



A Classical Chinese Garden at the National Arboretum

Serenity, Inside the Beltway

As a government town, Washington, DC, has made politics into a lifestyle and networking into an art form. But the drama of pundits and power-plays can be exhausting, leaving residents and visitors thirsting for a rejuvenating escape.

Fortunately, visitors to the National Arboretum will soon find a world where another art form—traditional Chinese garden design—defines the priorities; relaxation, reflection, and respect for the natural world. This centuries-old tradition combines five essential elements—structures, rock, water, plants and flowers, and art—to create a tranquil atmosphere nourishing to all who come to stroll, sit, reflect, and unwind.

American and Chinese designers are teaming up to create an original layout incorporating the varied elements typical of Jiangnan-style gardens. Modeled after the havens of Chinese scholars, the garden will inspire all visitors seeking a new way of appreciating the relationship between humans and nature.

An Oasis in the City

The Classical Chinese Garden will be located on the grounds of the US National Arboretum, a 446-acre “living museum” for the cultivation, display, and study of a vast variety of plants.


A Gift Across Cultures

The 12-acre garden is a gift from the Chinese people to the American people, its creation representing the ideal of cooperation between cultures. The People’s Republic of China will import all materials and skilled craftsmen from China, while the United States provides, prepares, and maintains the site.

A Piece of China in DC

Once completed in 2008, the Chinese Garden at the National Arboretum will be the finest example of a classical Chinese garden in the United States.





U.S. National Arboretum
3501 New York Avenue, NE
Washington, DC 20002

Celebrating Chinese Culture

Seasonal events at the Chinese Garden will include:

- Penjing demonstrations
- Kite-flying festivals
- Lantern festivals
- Calligraphy demonstrations
- Ching-ming festivals
- Mid-Autumn festivals
- Traditional Chinese music and dance



Ancient Design, Legendary Beauty, Great Tranquility

Designed in the style of gardens from the Jiangnan region, the site will simulate classical paintings and landscapes, portraying scenes legendary for their beauty. Key elements of the garden include:

- The Four Seasons Garden, designed after the private quarters where the master engaged in contemplation and scholarship. This compound displays the importance of bamboo in traditional Chinese culture.
- The Mountain House, a reception area where the scholar entertained visitors and displayed Ming and Qing furnishings, paintings, and calligraphy to exhibit a refined knowledge of culture and the arts.
- The Boat House, located on a 1.7-acre lake, offers visitors a place to sip tea and admire garden views with the feeling of being in a boat over the water.
- Five Pavilions, including magnificent views of the garden at the Whispering Pavilion; a display of tree peonies at the Peony Pavilion; and Chinese goldfish swimming at the Fragrance Pavilion.
- The White Pagoda, a sacred Tibetan structure.



A Wealth of Benefits

The new Chinese Garden will:

- Promote cross-cultural understanding
- Display Chinese culture and traditional art forms
- Serve as a venue for meetings and special events
- Support the mission of the National Arboretum by preserving valuable Chinese flora

