

## Lantern Dedicated by Keishoin

This famous copper lantern is decorated with the crest of the Tokugawa shoguns, which ruled Japan during the Edo period (1603–1867). It was donated to Kasuga Taisha Shrine by Keishoin (1627–1705), the mother of fifth shogun Tsunayoshi (1646–1709).

Keishoin was born into a low social class, but she became the concubine of Shogun Tokugawa Iemitsu (1604–1651) and gave birth to Iemitsu's heir. As the mother and personal advisor to the shogun, she achieved the highest position possible for a woman of her time. Keishoin became a Buddhist nun after Iemitsu's death, but continued to advise her son, Shogun Tsunayoshi, until her death in 1705.

Her patronage of Kasuga Taisha Shrine included the donation of this lantern and the Keishoden hall, which serve to display the strong connection between Kasuga Taisha Shrine and the Tokugawa shogunate.