

Undameshi no Torii, Luck-Testing Gate

Shrine gates, called *torii*, mark the entrance to a sacred space. For this reason, *torii* often stand at the entrance to shrines and other holy places. Unusually, this *torii* has a circular opening at the top. It is said that your wish will be granted if one or more of the three stones that visitors throw at the opening pass through the hole.

This gate was donated to the shrine in 1689 by Kaji Sadayoshi (1612–1698), a samurai retainer of the third Tokugawa shogun, Iemitsu. Tokugawa Iemitsu (1604–1651) had a strong connection with Nikko. He ordered the reconstruction of Nikko Toshogu and is enshrined in the Taiyuin at Rinnoji Temple. After the death of Iemitsu, Kaji Sadayoshi protected the Shogun's grave at the Taiyuin until his own death. He is buried at Nikko.