

# Nitobe

## MEMORIAL GARDEN



- 1 Nitobe Memorial Gate
- 2 Alarm rock
- 3 Nitobe lantern (Father figure)
- 4 Stepping stones & waterfall
- 5 Snow viewing lantern (Mother figure)
- 6 Memorial stone
- 7 77-log bridge
- 8 7-storey pagoda
- 9 Maiden lantern
- 10 11-plank flat bridge (early marriage)
- 11 Nitobe family crest lantern
- 12 Way of teenage rebellion
- 13 Yatsu-Hashi bridge & iris bed
- 14 Marriage lantern
- 15 Family viewing pavilion
- 16 Tea House & Zen garden
- 17 Remembering lantern & waiting pavilion

### Seasonal Highlights

- April - Spring cherry blossom festival
- July - Irises blooming
- October - Maple leaves

The Nitobe Memorial Garden is considered to be one of the best traditional Japanese gardens in North America and among the top five outside Japan. Nestled in two acres of native BC forest, this Shinto-style stroll garden includes a rare, authentic Zen garden and ceremonial Tea House.

This tranquil oasis is a memorial garden created to enshrine the spirit of the Japanese scholar, educator and diplomat Dr. Inazo Nitobe (1862-1933). Set in BC and designed by Professor Mori from Chiba University, Japan, the garden realizes Dr. Nitobe's dream of "becoming a bridge across the Pacific" to foster inter-cultural understanding.

A Japanese garden may be interpreted in many different ways and the design of Nitobe can be seen to represent a span of time such as a day, a week, a year or a lifetime: beginning, growing, changing and ending.

As Nitobe is a Zen garden meticulously designed down to every leaf and stone, interpretive signage would detract from the garden's minimalist purpose: "To have nothing is to have everything" (Zen Koan).

As a result, we have created this self-guided tour to help you follow one of the garden's many interpretations, a symbolic 'journey through life'. It can be completed in as little as 20 minutes, but we recommend at least 45 minutes to fully appreciate its nuances.

A Japanese garden is not only a place of beauty, but a place where the soul can find nourishment.

### Use of Symbolism



**Representation of Time** - The garden may be interpreted as a symbolic 'journey through life' from infancy, childhood, teenage years, marriage, adulthood and on to spiritual growth.



**Stone Lanterns** - An important feature in Japanese gardens, lanterns symbolize light dispelling darkness. Often placed at the junction of paths, they indicate choices in life. For many, the circular design of the Nitobe and marriage lanterns makes walking around them like saying a prayer.



