

Mt. Aonomine

Fine views of Matoya Bay and the sea beyond can be enjoyed from the hiking trail to Shofukuji Temple on Mt. Aonomine. In the past, monks at Shofukuji Temple lit fires and beacons to help guide ships. This led to the temple being considered a sanctuary for seafarers.

Over the centuries, those who relied on the sea to make their fortunes donated the numerous lanterns found here. This included merchants from far and wide who were dependent on ships navigating Ise-Shima's rocky coastlines. The bell, lanterns, and the inside of the main building's roof bear many names of temple sponsors. The great wooden gate that marks the entrance to the temple features elaborately painted carvings, including dragons and phoenixes, on its ceilings. This lavish decor is testament to the funding received from merchants and rewards a close look.

The current main building was constructed in 1836 and houses a gold, eleven-faced Kannon (Deity of Bodhisattva) statue. To the left side of the main building, there is an open corridor with *ema* (wooden prayer tablets) featuring painted scenes of the sea hung on the walls.