

## 10 Unusual Playgrounds From Around the World

by [David K. Israel](#) · September 14, 2009 · 8:30 AM

Playgrounds have come a long way since the early days of hot, steel slides and open-backed infant swings. Safety is a big issue on today's playgrounds, but so is imagination and ingenuity. Take a look at some of the many unusually cool **designs** popping up around the world. And if you have a favorite we left off the list (which could easily have been twice as long), be sure to tell us about it in the comments.

### 1. Nishi-Rokugo – Tokyo, Japan



In Japanese, Nishi-Rokugo means Tire Park. The Kawasaki plants are located not far away, so it's possible they donated the 3,000 tires that make up the dinosaurs, monsters, bridges, slides, swings, and all the loose ones there for kids to stack and hop on. But this sand-bottom park is hardly just for kids. Parents can haul tires up specially designed tire steps and tube down wide concrete slides. I can imagine it's the type of place you can spend hours at before you, er, *tire*, of it.

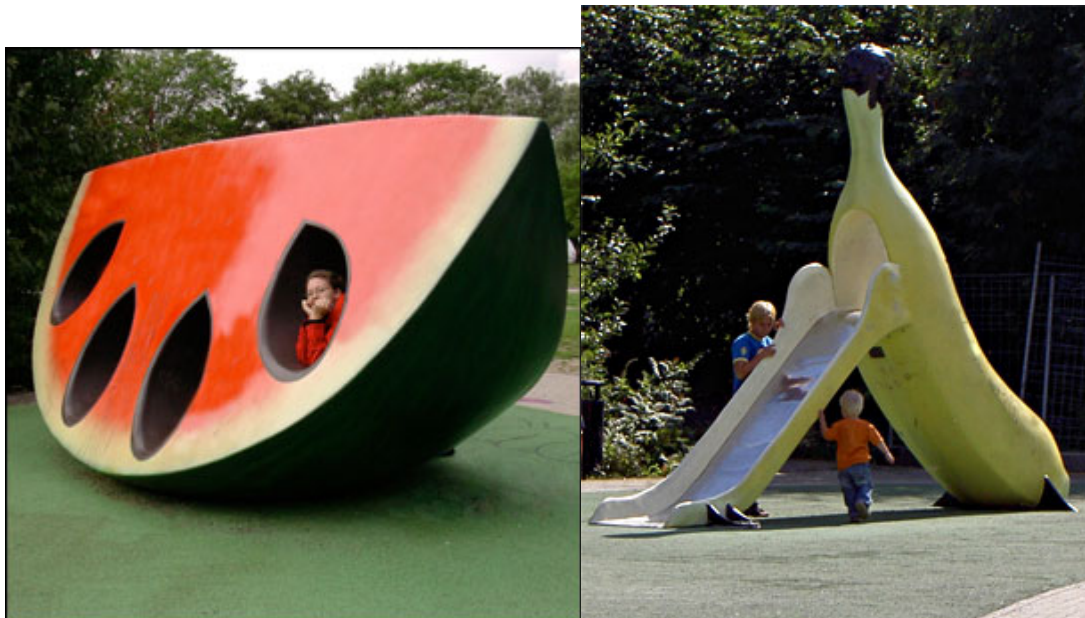


## 2. The Fruit and Scent Playground –Liljeholmen, Sweden

A banana slide, strawberry spinners, a *pair* of cherry swings, an orange see-saw and a watermelon jungle gym are all part of this unusual, small park in the south of Stockholm. It's a great theme because it also teaches kids the importance of fruit over junk food. Reports coming out of the country indicate that the outdoors-loving Swede is on the way out. According to a study by Karolinska university hospital, obesity among seven year olds in Stockholm has increased from 8.5% to 21% over the last fifteen years. What could be better than exercising in fruit as an antidote?







### 3. Clemyjontri Park – Fairfax County, Virginia



Not just the name is unusual at Clemyjontri Park in Fairfax County, Virginia. This place is one of the few playgrounds in the world where children with disabilities can play side-by-side those without. The entire park is equipped with ramps for wheelchairs and the ground surfaces are specially designed with a non-slip material. The park is named for Adele Lebowitz's (a major donor) four children: Carolyn (CL), Emily (EMY), John (Jon), and Petrina (Tri). Mrs. Lebowitz and her husband were also sponsors of a local children's television show, The Pick Temple Show, in the 1950s. The star of that show, a clown named Bozo, was played by Willard Scott. Bozo, as you might know, would later morph into Ronald McDonald.



#### 4. Preussen Park – Berlin, Germany



It may be the only playground in the world created specifically for seniors. In fact, anyone under 16 is not allowed inside Berlin's Pruessen Park, nicknamed the "Playground for Grown-Ups." The equipment is specifically designed for people over five feet tall and caters to Germany's fastest growing age demographic: seniors. The idea, obviously, is to encourage them to get out and exercise more.



## 5. Zabeel Technology Park – Dubai



Perhaps the first playground in the world with a technology theme, Dubai's Zabeel Technology Park has two zones featuring futuristic technology and **alternative energy** exhibits, a series of high tech interactive displays, and a maze modeled on the solar system.





## 6. Takino Hillside Park – Sapporo-shi, Hokkaido, Japan

The Children's Playground in the Takino Hillside Park in Japan borrows ideas and images from nature. Varied lighting and sound conditions create a unique sensory experience for kids, unlike anything else on this list. Check out the cool net play **tool** in the rainbow nest dome. You can see how a lot of the park is built into, and under the hill.



## 7. St. Kilda Adventure Playground – Adelaide, Australia



St Kilda Adventure Playground is one of Australia's best known parks and covers 4 hectares along the beautiful South Australian seafront. The park was opened in 1982 and recent upgrades include a wooden castle, a small maze, and a submarine, nicknamed "The Yellow Submarine." But the park's biggest attraction is the beached pirate shipwreck, which is especially popular with dolphins and other sea wildlife.

## 8. Teardrop Park – New York City, NY



Located between residential buildings in Battery Park City, Teardrop Park is unlike anything else in NYC. Built for a whopping \$17 million, the park features prominent rock outcroppings, geologic formations, a secret path, a bluestone ice wall, a humongous, almost dangerous looking slide, sandboxes, water play areas, a reading space with rock seats, and places to rock hop. Best of all, because it's not so easy to find, Teardrop Park is a real insiders secret. (Shhhhh.)





## 9. Yerba Gardens – San Francisco, California



It may sound like an unsafe setting, but the rooftop at Yerba Gardens in San Francisco is home to one of the most elaborate playgrounds ever constructed. Aside from the ice-skating rink, bowling center and the 130,000 square feet of open space to play in, the playground includes a beautiful 103-year-old hand carved carousel. The Zeum carousel was constructed in 1906 but could not be installed in San Francisco as originally planned because of earthquake issues. It was eventually housed at Luna Park in Seattle, where it was the only piece of equipment to survive a horrific 1911 fire. The city of San Francisco bought the carousel from a collector in 1998 and restored it to its original condition. It now serves at the centerpiece in Yerba Gardens





#### 10. Playground – Boadilla del Monte, Spain



Spanish architects Eduardo Navadijos and Csaba Tarsoly designed this stunning modern playground with the intention of giving children inspiration to pursue their dreams in an airy and cool **environment**. I've never been to Madrid, a mere 30 minutes drive from Boadilla del Monte, but when I do finally get there, this playground is my first stop.

