

Fudarakusan-ji Temple

Fudarakusan-ji is a Tendai Buddhist temple built facing the Pacific Ocean across a white sandy beach. The temple thus stood between the mountains and the sea. It was known for the practice of Fudaraku-tokai (Crossing the Sea to Fudaraku). More information about this ritual self-martyrdom can be found near the model boat on the opposite side of the courtyard.

The Thousand-Armed Kannon

Fudarakusan-ji houses a wooden statue of its chief enshrined deity, Thousand-Armed Kannon. The statue is around 170 centimeters tall and was sculpted during the Heian period (794–1185). It is only displayed publicly three times a year, during rituals on January 27, May 17, and July 10.

Like most sculptures of this deity, the statue does not have a thousand individually carved arms. It has two hands joined in a gesture of reverence, two forming a mudra (symbolic hand position) of meditation, and twenty more on each side. Each hand in the two groups of forty is said to render aid to beings in twenty-five different worlds, for a total of one thousand. The statue also has three faces, with the most visible one bearing an expression of mild compassion.

Kumano Sansho Omiwa-yashiro Shrine and the Parting Stone

Beside the temple stands Kumano Sansho Omiwa-yashiro, a Shinto shrine formerly known as Hamanomiya-oji. Originally, the temple and shrine formed a single syncretistic religious complex, but they were separated in the late nineteenth century.

Standing on the grounds of the shrine is a stone pillar called the Furiwake-ishi (Parting Stone), which marks the junction of three Kumano Kodo pilgrimage routes.