
Cultural Village

Designed by world renowned architect [Kengo Kuma](#), who is also spearheading the National Stadium for the 2020 Tokyo Olympics, the Garden's new Cultural Village not only provides additional space to accommodate its rapid visitor growth, but also - and most importantly - enhances its ability to immerse visitors in traditional Japanese arts and culture.

The \$33.5 million expansion represents Kuma's first public commission in the U.S. He worked together with the Portland Japanese Garden's Curator, third generation master garden craftsman [Sadafumi Uchiyama](#), to design the new Cultural Village in honor of the singular experience of each visitor and to ensure the serenity is protected for future generations.

With this expansion, Kuma and Uchiyama reused and optimized existing land - adding 3.4 acres of usable space to the 9.1 acre property - to create an immersive, fluid journey from beginning to end. To protect the peaceful environment, the Village emulates Japan's *monzenmachi*, the gate-front towns that surround sacred shrines and temples. The Tateuchi Courtyard is a gathering space for seasonal activities, performances and demonstrations to educate and enrich the visitor experience. New buildings include:

- The *Jordan Schnitzer Japanese Arts Learning Center* is home to the Tanabe Gallery, with year-round exhibitions, the Yanai Family multi-purpose classroom, the Cathy Rudd Cultural Corner showcasing demonstrations and music, the Garden Gift Shop, and the Vollum Library, a comprehensive resource on Japanese gardening and related arts. Additionally, the Learning Center will be home to art installations, including a piece from Jun Kaneko.
- A new *Garden House*, where an expanded offering of horticulture workshops will take place.
- *Umami Café by Ajinomoto* - At the heart of the village, visitors will find the authentic, intimate *Umami Café*, which provides a place to rest and refresh while experiencing Japanese tradition firsthand. The café features teas from Jugetsudo, whose flagship tea cafés in Tokyo and Paris were also designed by Kuma. Traditional sweets and savory snacks are also available. With a design reminiscent of Kyoto's Kiyomizu-dera temple, the Umami Café's unique location floats over the hillside at the east side of the Village and provides scenic views of the area's surrounding beauty.

Master Craftsmanship

One of the standout structures is the authentic, medieval [Castle Wall](#) found the west end of the Portland Japanese Garden's new Cultural Village. The building process was led by Suminori Awata, a 15th-generation Japanese master stonemason. The wall measures 185 feet long and 18.5 feet high and was built using traditional hand tools and techniques. In total, the wall has 500 tons of Baker Blue granite from a quarry outside Baker City, Oregon.

[For more Photos of the Cultural Village & Umami Café, Click here](#)

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LEED Gold: A Commitment to Sustainability

Environmental responsibility is one of the foundations of the Portland Japanese Garden. The organization is so deeply tied to nature, it is important that as the Garden grows, it does so with special consideration for sustainability. Each new LEED-certified structure exists harmoniously with nature and serves as a mere frame from which to view its exquisite beauty, leaving the Garden as the centerpiece.

- With the recent expansion, the Garden added 24 geothermal wells beneath the Cultural Village Plaza. The wells were bored 300 feet down into the earth to take advantage of the moderate temperatures in the ground, boosting energy efficiency and reducing the operational costs of heating and cooling the buildings.
- To ease pressure put on the city sewer system by rainwater runoff, Garden Curator Sadafumi Uchiyama designed a stone creek to run from the top of the hill to the entrance. Dry in the summer, the creek will channel runoff during the rainy season. Water will go into the hidden holding tank under the parking lot where it will slowly release into the sewer.

Other measures taken with the new Cultural Village expansion include:

Facilitating healthier indoor air quality

- Low-emitting, non-toxic Green guard carpet
- Low VOC paints, coatings, adhesives & sealants
- Operable windows and walls in all occupied spaces that allow for user-controlled ventilation

Responsibly sourced building materials

- Regionally sourced materials like Port Orford Cedar and Baker Blue granite
- Materials with recycled content
- Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) certified wood

Emphasis on efficiency and energy savings

- High-efficiency fixtures that use less water without sacrificing performance
- High-efficiency LED lighting including occupancy and daylight sensor controls
- High-performance low-e coated thermal insulated glazing units
- High-efficiency water heating equipment
- Low-flow fixtures for hot water savings
- High-performance continuous building insulation
- Highly efficient hydronic radiant heating in the Garden House and Village House floors

The buildings' designs incorporate large sliding window walls that allow access to light and fresh air. Kuma designed living roofs atop the structures, which absorbs rainwater and prevents water run-off. In addition, the designers have introduced hundreds of plants, shrubs and trees to create a beautiful, green environment with reduced erosion, better soil health and improved air quality. The Garden has begun the long-term task of removing the invasive ivy along the walking path. Eventually, the ivy will be replaced with native plants and intentional landscaping.

This Green approach has been the North Star guiding the Cultural Crossing project and will ensure the Garden can be enjoyed by all for generations to come. In the words of Kengo Kuma: "Ecologically responsible and environmentally conscious design is very important in our approach."

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