



JAPANESE GARDENING



CHARLES CHESHIRE

Special photography by Alex Ramsay

LORENZ BOOKS

This edition is published by Lorenz Books
an imprint of Anness Publishing Ltd
info@anness.com

www.lorenzbooks.com www.annesspublishing.com

If you like the images in this book and would like to
investigate using them for publishing, promotions or
advertising, please visit our website
www.practicalpictures.com for more information.

Publisher: Joanna Lorenz
Editorial Director: Helen Sudell
Project Editor: Emma Clegg
Designers: Simon Dalry and Mike Morley
Jacket design: Nigel Partridge
Additional materials and equipment text:
Jenny Hardy
Illustrators: Anna Laffin and Anna Koska
Special photography (locations and steps):
Alex Ramsay
Special photography (materials and equipment):
Peter Anderson
Production Controller: Ben Worley

© Anness Publishing Ltd 2020

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be
reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted
in any way or by any means, electronic, mechanical,
photocopying, recording or otherwise, without the prior
written permission of the copyright holder.

A CIP catalogue record for this book is available from
the British Library.

PUBLISHER'S NOTE

Although the advice and information in this book are
believed to be accurate and true at the time of going
to press, neither the author nor the publisher can
accept any legal responsibility or liability for any errors
or omissions that may have been made nor for any
inaccuracies nor for any loss, harm or injury that
comes about from following instructions or advice in
this book.

Page 1: The dry garden at Ryōgoku-in, Kyoto.
Page 2: The Japanese maple in autumn.
Page 3: From left: Syokko-ho-en, near Kyoto: digging a
moat in a courtyard garden; stepping stone path, water
basin, lantern and Japanese gate in a tea garden.
Page 4: From top: The Golden Pavilion, Kyoto; a pair of
sand cones in the Shinto shrine of Kamigano, Kyoto; a
stroll garden path leading to a gateway. Scarecrows and
pruning shears; a shelter in the stroll garden of Karaku-in
in Okayama.
Page 5: From top: Boxwood clipped into rounded shapes;
placing rocks as part of a dry waterfall; raked gravel
patterns; placing elements in a mixed stone path; the
moon bridge at the Huntington Botanical Gardens in Los
Angeles.



Contents

Introduction	6
A HISTORY OF JAPANESE GARDENING	8
The evolution of the garden	10
Waves of Chinese influence	12
Modern & Western influences	16
INSPIRATIONS	18
The natural landscape	20
The influence of Zen	26
Architectural elements	30
Understanding the Japanese garden	34
Translating the style	37
CLASSIC GARDEN STYLES	40
Pond gardens	42
Dry gardens	46
Tea gardens	50
Stroll gardens	54
Courtyard gardens	58
NATURAL MATERIALS	62
Rocks & boulders	64
Choosing rocks & boulders	68
Moving rocks & boulders	70
Paving & stepping stones	72
Cobbles, pebbles & piddlestones	74
Sand, grit, gravel & slate	76
Dry water	80
Making a dry waterfall & stream	82
Plants & planting	84
Topiary	88
WATER FEATURES	92
Streams, waterfalls & ponds	94
Preparing the watercourse	98
Building a meandering stream	100

Pond liners, pumps & filters	102
Creating edges for a pond	104
Tsubuhai & shishi-odoshi	106
Making a sui-inkutsu	111
Constructing a reservoir	112

CREATIVE CONSTRUCTS

Paths	116
Path styles	120
Tea houses & other buildings	122
Boundaries	124
Making a tea-path gate	130
Bridges	132
Making a yatsushashi bridge	134
Decorative artefacts	136
Lighting	138

CREATING A GARDEN

Making a plan	142
The pond garden style	146
Garden plan: a pond garden	148
How to make a pond garden	150
Making a pond with a soil liner	152
Making a pine island	154
Building a waterfall	156
The dry garden style	158
Garden plan: a dry garden	160
How to make a dry garden	162
Positioning rocks	164
Placing edging stones	166
Improving drainage	168
The tea garden style	170
Garden plan: a tea garden	172
How to make a tea garden	174
Arranging a tsubuhai	176
Setting a lantern	178
Laying stepping stones	180



The stroll garden style	182
Garden plan: a stroll garden	184
How to make a stroll garden	186
Making a pond with a flexible liner	188
Making a gravel path	190
Making a wisteria arbour	192
The courtyard garden style	194
Garden plan: a courtyard garden	196
How to make a courtyard garden	198
Building a bamboo screen fence	200
Laying a paving-stone path	202
Building a mound	204

PLANT DIRECTORY

How plants are named	206
How to use the plant directory	208
Spring trees & shrubs	209
Spring blossom	210
Late spring & summer trees, shrubs & climbers	212
Summer flowers	215
Autumn foliage	218
Autumn flowers	220
Evergreen shrubs	223
Evergreen trees & conifers	225
Ferns	229
Bamboo	233
Palms	234
Other plants of interest	235
Care & maintenance	236
Glossary	238
Useful addresses	246
Index	248
Acknowledgements	250
Plant hardiness	255

Introduction

"Visualize the famous landscapes of our country and come to understand their most interesting points. Recreate the essence of these scenes in the garden, but do so interpretatively, not strictly."

