

# Dinner Party for Eight

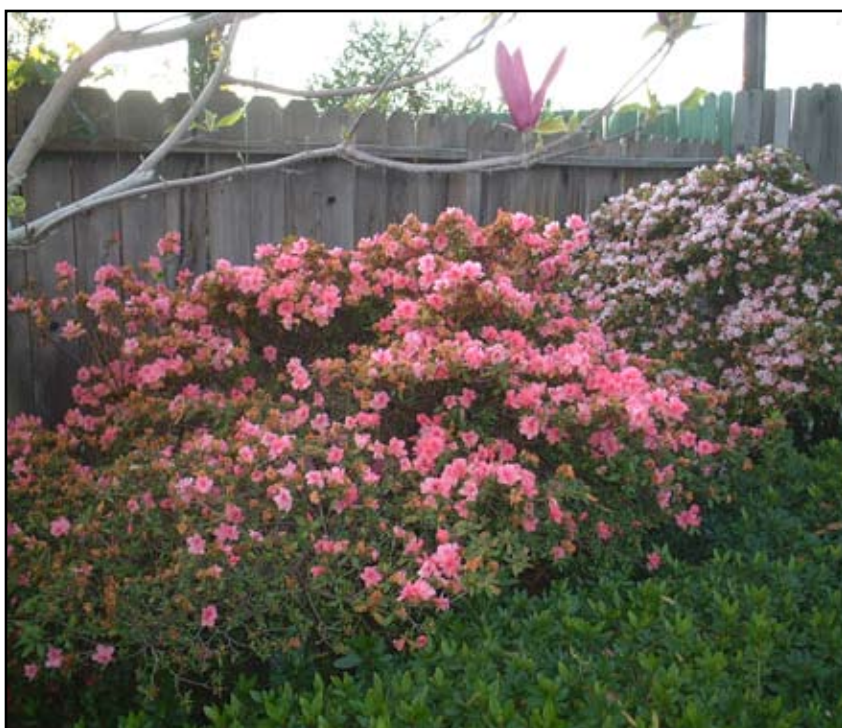


If I had been taking the pictures, I probably wouldn't have thought of snapping the above photo, a dining table set up with *sashimi* plates and *sake* containers, a table still empty of guests. But 80-year-old Masataka Usami saw the setting as worthy of a shot, and the photo does show some beautiful things that Yoshi has collected over the decades. After we sat down, Masa

positioned his tripod camera, set the timer and rushed to my side at the end of the table. Flash! Seven of us were caught, but Ken Asano had scooted a little too far away and was missed. From left to right are Mitsuhiro Yamamoto, Haruko Nakamura, Yoshi and Jackson Sellers, Masa and his Fusako, and Ken's wife Harue. Okay, now we were ready to eat and drink.







The sun was low and trees were casting shadows, but the men gathered on the patio with their drinks as the women – all except Fusako who was manning Masa's camera – bustled around inside, doing what women do at dinner time. Real men don't cook or set tables. They just eat when the food magically appears. Jackson, in suspenders that barely do the job, eats too much. Ken, at right, managed to get into this picture. I am flanked by Mitsuhiro and Masa. It was Masa who shot the sprawling azalea clumps at left. The lonely magnolia blossom above them looks like a huge butterfly.

**Text by JACKSON SELLERS**  
**Photos by MASA USAMI**  
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This was a couple of days after Yoshi's 71st birthday and the Asanos had brought a cake for the occasion. Below, Fusako hands Yoshi a cake-cutter, while Ken and Mitsuhiro look on. Then I slipped into the library for an after-dinner smoke next to the fireplace, over which hangs a *USS Colahan* painting that once hung in the warship's wardroom. Yoshi won't let me smoke anywhere else in the house. The women joined me. From L to R are Fusako, Yoshi, Haruko and Harue.

