

Tenjuin Mausoleum

The Tenjuin Mausoleum is the final resting place of the daimyo Mōri Terumoto (1553–1625) and his wife, known both as Seikōin and Lady Minami no Ōkata (1558–1631). “Tenjuin” is Mōri Terumoto’s posthumous name, and the mausoleum sits on the site of his former residence. Terumoto’s loyal retainer Nagai Motofusa (?–1625) is also interred here. Motofusa committed ritual suicide following the death of his lord in 1625.

Terumoto was grandson and heir to the warlord Mōri Motonari (1497–1571). In the sixteenth century, Motonari established the Mōri family as one of the most powerful families in Japan. After the death of Toyotomi Hideyoshi (1537–1598), who had nearly succeeded in unifying Japan’s warring regional leaders, Terumoto was named one of the five regents who would rule Japan until Hideyoshi’s son Hideyori (1593–1615) came of age. When another of the five regents, Tokugawa Ieyasu (1543–1616), began to take power for himself, Terumoto sided with Hideyori. Although Terumoto controlled a large army, at the pivotal Battle of Sekigara (1600) between the forces loyal to Ieyasu and those loyal to Hideyori, Terumoto remained in Osaka Castle, arguably costing Hideyori’s side the victory. As punishment for siding against the victorious Tokugawa, most of Terumoto’s domain holdings were taken away, and the Mōri were forced to move from Hiroshima to Hagi. Terumoto eventually retired and became a monk.

The mausoleum is humble compared to the grandeur of two other Mōri family memorial sites in Hagi, the Daishōin and Tōkōji temples. The Tenjuin Mausoleum once had a temple as well, but it was destroyed in 1869. The graves of Terumoto and his spouse, a pair of five-tier *gorintō* stone towers, are surrounded by a stone fence. A stone torii gate stands at the entrance, and stone lanterns line the 64-meter path to the mausoleum.