

Oshino Hakkai Springs

The Inner Eight Lakes (Uchi Hakkai) were scattered around Mt. Fuji, and the full Eight-Lake Circuit took days to complete. Toward the middle of the nineteenth century, a Fuji-ko confraternity in Kai Province came up with a solution: to “revive” a set of eight springs in Shibokusa, a village conveniently located along the road between Lake Asumiko and Lake Yamanakako, as an alternative Eight-Lake Circuit.

Historical documents suggest that this “revival” actually involved new construction to ensure they would have the required number of springs within an area small enough to complete a circuit in one day. The project was successful, and the Oshino Hakkai remains a popular tourist destination to this day. (The name itself dates only to the 1930s; before this, it was known as Shibokusa no Moto Hakko, or Original Eight Lakes of Shibokusa.)

Nearby Shibokusa Sengen-jinja Shrine is also notable as the home of three wooden statues of deities carved in the fourteenth century. All are sculpted in sitting postures. The largest is female, and the other two are male.