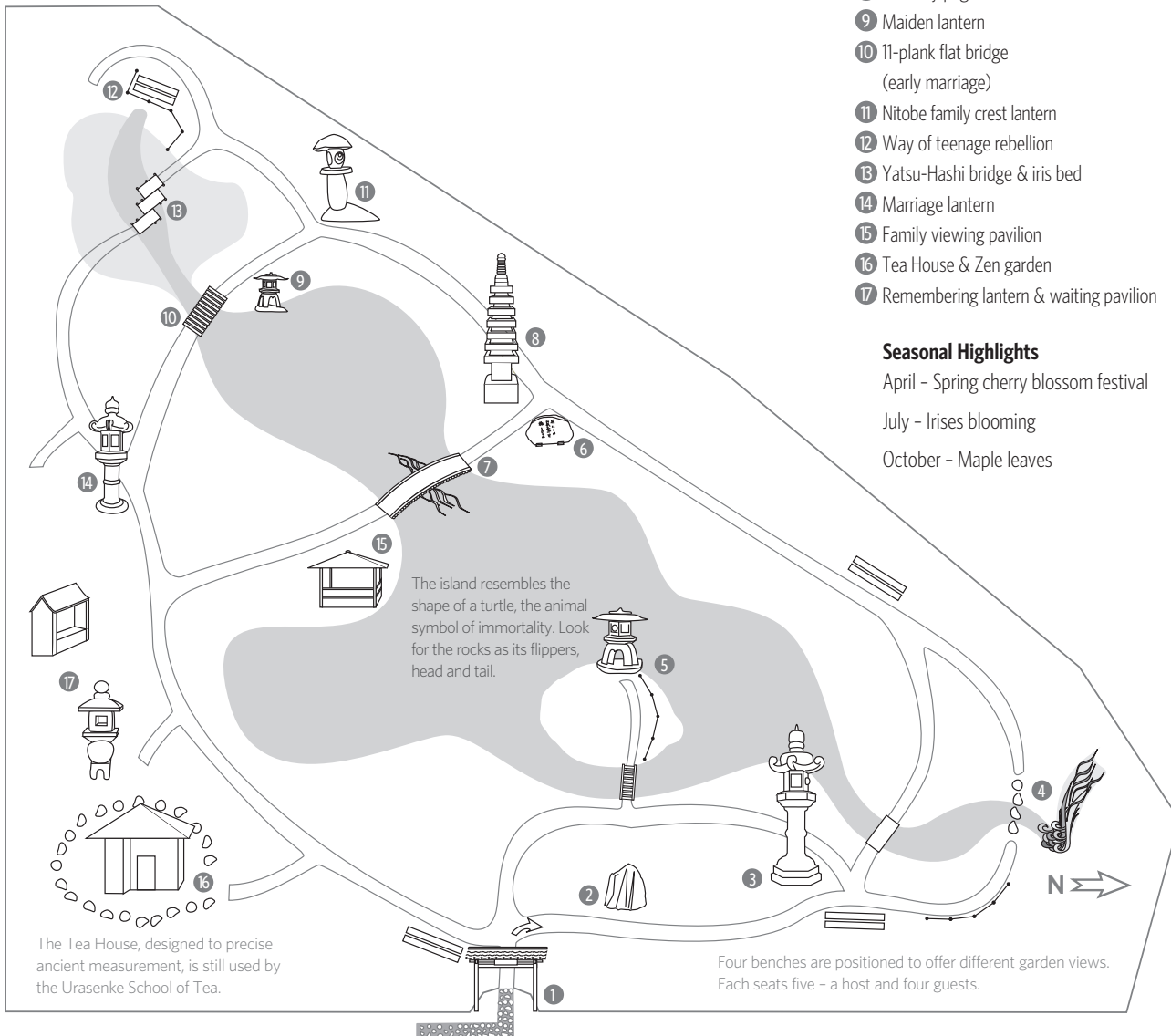
**Bridges** - Water crossings reflect different life stages such as marriage, spiritual growth, etc.



**Trees** - Native BC western red cedars and western hemlocks are pruned Tokyo style to accentuate the delicate structures of trunks and branches.



**Waterfalls** - Illustrating the male and female traits of nature in the Shinto religion, the strength and masculinity of the waterfall contrasts with the calm, feminine stream.



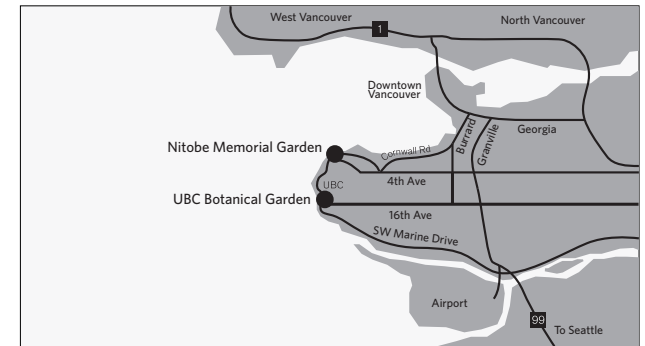
Please do not remove or damage the plants, please stay on the paths at all times. No food or beverages, no pets, no bicycles, no smoking.



Nitobe is a memorial garden dedicated to the spirit of Dr. Nitobe. It is based on a counter-clockwise design that follows the way of the moon, rather than the sun. As you enter, begin to your right. Please remember the garden is a living museum for all to enjoy.

