

Honden, Main Hall, and Haiden, Prayer Hall

The Main Hall of the Taiyūin Mausoleum is an ornate structure covered in intricate carvings, designs, and so much gold leaf that it is also known as “The Golden Pavilion,” or Kinkakuden. It is here that the spirit of Iemitsu is enshrined. The building is constructed in three distinct sections: the outer Prayer Hall, the inner Main Hall, and the passageway connecting the two. This is a style of architecture known as *gongen zukuri*. Typically shrines and temples face towards the auspicious southern direction, but this building faces northeast towards Toshogu to honor Iemitsu’s grandfather, who is buried there. The statue of the Buddhist deity venerated in the Main Hall nevertheless faces south.

Directly in front of the Main Hall is a collection of bronze lanterns donated by the most powerful feudal lords in the country with the exception of one pair, which is a gift from the king of Korea. The six lanterns located closest to the hall were donated by the three cadet branches of the Tokugawa house. Each family donated a pair of lanterns.