The Waka poetry garden, Rikugien

This strolling, mountain and pond-style garden was created based on the theme of Waka poetry in the 15th year of the Genroku Period (1702) by the shogun,Tokugawa Tsunayoshi's trusted confidante Yanagisawa Yoshiyasu.

This garden is a typical example of the famous gardens of Edo Period. In the Meiji Period, this garden became a second residence of the founder of Mitsubishi, Iwasaki Yataro. Later, in the 13th year of Showa (1938), the Iwasaki family donated this garden to the City of Tokyo, and in Showa 28 (1953) it was designated as a special site of exceptional beauty and an important cultural asset.

④Garyu-seki

This name refers to the rock half submerged in the pond that it appears to be a sleeping dragon, hence the name, "Sleeping Dragon Rock."

⑤Horaijima

This is a small island in the pond made of stones, created based on a form of mysticism aimed at attaining supernatural power.

The stone path marker on the Hill of Instruction

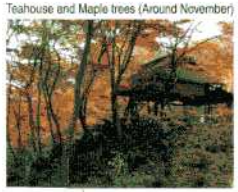
⑥Sekichu

There were originally 88 stone markers that indicated views of the garden that were of special beauty or interest (The "88 Views of Rikugien"). At the present time, only 32 of the markers still exist.

⑦Takimi-no-chaya

The Teahouse for Watching The Dragon is next to an arbor on a stream that runs through a gorge. The water falls down through the rocks, sending off a spray. From the arbor, there are good views of the Sleeping Dragon Rock and other scenes and one can hear the sound of the water.

Teahouse and Maple trees (Around November)



⑧Tsutsuji-no-chaya

This teahouse was built using the wood of old trees during the Meiji Period. It managed to survive the war and at the present time is still a site of great attraction because of its rare and beautiful form that can be seen at its best when maples turn red in the fall.

③Imo-yama/Se-yama

These two garden hills are located on Naka-no-shima, an island in the pond. In former times, vernacular terms for "man" and "woman" were "se" and "imo" and the two hills are reminiscent of Izanagi and Izanami of Japan's ancient origin myth.

②Deshio-no-minato

This is one name for the shore of the pond. The site is rich in good views of the different highlights of the garden. On the left is Horaijima. On the opposite side, the shore of the pond called Fukiage-hama is visible.

⑨Fujishiro-toge

The tallest hill in the garden is 35m high. The summit of this hill is called Fujimi-yama ("Fuji-view peak"). The views from the top of this hill are truly wonderful. The name for the hill is taken from a mountain pass of the same name in Kishu (present day Wakayama Prefecture).

⑩Sasakani-no-michi

Ancient people referred to spiders as "sasakani." The path is very narrow and therefore likened to a strand of a spider's nest.

⑪Togetsukyo

This stone bridge was named after a famous Waka poem about the view of the moon moving across the sky with the cry of a crane in a rice paddy heard nearby. The bridge is using two large slabs of stone.

①Naitei-Daimon

This gate was created so that it is possible to enter the garden from a central point. There is a large weeping cherry tree(Prunns pendulaf. Pendula) in the open space close by.