- 1 Beginning before the Nitobe Memorial Gate, the irregular sensory stone path helps awaken your senses as you enter the garden.
- 2 Winding through BC native forest, the path's gentle landscape of soft moss and low rocks suggest the calm femininity of creation. From this, an upright alarm rock alerts you to something important ahead.
- 3 The large Nitobe lantern (Kasuga) was dedicated to Dr. Nitobe's memory. A lotus blossom, a symbol of paradise and purity, is carved into the pedestal's base and cosmic Zodiac signs encircle the top. In our walk of life, this lantern may be interpreted as the Father figure and the two paths beyond as alternate passages through childhood.
- 4 Left lies a short, easy path and to the right, a steeper way represents the potential perils of infancy. Look up and listen to the waterfall (taki-ishi-gimi) as you cross the stream's stepping stones.
- 5 The paths rejoin beside the lake. Visible on the island is the snow viewing lantern (yukimi doro) which may represent the Mother figure.
- 6 The memorial stone before the bridge expresses Dr. Nitobe's lifelong wish to be a "bridge across the ocean".

- 7 The 77-log bridge is a curved, traditional earth bridge built with logs and filled with soil and stones.
  - 8 To the right, the 7-storey pagoda adds an exotic beauty to aid peaceful meditation. The Buddha carving suggests a teenager's search for life's meaning.
  - 9 Under the maples is the maiden lantern, a miniature of the island's snow viewing lantern.
  - 10 The 11-plank flat bridge is easily crossed in a hurry and leads directly to the marriage lantern, suggesting marriage early in life.
  - 11 On your right, the Nitobe family crest lantern (shizen doro) is made of local stone from Morioka (Dr. Nitobe's birth place). It bears the moon and stars familiar to many Japanese as the Nitobe family crest.
  - 12 At the junction, left leads to the Yatsu-Hashi bridge and right leads to a dead-end which may represent the way of teenage rebellion. The area around the bench appears disorderly, but it offers a clear view of the garden and the 'journey of life' thus far.
  - 13 Retracing your steps, the Yatsu-Hashi bridge provides a view of the iris bed. The area is flooded every July, giving the delicate illusion the irises grow on water.
  - 14 The marriage lantern ahead has lotus flowers and Zodiac signs similar to that of the Nitobe lantern.
  - 15 The family viewing pavilion (azuma-ya) is built with imported Japanese cypress wood (hinoki). The inverted rice bowl on the roof may symbolize the feeding of the family.
  - 16 The leaning cherry tree invites you to enter the Tea House and Zen garden. Sensory stones slow you in preparation for the tea ceremony, a rigorous spiritual discipline training body and mind.
  - 17 Near the waiting pavilion and remembering lantern there is a stone basin (tsukubai) that is used for ritual cleansing before the tea ceremony.
- Leaving the garden, the final bench affords an opportunity to sit and contemplate a different view of the garden and the completion of your symbolic journey.



**Directions** - 15 minute drive from Vancouver, UBC gate 4, parking in Fraser River Parkade. Bus #4, 10, 25, 41, 42, 49 or 99 to UBC, 10 minute walk from UBC transit loop or take C20 UBC community shuttle from UBC bus loop.

**Free Nitobe guided tours** - call 604.822.4208, two weeks notice required

**Groups, UBC Class Visits, Weddings** - group tours call 604.822.6038. Two weeks notice required, group rates available for 10 or more

**Membership** - unlimited entry to Nitobe Memorial Garden and UBC Botanical Garden, discounts at Shop in the Garden, events and classes. For information call 604.822.4208

**Shop in the Garden** - gifts, books, garden supplies, plants - UBC Botanical Garden entrance 5 minute drive south, 6804 SW Marine Drive: 604.822.4529

**Hortline** - free gardening advice available Tuesday and Wednesday 12pm to 3pm: 604.822.5858

**Online horticulture forum** - [ubcbotanicalgarden.org/forums](http://ubcbotanicalgarden.org/forums)

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