

Famous Bonsai Not to Be Missed

Among the factors that contribute to a bonsai's prestige and worth, three factors are key: the age of the tree; its shape or design; and its history and provenance. Of course, different trees resonate with different viewers and for various reasons, and discovering personal preferences is part of the pleasure of bonsai appreciation. Nevertheless, the Museum recommends visitors to be sure to visit its most famous bonsai, described below.

Goyomatsu (Japanese white pine) named "Chiyo no Matsu"

One of the largest bonsai in the collection, Chiyo no Matsu stands at 1.6 meters tall and has a width of 1.8 meters. A vast landscape is conveyed by branches that reach out along the horizon, while the shape of the tree as a whole suggests the billowing shape of the clouds of the Japanese midsummer.

Ezo matsu (Ezo spruce) named "Todoroki"

Taken from the forests of Japan's northernmost island Hokkaido (formerly known as Ezo) roughly a century ago, this oldest tree in the collection is around 1,000 years of age. It is believed to be one of the oldest spruce bonsai in the world.

Karin (Chinese quince)

The grandiose appearance of this roughly 150-year-old bonsai suggests the master of a magnificent forest, and possesses all the dignity of a fully-grown tree. Its impeccable lineage includes ownership by several notable figures, among them former prime minister Kishi Nobusuke (1896–1987). This tree was named the very first *kicho bonsai* (Bonsai of Cultural Importance) by the Japanese Bonsai Association in the 1980s.