



Sukiya Inspired Summer Camp On The Sebago Lake Basin

Prepared for: Japanese Cultural Center
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Overview

The Japanese Cultural Center has commissioned a summer camp in western Maine as part of their cultural outreach program. The purpose of this project is to create a summer camp experience which emphasizes traditional Japanese values and connections to nature.

Existing Site

The selected site is located directly on the shore of the Sebago Lake Basin which provides campers with a much quieter and peaceful experience. There is also an unobstructed north facing view and connection to the water.

The lot is wooded on three sides with a mix of pine and maple trees.



Design Intention

Arguably the most mature style of Japanese architecture, the **Sukiya style**, will serve as the backbone for this project. The Sukiya style addresses the overuse of paint and stains for wood finishes by embracing naturally occurring growth features such as knots, kinks, and scars while retaining grain colors and textures.

This project proposes structure each adjoined by the tea house **engawas**. This common corridor not only connects the two masses but also works as an axis corridor across the site, connecting the quiet Western gardens with the busy camp activities to the East. The building buffers the two opposing activities by reducing camp activity noise and sight lines. The primary South to North axis links the bunk room building with the semi-traditional tea and indoor activity spaces. This axis also works to frame the view directly onto the Sebago Lake Basin, reinforcing the connections to nature out past the sliding shoji screens. The northern view over the water provides no direct glare to the interior spaces

The Bunk room is subdivided by shoji screens into three spaces for privacy with four campers each. The bunk beds are sized for traditional tatami mats with private shoji screens for campers to allow cool summer breezes to cross ventilate the space or simply for individual views to the outdoors.

The combined tea room/activity room is oversized to bring all 12 campers together and out of the elements for semi-formal tea gatherings, indoor games, group learning or for campers to simply relax in. Other traditional elements in this space include a **Tokonoma alcove**, tatami mat

derived floor arrangements and a **Chigaidana shelf system**. The Northern wall contains four movable full height shoji screens to frame the impressive view to the water. The site itself will be reworked with lush gardens, water features and bridges strategically placed along walking paths to encourage peaceful contemplation.

Summary

A successful camp layout rests on the development of additional bunkhouses, tea/activity rooms, garden spaces, cafeteria, and visitors center which connect to each other through various walking paths. Moving past the architecture children will experience and tradition and beauty of the Japanese culture while building lifelong friendships in the process.



Cover image by: LimeGreen

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