

The Seventh Cup of Tea

Here and Now: The Perfect Moment for Tea

A tea garden is a quiet, meditative space designed for gathering over a cup of tea. As guests walk through the garden, they gradually find calm, turn inward, and begin to feel unique, unrepeatably sensations even before stepping into the tea hut. Each tea garden is one of a kind, reflecting the creator's mindset and influencing its guests through its layout and atmosphere.

The aesthetics of Zen tea gardens are shaped by the Japanese principle of *fūryū*, the art of letting things in life flow naturally, like the wind moving across the landscape.

Understanding this principle means being in complete harmony with nature, refraining from altering its course. The principle of *wabi* is also present, finding beauty in simplicity and often in well-worn, modest elements that not everyone may notice or appreciate.

Japanese Tea Garden

Our Japanese Garden, designed by Kamila Skálová, draws inspiration from traditional tea gardens. Typically, a tea garden is divided into two sections connected by a path of carefully placed *tobi-ishi* stones, inviting mindful walking in harmony with one's breath. Zen gardens often evoke mountain landscapes with streams and ponds, while the tea hut suggests a humble hermitage or a meditation room within a temple. The greenery is left in its natural beauty, unshaped by pruning, and the carefully moistened moss adds a fresh, vibrant quality to the garden.

How to Perfectly Tidy a Tea Garden

Tea master Sen No Rikyu once asked his son to sweep the garden paths. His son did so meticulously, removing every leaf. Still unsatisfied, Rikyu asked him to sweep once more, even more carefully. When his son finished, Rikyu shook a tree, letting a few leaves fall gently onto the path. Only then, with this touch of natural imperfection, was he truly pleased; now, everything was perfect.

Water is an essential part of the garden. A basin is used for both physical and symbolic purification.

The stone lantern, originally used during nighttime tea ceremonies, now symbolizes the light of wisdom and enlightenment.

The tea hut includes a small room with a niche for the tea master. Inside the room is a *tokonoma*, a small alcove that holds a calligraphy scroll and a flower.

Calligraphy in the alcove is often chosen to reflect the season, as well as the temperament or state of mind of the tea master, sometimes featuring a poem or a single expressive word.

The flower in the alcove is known as *chabana*. It may consist of a few naturally arranged plants, a single blossom, or a small branch.