

Ichi no Torii First Torii Gate

The first torii gate marks the main entrance to Kasuga Taisha Shrine and is designated an Important Cultural Property. Originally constructed during the Heian period (794–1185), the current gate dates to 1638.

This gate lies directly west of Mt. Mikasa, the sacred mountain east of Kasuga Taisha Shrine. To the west of the torii is the Sanjo Road, which once connected Kasuga Taisha Shrine with the center of Heijokyo, the first permanent capital of Japan, which was established in 710.

Torii gates mark the entrance to the sacred space of a Shinto shrine. The first torii gate of Kasuga Taisha Shrine is one of the first torii gates to be painted vermillion. This shape of torii originated at Kasuga Taisha Shrine, hence the name “Kasuga Torii.” It is one of the earliest torii with straight top lintels and slightly tapered pillars.