

TITLE: Tanigami Nyonindo Hall Site

The Tanigami Nyonindo Hall is unique among the halls that once existed on the Nyonin Michi (Women's Pilgrimage Route). Each of the other seven *nyonindo* halls was located beside a “gate” (*guchi*), or access point, where roads led up to Koyasan from towns and villages at the base of the holy mountain and beyond. However, no road led up from the base of the mountain at this location. Here, a branching path led only down to the Koyasan plateau, making this a shortcut to Koyasan rather than a “gate” connecting the sacred mountain to other parts of Wakayama. The Tanigami Nyonindo Hall was located near the place where the trail begins the upward climb to Mt. Benten, a sacred peak dedicated to the goddess Benzaiten, whom Kobo Daishi (also known as Kukai, 774–835) enshrined there shortly after founding Koyasan.

Like the other halls on the Women's Pilgrimage Route, the Tanigami Nyonindo Hall served as a meeting and lodging place for people walking the pilgrimage route, traveling to and from Koyasan, or transporting goods along the road. Although all people are welcome at Koyasan today, religious restrictions prohibited women from entering the sacred plateau before the Meiji period (1868–1912). Until that time, women often walked this path year-round as a form of religious pilgrimage, staying at these *nyonindo* halls.