

**Refectory Hall (Jikidō)**

The Jikidō is Tōji's refectory hall, where the monks eat and conduct their day-to-day religious training. The original hall survived a millennium of fires, earthquakes, and other dangers. It was even commandeered by the samurai warlord and future shogun Ashikaga Takauji (1305–1358) to use as his headquarters during a battle in 1336.

The hall was unfortunately consumed by fire in 1930, and the present building was completed in 1933. Inside it are the fire-damaged remains of four of the statues from the original hall, which depict Buddhist deities known as the Four Heavenly Kings (Shitennō).

On the twenty-first of each month, scrolls representing the 88 temples of the Shikoku Pilgrimage are hung around the outside of the Jikidō. The temples of the pilgrimage are all associated with the monk Kūkai (774–835), the founder of Shingon Buddhism. A tray of earth collected from the grounds of the corresponding temple is placed on the ground in front of each scroll. Tradition holds that standing on the earth from one of these distant temples confers the same merit as an actual visit, meaning worshippers can complete the pilgrimage spiritually if not physically.