

Hirakiki Shrine

Hirakiki Shrine is believed to be one of the oldest Shinto shrines in Japan. It appears in historical records from 860 CE. The shrine's location at the foot of Mt. Kaimon has led historians to conclude it may have been connected to mountain worship practices.

Thanks to its position on the coast, since ancient times Hirakiki Shrine has attracted sailors, travelers, and envoys from the Ryukyu Kingdom (present-day Okinawa) who came to pay their respects to the god of navigation enshrined in the main worship hall. The current shrine was reconstructed by the Shimazu family in 1787, an excellent example of Edo-period architecture with bright vermillion accents. The *homotsuden* treasure hall houses a *maki-e* decorated lacquer box with a plum and pine design that has been designated an Important Cultural Property.