

Shoryoin

The Shoryoin is dedicated to the worship of Prince Shotoku (574–622). The name Shoryoin, which means the “temple of the sacred spirit,” suggests it is the repository of his spirit. The Shoryoin was used as living quarters for priests in the Nara period (710–794).

The long and narrow building, aligned on the north to south axis, stands east of the Great Lecture Hall. The southern third of the building was renovated in 1121, but the remaining two thirds retain much of its original appearance as living quarters for priests. The Shoryoin has a statue of Prince Shotoku with five other sculptures. The statue of the Prince is said to date back to 1121. The statues of the Jizo bodhisattva and Nyoirin Kannon date from the beginning and the end of the Heian period (794–1185), respectively.

Many statues, portraits, and other icons of Prince Shotoku were made during the Kamakura period (1185–1333) when worship of the deified Prince Shotoku was at its peak.