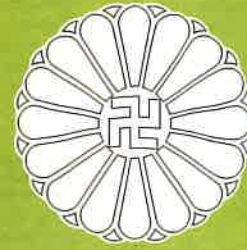


MT.SHOSHA

GUIDE TO ENGYOJI TEMPLE



書寫山



圓教寺



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 Godaigo 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 Engyoji at that time. The auditorium was once the main building on 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 two statues of guardians are also "Important Cultural Properties". The present building was constructed at the beginning of the 15th century but was dismantled and reconstructed in 1956.

JIKIDO ■食堂

Jikido, an "Important Cultural Property" which was constructed in 1174 at the request of "Pope" Gosirakawa 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 1963. The treasures of this temple are displayed on the second floor.

GOHODO ■護法堂

Muromachi period. Reconstructed in 1559. Gohodo is dedicated to Shoku's guardians, who are incarnations of the God Treasure (Wakaten) and the God of Fire (Ototen). These guardians' figures are also "Important Cultural Properties".

JOGYODO ■常行堂

This training hall is dedicated to Amitabha and is an "Important Cultural Property". Ceremonial music 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 harmonic beauty. The building was remodeled and reconstructed in 1965.

山寫書

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JURYOIN ■壽量堂

Edo period, Reconstructed in 1688. One of the main sub-temples in Engyoji 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 Engyoji Temple.

NIOMON ■仁王門

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

KONGODO ■金剛堂

Muromachi period. Reconstructed in 1958, an "Important Cultural Property". The Kongodo was a sub-temple of the Fugen-in in which Shoku lived. It is said that it was here that Shoku met the Kongosatta (Vajrasattva) and was taught a secret way to communicate with the Buddha.

SHORO ■鐘楼

BELL TOWER
Determined, based on its shape and dimensions, to date from the early 14th century (1332), this bell tower is one of the oldest in Japan, and an "Important Cultural Property".

MANIDEN ■摩尼殿

Maniden is the main building constructed in A.D. 970.

It is dedicated to the Goddess of Mercy. Envisaging a celestial nymph worshipping a cherry tree, Shoku 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 33 temples appointed as pilgrimage sites in Western Japan. The Engyoji Temple is

the 27th of them. The pilgrims visit Maniden to worship and to receive a stamp indicating that they have visited Engyoji 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 18 of January.

