

North Garden

The garden on the north side of the Shinden Hall is intended to promote a sense of calm. This is achieved with elements such as a spring-fed pond in the shape of the character 心 (*kokoro*, meaning heart or mind), a waterfall, and an artificial hill covered with lush foliage. On the hill stands the Hitotei teahouse, the name referring to the waterfall spray one must pass through to reach the teahouse.

The garden is thought to date to the late 1600s, but it was almost completely lost in a fire in 1887 that destroyed the Goten Palace. It was rebuilt in its current form in 1914 under the supervision of garden architect Ogawa Jihei VII (1860–1933), who took the surrounding structures into account in the placement of various features. This is particularly evident when viewing the garden from the Shinden. From here, the Hitotei is aligned with the Central Gate and Five-Story Pagoda outside the garden, forming a line of successively taller buildings. The gate and pagoda were originally painted bright red, contributing to a landscape that remains striking today.