

Bokakaku Pavilion

The Bokakaku Pavilion stands directly in front of Shoseien's Onrindo Hall, which is the central building of the garden and houses a Buddhist altar. The two structures hark back to the time when the garden was the retirement residence of head priests of Higashi Honganji Temple. Their placement is intended to evoke the layout of a monastery, with Bokakaku representing the main gate and the Onrindo the main hall.

The two-story pavilion functions as a teahouse. Guests wait on benches to the sides before they are invited to ascend one of the steep ladder-like staircases to the tatami-mat room on the second floor for the tea gathering. The room's windows can be opened, allowing guests to look out over the cherry trees that grow all around the pavilion while enjoying their tea. Bokakaku means "pavilion by the flowers," and it is surrounded by a variety of early- to late-blooming species of cherry that flower throughout spring, bathing the area in hues of pink and white.