From the *Sakuteki*, the earliest known book of Japanese garden design, written in the 11th century.



Left: Water plays a crucial role in Japanese gardens. This waterfall at St Mewgan, in Cornwall, England, is designed to look naturally formed. The source of the water is well hidden amongst the lush foliage of bamboo.

intimate relationship with the history of Japan. Even a modest knowledge of the country's relationship with China and Buddhism, will go a long way towards helping us to understand the art of the Japanese garden, and thereby enabling us to reproduce it.

It was the dynamic, creative energies of Zen monks and painters of the medieval period that set the stage for the development of the exceptional art form that is the Japanese garden. These ancient gardens, especially those constructed of stone and sand (some of which survive even from the 13th century), have become the benchmark of abstract garden art throughout the world.

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF PLANTS

Plants are fundamental to all but a few Japanese gardens. Most of the plants used possess symbolic significance, including the twisted pine, scattered cherry blossom, pendulous wisteria, the lotus ('purity rising out of the mud') and fiery Japanese maple. These plants are always placed with restraint and care, and gardeners celebrate the seasons through their fleeting beauty. Everything in the garden – plants, rocks, lanterns, water – serves a role in the creation of a unified, harmonious and poetic picture. This is an art in which the whole is far greater than the sum of its parts.

Japanese garden design, in particular, exerts a powerful and mystical grip. Steeped in significance and refinement, the Japanese garden has enormous appeal, especially for garden designers seeking both a deeper meaning and a more contemporary edge for their own gardens.

THE STYLES OF JAPANESE GARDENS

Japanese landscape gardens can be broken down into five main styles – pond gardens, dry gardens, tea gardens, stroll gardens and courtyard gardens – and each of these has a long and

The Japanese garden has captured the imagination of Western gardeners ever since they discovered its delights in the 19th century. Japan, isolated from the rest of the world from the 1630s to over 200 years later, had been nurturing extraordinary and unique styles of architecture, poetry, painting, flower arranging and gardening. When artists, architects and designers in the West were finally exposed to these Japanese arts in the late 19th century, they were astonished by what they found.

The strong influence of Japanese arts is still being felt today. Of these arts,

Right: A patchwork of different species of moss in the dappled sunshine at Sazcen-in, Ohara, near Kyoto. The soft velvet carpets of moss under Japanese cedars (*Cryptomeria*) produce a magical effect.

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF WATER AND ROCKS

Water is one of the most important elements in the Japanese garden. It can often be found in the form of a pond, a stream or a simple small water basin. Even when water is absent, its presence is often suggested through areas of sand and gravel, or dry streams. Rocks are equally important and are regarded as possessing a kind of spiritual and living essence that needs to be respected if they are to be placed successfully.

A real understanding of the two elements of rock and water, through careful observation in nature, will help to form a good basis for creating Japanese-style gardens. The more the natural law of these elements is understood, the easier it becomes to treat them in abstract ways.

It is this abstraction of nature that is most difficult to reproduce successfully. But don't be put off: it is perfectly possible to assimilate some of the simple beauty of Japanese gardens without delving into the often esoteric meaning behind them.



HOW TO USE THIS BOOK

This book shows you how to create a beautiful and individual Japanese garden. The first two chapters take you through the history of the gardening style, and the environmental and cultural elements that have inspired and influenced it, in particular Zen, and attitudes and beliefs concerning the natural world. This section also describes ways in which the principles have been interpreted over the years, and suggests how you might continue

Left: Statues of the Buddha are not common in Japanese gardens, but this one makes up part of an enticing collection assembled in a forest of bamboo by the early 20th-century artist Hashimoto Kansetsu.



this tradition by adapting them. The five main garden styles (pond, dry, tea, stroll and courtyard) are then outlined in their traditional forms so you can think about which ones most appeal. Chapters on Natural Materials and Creative Constructs introduce essential elements, supported by practical explanations of how to achieve them, and a section on Water Features shows how to plan all the water-based items. Creating a Garden looks at each style more closely, with each one presenting a detailed garden plan and showing how to combine three key practical elements to create part of a garden. The plant directory gives a selection of plants, followed by advice on care and maintenance.