Shinjuku-Gyoen 新宿御苑

Shinjuku Gyoen marks the land which once belonged to the Naitō family. Naitō Kiyonari was an infamous but important vassal of Tokugawa Ieyasu. Because he was loyal to the Tokugawa Shogunate, he got this land in Edo, which lay between all important trade routes. It covered 58.3ha.

Over time, the land of the Naitō family throughout the country grew too big. That’s why Naitō Kiyomas gave a little bit of Shinjuku Gyoen back to the Shogunate.

Around 1870, the remaining Naitō land of 31ha plus neighboring land, which once belonged to the Naitōs as well, was used to build an experimental garden. Here, western style agriculture was promoted. First experiments with foreign fruits and vegetables were made, as well as experiments in stock farming and sericulture. The trees which were first grown in Shinjuku Gyoen are, for example, tulip trees, himalayan cedar, plane trees and bald cypresses.