

## Matsudaira-go Enchi Park

Matsudaira-go Enchi Park is a five-acre expanse of greenery next to the main road in the village of Matsudaira, along the way from Matsudaira Toshogu Shrine to Kogetsuin Temple. The park was designed to represent the local landscape as it might have looked during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries when the Matsudaira family controlled these lands. Seasonal flowers bloom in the park from spring to autumn. There are cherry blossoms in March and April, iris and hydrangea in early summer, and bush clover (*hagi*) in autumn, when the red and yellow foliage also adds to the colorful scene. A small stream winds through the park into a small pond. Fireflies can sometimes be seen around the stream on evenings in June, and the pond provides a habitat for scarlet dwarf dragonflies.

A path from the park's western entrance leads to a bronze statue of Matsudaira Chikauji (d. 1394?), the founder of the Matsudaira family. Seven stone pillars stand along either side of the path. Together with the statue, they represent the eight generations of the Matsudaira family that preceded Tokugawa Ieyasu (1543–1616), the ninth head of the family who went on to establish the Tokugawa family and the shogunate that ruled Japan from 1603 to 1867.

Closer to the eastern entrance is Tenka Jaya, a restaurant that serves basic meals like udon and soba noodles as well as sweets. Their *tenkamochi* are three small mochi rice cakes on a skewer that represent the “three great unifiers” of Japan: Oda Nobunaga (1534–1582), Toyotomi Hideyoshi (1537–1598), and Tokugawa Ieyasu. The covering of sweet red bean paste on the Ieyasu mochi cake indicates both his connection to Matsudaira-go and that he was the only one of the three who managed to establish an enduring government.