

# North America's Best Japanese Gardens

*Portland Tops the list, Anderson close behind.*

There are more than 300 public Japanese gardens in North America. A few dozen are noteworthy. Most are not. In 1999 JOJG launched a survey to try to identify those top gardens. Our primary goal was to help JOJG readers decide which ones to visit. Another goal was to recognize outstanding gardens for their superb efforts.

Here is the latest update to that survey. In 2013 JOJG distributed a questionnaire to 34 sukiya living specialists. The letter posed one question: "What are the highest-quality public Japanese gardens located in North America?" We encouraged participants to apply their own definition of the word "quality," and we encouraged them to avoid selecting gardens merely on the basis of size or fame.

The latest survey results look familiar, but larger big-city gardens seem to be rising in the rankings. As in the past, participants favored well-maintained gardens. In the past they also tended to favor gardens displaying intimate traits such as subtleness, moderation, and human scale, but popular tastes seem to be shifting slightly toward the huge stroll-around-the-pond -style gardens that are tourist draws in many major cities.

The race for the top two positions was extremely close. In the end, the *Portland Japanese Garden* nosed out *Anderson Gardens* as North America's highest-quality garden. Their total scores were almost identical, and comparing them has become a "Coke or Pepsi?" -type debate for many professionals. A few pros, however, ranked both gardens much lower and instead selected smaller, more intimate spaces such as *Shofuso* in Philadelphia.

Four new gardens appeared on the list. The top-ranked newcomer was *Cheekwood* in Nashville, Tennessee. Other "rising stars" include *Como Park* in Minnesota and the *Chicago Botanic Garden*.

米国に300以上ある日本庭園のうち34名の専門家によって選ばれた上位25ヶ所を掲載しました。第一位はポートランドジャパニーズガーデン。

JACCC in Los Angeles suffered the largest drop, falling completely out of the top 25. The *Museum of Fine Arts, Boston*, also fell completely out of the top 25. MFA was once a rising star, but it ruined its once fine image by treating its garden as routine landscaping rather than a work of art.



Portland JN Garden

RANK / NAME	(Former Rank)	LOCATION
1. Portland Japanese Garden	(2)	Portland, OR
2. Anderson Gardens	(1)	Rockford, IL
3. Shofuso	(3)	Philadelphia, PA
4. UBC's Nitobe Garden	(4)	Vancouver, BC
5. Garvan Woodland Gardens	(8)	Hot Springs, AR
6. The Bloedel Reserve	(6)	Bainbridge Island, WA
7. Seattle Japanese Garden	(5)	Seattle, WA
8. Carleton College	(7)	Northfield, MN
9. Missouri Botanical Garden	(10)	St. Louis, MO
10. Tillman Water Plant	(12)	Van Nuys, CA
11. The Morikami Museum	(14)	Delray Beach, FL
12. Como Park Conservatory	(19)	St. Paul, MN
13. Cheekwood	(--)	Nashville, TN
14. Osmosis Spa	(17)	Sonoma County, CA
15. Chicago Botanic Garden	(--)	Chicago, IL
16. Asticou Garden	(11)	Mr. Desert Island, ME
17. San Mateo Japanese Garden	(9)	San Mateo, CA
18. San Diego Tech Center	(--)	San Diego, CA
19. Golden Door Spa	(23)	Escondido, CA
20. The Nishinomiya Garden	(16)	Spokane, WA
21. Lethbridge Japanese Garden	(22)	Lethbridge, AB
22. Montreal Botanic Garden	(24)	Montreal, QC
23. Amherst College	(15)	Amherst, MA
24. Brooklyn Botanic Garden	(18)	Brooklyn, NY
25. Aspen Institute	(--)	Aspen, CO
(--)	(13)	Los Angeles, CA
(--)	(20)	Chanhassen, MN
(--)	(21)	Boston, MA
(--)	(25)	Middletown, CT