

## **Gardens of Lake Hamana**

The “Amazing Garden Lake Hamana” project consists of seven gardens in and around the Lake Hamana area of Hamamatsu City. The sites include a variety of flower parks and other natural spaces, as well as a castle surrounded by cherry trees, a Buddhist temple and a Shinto shrine, and a tea house offering matcha and *sencha* green tea. These examples of traditional architecture provide attractive settings for enjoying spring blossoms, summer greenery, and autumn foliage.

Flower cultivation flourishes and flowers have always been highly regarded in Hamamatsu, as demonstrated by the scale of international exhibitions hosted there. One such event was Pacific Flora 2004, a celebration of flowers and botany-related cultures from around the world. These exhibitions inspired the Amazing Garden Lake Hamana initiative, which commenced in 2019 with the aim of promoting tourism to local gardens by designating the Lake Hamana area and its surroundings one amazing garden.

The Amazing Garden initiative embodies the vision of Tsukamoto Konami, Japan’s first female certified tree doctor and former director of Ashikaga Flower Park in Tochigi Prefecture. Tsukamoto is renowned in Japan for her efforts, and her vision for the Amazing Garden initiative is one of integration between all seven sites to showcase the seasonal beauty of Hamamatsu in its many colors.