Guide to Engyoji Temple Located on Mt.Shosha.

Engyoji Temple was founded about 1000 years ago (in A.D.966) by Shoku, a holy Buddhist priest, who received special spiritual enlightenment from Monju, the God of Wisdom and Intellect. It was on Hakusan, a part of Mt.Shosha, that Monju informed Shoku that anyone who climbed this mountain would be purified both in body and spirit.

This belief soon spread and many people climbed Mt.Shosha to beg for divine favours. "Pope" Kazan and "Pope" Goshirakawa visited Engyoji Temple to be instructed by Shoku. The Emperor Go-Daigo also stopped there on his way back from Oki Island.

Faith in Mt.Shosha increased and prospered rapidly. In Japan Mt.Hiei is famous as a training center for priests. Mt.Shosha, although not as famous worldwide as Mt.Hiei, did achieve fame as the most important training center for priests in the western area of the Kansai district.

Even today, many people from all over Japan make pilgrimages to this temple year round. The primeval forests of Mt.Shosha have made a very sacred and peaceful atmosphere. Spring and Autumn are especially good seasons for visitors. Spring is famous for the wonderful cherry blossoms and Autumn for the splendid colored leaves of the maples and the other trees.

Eight buildings and seven Buddhist statues are appointed as "Important Cultural Properties".

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DAIKODO 大講堂

This great auditorium was constructed in A.D. 986 at the request of "Pope" Kazan, who named this temple Engyo-ji at that time. The auditorium was once the main building in Mt. Shosha and was famous as a training center for priests. This building is dedicated to the Incarnation of Truth and is an "Important Cultural Property". The tow statues of guardians are also "Important Cultural Properties". The present building was constructed at the beginning of the 16th century but was dismantled and reconstructed in 1968.

JIKIDO 齋堂

Jikido, an "Important Cultural Property" which was constructed in 1174 at the request of "Pope" Gosho-nari to enshrine the God of Wisdom and Intellect. This incomparable, wide, two-storied building is unique for its architectural style. It is said to have been both a priest's training center and a boarding house. It was left unfinished for several hundred years until it was dismantled and reconstructed in 1968. The treasures of this temple are displayed on the second floor.

KONGODO 境極堂

Muramata period. Reconstructed in 1956, an "important Cultural Property".
The Kongo-do was a sub-temple of the Fugen-ji in which Shokou lived. It is said that it was here that Shokou met the Kongosat (Vajrasattva) and was taught a secret way to communicate with the Buddha.

MANIDEN 前殿

Maniden is the main building constructed in A.D. 979. It is dedicated to the Goddess of Mercy. Envisaging a celestial nymph worshiping a cherry tree, Shokou was inspired to carve a statue of the Goddess of Mercy standing on the tree. After that the building was added. Maniden stands halfway up this rocky mountain. Unfortunately, this nearly 1000 years old building was burnt down in 1921. The construction of the present building was finished in 1932. There are 35 temples appointed as pilgrimage sites in Western Japan. The Engyo-ji Temple is the 27th of them. The pilgrims visit Maniden to worship and to receive a stamp indicating that they have visited Engyo-ji Temple. Many important annual events are held at Maniden. The four heavenly guardians of Buddhism are also enshrined here, their figures being classified as "Important Cultural Properties". The principal statue and four guardians figures can be seen only once a year on the 15 of January.

GOHODO 御法堂

Muramata period. Reconstructed in 1559. Gohodo is dedicated to Shou's guardians, who are incarnations of the God Treasure (Wakasabun, the God of Fire, Uten). These guardians' figures are also "Important Cultural Properties".

JOYODO 常行堂

This training hall is dedicated to Amitabha and is an "Important Cultural Property". Ceremonial recitals and graceful dances were performed on the northern stage of this building opposite the great auditorium. The combination of the two differently shaped roofs on this building represent the beauty of the building. The building was remodeled and reconstructed in 1968.

JURYOIN 円登堂

Edo period, Reconstructed in 1688. One of the main sub-temples in Engyo-ji Temple. Records show that Juryoin was visited by the retired Emperor Goshirakawa in 1174 after becoming a Buddhist priest. Juryoin is known as one of the most revered sub-temples in Engyo-ji Temple.

NIHON 仁王門

Edo period, Reconstructed in 1665. Main gate to Engyo-ji Temple. The last point on the east hill approach to the temple. The temple grounds inside the gate are considered sacred.