

## Japanese Black Pine Trees

There are about 2,000 Japanese black pine trees (*Pinus thunbergii*) in the Garden Plaza area in front of the Imperial Palace. The sculptural forms of the trees have made them among the most photographed aspects of the garden.

The Garden Plaza area was once an inlet of Edo (Tokyo) Bay, but in 1593 was filled in to expand the enormous Edo Castle complex. Before its construction, the coastline would have been covered with black pines. The planting of the copse seen here today began in 1888. They continue to thrive with the painstaking pruning and care of a team of dedicated gardeners. This vast green space is a favorite spot for relaxing outdoors in the center of Tokyo.