



Chinese Garden Fact Sheet

Overview

Inspired by the Huntington's collection of plants from China, the Garden of Flowing Fragrance (Liu Fan Yuan) combines familiar plants with many features that are unique to the southern, Suzhou-style Chinese gardens. Composed much like a painting, the garden has views framed by paths and structures. Also like a Chinese painting, the garden is layered with meanings, including literary references. The structures have evocative names and often are enhanced with short poems in elegant calligraphy. Pavilions and terraces provide places to enjoy views, pursue leisurely activities, and celebrate with friends and family.

History

The intention to build a Chinese garden was considered for many years. It became a reality when overseer Peter Pannaker bequeathed \$10 million for construction and endowment of a Chinese Scholar Garden, based on the architectural traditions of southern China. With the addition of another \$8.3 million, construction began in the summer of 2004 and phase one of the garden opened in February 2008. Phase two, which will expand the garden to its full 12 acres, is currently being planned.

Collections

One principle of Chinese garden design is the incorporation of existing mature plants into the garden. These plants include:

- Oaks – COAST LIVE OAK (*Quercus agrifolia*), SOUTHERN LIVE OAK (*Q. virginiana*), SAWTOOTH OAK (*Q. acutissima*)
- Pines – CANARY ISLAND PINE (*Pinus canariensis*), TORREY PINE (*P. torreyana*)
- COST REDWOOD (*Sequoia sempervirens*)
- Cedars – DEODAR CEDAR (*Cedrus deodar*), INCENSE CEDAR (*Calocedrus decurrens*)
- BLACK BAMBOO (*Phyllostachys nigra*)
- CAMELLIAS (cultivars of *Camellia japonica*)

This garden is designed to emphasize seasonal change. Plants added to show spring bloom and fall color include:

- More than 10 species and cultivars of spring-flowering *Prunus* – JAPANESE FLOWERING APRICOT or JAPANESE FLOWERING PLUM (cultivars of *P. mume*), FLOWERING PEACHES and FRUITING PEACHES (cultivars of *P. persica*), PINK CLOUD FLOWERING CHERRY (*P. serrulata* 'Pink Cloud'), WEEPING FLOWERING CHERRY (*P. subhirtella* 'Snow Fountains'), FLOWERING PEAR (*P. kawakamii*)
- LYNWOOD GOLD FORSYTHIA (*Forsythia intermedia* 'Lynwood Gold') bears yellow flowers in the early spring.

- JAPANESE MAPLE (*Acer palmatum*) have lovely red leaves in the fall.
- CHINESE FLAME TREE (*Koelreuteria bipinnata*) have yellow flowers in summer and yellow leaves in the fall.
- SWEET GUM (*Liquidambar styraciflua*) varieties have yellow, orange, red, and wine-colored leaves in the fall.

Some plants were included for their symbolic references:

- BANANA TREE (*Musa* species) in the courtyard is the symbol of scholarship.
- CHINESE LOTUS (*Nelumbo nucifera*) represents beauty rising above the muddy soil of its birth.
- JAPANESE BLACK PINE (*Pinus thunbergii*) represents endurance and fortitude by remaining green through winter.

Finally, since this is the Garden of Flowing Fragrance, some plants added for scent include:

- SWEET OLIVE (*Osmanthus fragrans*)
- CHINESE LOTUS (*Nelumbo nucifera*)
- CAMPHOR TREE (*Cinnamomum camphora*)
- GARDENIA (*Gardenia* species)
- SAUCER MAGNOLIA (*Magnolia x soulangeana*)

Programs

- Lectures are offered on both popular and scholarly topics.
- Culture and arts series include continuing education classes and family workshops. Subjects include brush painting, flower arranging, calligraphy, *Tai Chi*, and cooking, among other topics.
- Ask Me and group tour docents interpret the garden for visitors. A cell phone tour is also available.