

Tea Garden

About 800 years ago, Myoe planted tea seeds near Kosanji. The temple maintains a small tea plot in honor of its tea heritage, and there is a small harvest every May.

After traveling in China, Zen Buddhist priest Eisai (1141–1215) returned to Japan with tea seeds. He gave some to Myoe, who cultivated them near Kosanji. In those days, tea was used to help monks stay awake during long meditation sessions.

Myoe played a key role in the history of tea in Japan. His tea-growing activities eventually led to large-scale cultivation in Uji, about 30 kilometers southeast of Kosanji. Uji is now one of the most important tea-producing regions of Japan, known for its fertile soil and good weather conditions. Tea growers from Uji visit Kosanji each year on November 8 to present offerings of first-picked tea (*shincha*) from the previous spring.