

## **Monochrome Print of Omuro 88-Temple Pilgrimage**

The Omuro 88-Temple Pilgrimage at Ninnaji, a miniature version of the Shikoku 88-Temple Pilgrimage, was depicted in this black-and-white woodblock print immediately after its inauguration in 1827. The print is an advertisement of sorts to promote the Omuro Pilgrimage to the public. It highlights the compact scale of the route, which ascends the steep hills at the rear of the temple collectively called Mt. Joju and can be walked in 2 hours. This is a remarkable feat compared to the Shikoku Pilgrimage, a 1,200-kilometer journey to 88 temples across four prefectures that can take several months to complete. Walking the Omuro Pilgrimage is said to bestow the same blessings as visiting all 88 temples of the Shikoku Pilgrimage, since the paths on Mt. Joju contain sand from the 88 temples in Shikoku.

The practice of building mini-pilgrimages for those unable to walk the entire length of the Shikoku Pilgrimage emerged in the Edo period (1603–1868) when the popularity of the 88-temple journey peaked among the populace. Ninnaji's version was developed by Prince Sainin (1797–1847), the 29th abbot of the temple, in response to requests from his congregation.