

Koshoden Coffered Ceiling Paintings

This lecture hall and seminary was constructed in 2000. The vast, 108-tatami mat lecture hall is used for the final training of Jodo sect Buddhist priests, and is normally closed to the public. On special occasions, visitors are allowed in to view the coffered ceiling with its many colorful paintings. This is one of Zojoji Temple's most cherished treasures. Most of Zojoji's artworks were destroyed in fires or the 1945 air raids. In 1997, Zojoji commissioned artists in Japanese-style painting to create works that would be installed in the ceiling. The theme was "flowers of the four seasons," and 120 of the country's most eminent painters made contributions to this arrangement, creating a new temple treasure for present and future generations.

The *fusuma* sliding doors are decorated with a panoramic painting of a landscape on a gold background, with flowers from all seasons. On the opposite side, a monochromatic *suibokuga* ink painting of mountains highlights the grain of the wooden doors.

We hope you will enjoy identifying the many varieties of Japanese flowers, ranging from spiderworts, peonies, and morning glories to hibiscus, chrysanthemums, and, of course, cherry blossoms.