

Jodo-in (Important Cultural Property)

The most sacred site on Mount Hiei, this temple is a mausoleum dedicated to Dengyo Daishi Saicho (767–822), the Great Master who founded the temple complex of Enryakiji on Mount Hiei. Saicho dedicated his entire life to gaining permission from the emperor to ordain monks based on the Mahayana precepts, which held that even laypeople could achieve enlightenment in this life. Saicho passed away in 822.

The Jodo-in temple was built in 854 by Saicho's leading disciple, Jikaku Daishi Ennin. It enshrines the remains of Saicho, and was modeled after the Chikurinji temple in China. A monk called the *jishin* or true watcher has been stationed at the mausoleum ever since the mausoleum was built. The monk must be prepared to serve the spirit of Saicho day and night as though Saicho were still alive, and must observe the strictest rules to maintain purity of mind and body.

Bodhi and sala trees are planted near the mausoleum fence, evoking the paradise of the Gokuraku Pure Land. In Buddhist tradition, the Buddha achieved enlightenment while sitting in meditation beneath a bodhi tree, and passed away lying between two sala trees. The “true watcher” cleans the grounds, performs religious services and diligently pursuing his studies from early morning to evening. He maintains a strict lifestyle following the regulations of “ascetic practice on the mountain” and will not leave Mount Hiei for a period of twelve years.

J: Japanese S: Sanskrit

Jodo-in (Temple of the Pure Land)

Jikaku Daishi Ennin (Great Master of Compassionate Awakening)

Chikurinji (Bamboo Forest Temple)

Mahayana Precepts Hall (Kaidan-in)

Sarasoju (S. Sala tree)

Bodaiju (S. Bodhi tree)

Gokuraku Pure Land (S. Sukhavati)

Ascetic practice on the mountain (J. rozan shugyo)

“True watcher” (J. jishin)