

Miedo

Every morning at six o'clock, the monks of Tōji serve a meal of tea, rice, fruit, and seasonal vegetables to a statue of Kūkai (774–835), the founder of Shingon Buddhism, who is known posthumously as Kōbō-Daishi, or the Great Teacher of Buddhist Doctrine. Kūkai lived in the Miedo while he was abbot of Tōji Temple. The morning ceremony is open to anyone, and those in attendance are allowed to touch one of the relics that Kūkai brought back from his studies in China.

The Miedo burned down in 1379 but was completely rebuilt by 1390. It was one of the few buildings at Tōji that survived a subsequent fire in 1486. Its architectural style is more secular than religious, resembling the manor houses of nobles and high-ranking samurai of the early Heian period (794–1185).