

A Brief Guide to Religious Temples in Japan

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Japanese temples – popularity ranking

1. Kiyomizudera (Kyoto)
2. Todaiji Temple (Nara)
3. Kinkakuji (Kyoto)
4. Ginkakuji (Kyoto)
5. Okunoin (Mt Kōya)
6. Hasedera (Kamakura)
7. Sensōji (Asakusa)
8. Kokedera (Kyoto)
9. Daibiutsu (Kamakura)
10. Sanjusangendō (Kyoto)
11. Horyūji Temple (Nara)
12. Osorezan (Mutsu)



Temples you should visit !



1. HORYŪJI TEMPLE (NARA) 607



2. ENRYAKUJI, Mt HIEI (KYOTO) 788



3. EIHEIJI TEMPLE (Fukui 1244)

大 龍





4. TAISEKIJI TEMPLE (Fujinomiya 1290)



5. TOSHOGŪ (Nikkō, 1617)

Some Features of Japanese Religion(s):

- Eclectic and syncretic
- Nature Worship
- Mountains as sacred sites
- Engagement with ancestors
- Worship of heroes
- Importance of funerary rites and memorial rites
- *Genze Riyaku*: practical benefit and immediate gratification
- Protection talismans (*ofuda, omamori*)
- Popularity of pilgrimage

Shikoku Island (1400 kilometer pilgrimage route) 88 temples

Shinto-Buddhist Amalgamation

- 6thC: Buddhism was imported to Japan and has coexisted with Shinto ever since.
- 9th C onwards: Shinto deities became incorporated into the Buddhist pantheon and worshipped as local manifestations of *buddhas* or *bodhisattvas*.
- *Jingūji* (shrine-temples): Buddhist rituals were performed within Shinto shrine premises often by Buddhist clergy.
- 17thC: Buddhism was made state religion as a way to curtail the threat posed by Christian missionaries. Temple affiliation became compulsory (for funerals and memorial rites) and Buddhist priests became part of a state surveillance system.
- Mid 19thC: forced separation of Buddhism and Shinto.
- 1889: Shinto becomes state Shinto.



Pilgrimage in Shikoku



Tsukuba Grand Shrine of America

茨城
県庁
長寿
交番



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茨城県つくば市

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