

Site of Shiga-in Monzeki

This site was originally a small village temple for Jien (1155–1255). In 1615, the Emperor Go-Yozei (1571–1617) gave the Hoshoji temple, where many emperors took the tonsure, to Tenkai (1536–1642) who moved it this location. In 1655, Emperor Go-Mizunoo (1596–1680) gifted to the temple the income from a large tract of land and the title “Shiga-in.” From 1656 until 1871, the head of the Enryakuji, the *zasu*, was a member of the imperial family who had taken the tonsure. Since this was their residence, it was often referred to as the Shiga-in Palace.

The palace burned to the ground in November 1878. In 1880, each of the three districts of Mount Hiei donated their best building to be moved here.

The perimeter white wall in the magnificent anozumi stone style encloses a garden designed by Kobori Enshu (1579–1647). The building has illustrated fusuma sliding doors painted by the Kano school artist, Watanabe Ryokei (?–1645). The inner temple hall enshrines the Buddha Yakushi, the Buddha of Healing, flanked by images of Chigi, or Tendai Daishi, the Chinese founder of Tendai Buddhism, and Saicho, who introduced Tendai Buddhism to Japan. Prayers for peace and the security of the nation are offered here daily.

C: Chinese S: Sanskrit

Shiga-in Monzeki (Shiga Temple)

Yakushi (S. Baisajyaguru)

Chigi (C. Zhiyi)

Tendai (C. Tiantai)

Saicho (Dengyo Daishi) “the great master who transmitted the Buddhist teachings”