

Keishin-en Garden

Keishin-en Garden was created in the late Edo period (1603–1867), directly to the south of Kyakuden Hall. It is both a strolling garden with a pond at the center (*chisen*), and a viewing (*kansho*) garden, that is intended to be admired, rather than strolled through. The design incorporates stone lanterns and an artificial hill (*tsukiyama*) with a five-story stone pagoda and a pine tree shaped to resemble the wings of a crane. In the pond, one island is shaped like a turtle. Cranes and turtles both represent longevity and happiness in Japan.

The pond itself is shaped like the Chinese character for heart (*kokoro*). A small waterfall tumbles into the back of the pond, fed from the nearby Ritsugawa River. Nearby, a number of rocks are positioned to represent Mount Horai, a mythical mountain island where Buddhism's Eight Immortals dwell.

The garden is home to an estimated 120 different species of plants that are particularly spectacular in autumn when the maple leaves change color. Priests from the temple use the garden's flora in ikebana flower arrangements and as decorations for tea ceremony gatherings.