



DISTINCTIVE ELEMENTS OF THE JAPANESE GARDEN

CHARLOTTE PARTRIDGE ORDWAY JAPANESE GARDEN

In 1979, the City of Nagasaki presented Saint Paul with the plans for this garden as a gift honoring the Sister City relationship between Nagasaki and Saint Paul. Established in 1955, this was the first Sister City relationship between Asian and American cities.

Mr. Masami Matsuda, a renowned landscape gardener in Nagasaki, created the garden in the chisen-kaiyu (strolling pond) style. The garden is intended to be experienced from many angles, rather than from a single vantage point. Alive with diverse and beautiful elements, the garden was created to delight all senses.

Although Japanese gardeners painstakingly consider the placement of every element, the garden is representative of a natural landscape. Mr. Matsuda credits nature itself with this garden's creation.

THE GARDEN EVOLVES

Under Mr. Matsuda's supervision in 1991, the garden was extensively renovated and a Tea House and Tea Garden were added. He designed the Tea House in the traditional sukiya style characterized by elegance and simplicity. The Tea House is constructed from natural materials including native cedar and hardwoods creating a humble retreat. The Tea Garden is characterized by low plantings and luxuriant moss which combine to produce a tranquil setting and encourage a feeling of calm prior to the tea ceremony.

Rocks

Rocks, the "bones of the earth," are a valued feature in most Japanese gardens. They punctuate the space while reminding visitors of other elements of nature—towering mountains, weathered shorelines, and meandering streams. Rocks also lend a sense of stability and age to the garden. Japanese gardeners consider the garden's topography and the characteristics of the rocks themselves before placing them. They determine each rock's "face" and position it in the garden accordingly. To make a rock appear natural in the landscape, large sections of it may need to be buried. The Japanese Garden has more than 400 tons of igneous and metaphoric rock from the Canadian Shield geologic formation, much of which was hauled from a quarry in Apple Valley, Minnesota.

Plants

The plants and trees in the Charlotte Partridge Ordway Japanese Garden are hardy in Minnesota and planted according to Japanese garden design principles. Gardeners use special techniques to prune and shape the pines and shrubs to compliment and soften rock compositions or evoke images of hilltops and billowing clouds. This deliberate blending of adaptive plants and Japanese design aesthetics serves as a reminder of the enduring friendship between the Sister Cities of Saint Paul and Nagasaki.

Water

Japanese gardens have long featured ponds, streams, and waterfalls in their designs representing the abounding cascading streams in the mountainous islands of Japan. In a Japanese garden, water can represent a vast ocean, a meandering stream, or a rushing mountain waterfall. Water in the garden is valued for its transient effects; the music of a waterfall is the heart of this garden. A "viewing stone" at the edge of the pond provides guests with a central vantage point. Dry riverbeds, defined by water-smooth stones, evoke water when none is present and suggest the power of a rushing stream. The dry riverbed in this garden also serves to channel runoff following a heavy rain.

Paths

Garden Pathways often express artful design. Some paths are made of irregularly shaped, flat-topped stones and are arranged to suggest natural trails. Other use cut slabs of granite, discarded millstones, and other materials. Paths not only direct visitors through the garden, they also help set their pace. Irregular stone paths, such as those used in the Tea Garden, require that guests watch their steps and induce in a thoughtful frame of mind. Regular paths lead to a series of beautiful vistas and important elements within the garden.

Lanterns

Stone lanterns in Japan were originally found in Buddhist temples. Later, tea masters used discarded temple lanterns to express the modesty of tea houses, while providing light for early morning or evening ceremonies. Lanterns were eventually used in the design of other types of gardens as well. Three of the lanterns in the Charlotte Partridge Ordway Japanese Garden were originally part of the 1904 World's Fair in Saint Louis. They were brought to Minnesota for a Japanese Garden located on what is now Como Park Golf Course. The City of Nagasaki provided the wide-roofed "snow-viewing" lantern, located near the bridge, as a gift to the citizens of Saint Paul. The reddish lantern at the entrance to the garden was created from stone salvaged from a 100-year-old park drinking fountain.



THE ORDWAY GARDENS

The Marjorie McNeely Conservatory curates one of the top ten public Bonsai collections in the United States. The collection includes trees styled by nationally renowned Bonsai masters Mas Imazumi and John Naka.

Bonsai is a Japanese art form descended from Chinese penjing which dates back over 2,000 years. Bonsai is not a particular type of tree but rather an aesthetic style that utilizes living plants as a sculptural medium. Almost any species of tree or woody shrub can be trained as a Bonsai, but plants with small, simple leaf forms are preferable.

The techniques used are basic but require a dedicated commitment to continual care and attention to detail. Bonsai are not trained to represent a scale model of full size trees, but rather, they are styled to create refined, sculptural works that reflect natural forms.

Bonsai continue to grow throughout their lifetimes, but every aspect of their development is carefully managed. The plants are kept small by pruning and pinching new growth resulting in a unique, living sculpture.

The word Bonsai (pronounced 'Bone Sigh') comes from the Japanese pronunciation of the Chinese word 'pen-tsai' meaning tree in a tray.



SISTER CITIES SHARING A VISION

"It is my hope that this Japanese garden will be a bridge between our two cities and countries, and a place of cultural exchange, understanding and peace.

I truly feel that each tree, every blade of grass, and each and every stone, is a spiritual link to my heart."

— *Masami Matsuda*
Master Landscape Gardener



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The family of Mrs. John G. Ordway generously donated funds to build the Charlotte Partridge Ordway Japanese Garden. The City of Saint Paul and Como Friends are grateful to the Ordway family, private donors, and members of many organizations in Saint Paul and Nagasaki who made important contributions to the installation and subsequent restoration of the Charlotte Partridge Ordway Japanese Garden. From the beginning, volunteers and staff have dedicated countless hours to nurturing and maintaining the garden.

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THE ORDWAY GARDENS
A JAPANESE COLLECTION

