well: Toju-en exports trees overseas. "Bonsai is a labor of love," comments second-generation owner Mr. Hamano, and he hopes that customers will listen to the "voice" of their bonsai trees and nurture them for future generations.