

Teahouse

The teahouse is one of the newest buildings at Hokokuji Temple and was designed to blend seamlessly into its surroundings. The curved roof of the plain wooden structure mimics the swaying bamboo trees around it. The teahouse is open planned, with no doors or windows, to create the sense of the space as an extension of the garden itself. The seats all face the garden, offering a perfect view of the bamboo grove. This is the ideal place for quiet relaxation over refreshments.

Matcha green tea is served in the authentic style: the powdered tea is whisked in ceramic tea bowls and served with traditional sweets. The sweets served are *rakugan*, made by pressing a sugar mixture into wooden molds in seasonal shapes such as cherry blossoms in spring. It is customary to eat the sweet first, then drink the tea. The hot green tea is always made fresh.

The wooden trays used to serve the tea are made by a local artisan and are an example of *Kamakura-bori*, a type of lacquerware developed in Kamakura. Each one has a unique pattern carved into it. Separate tickets are required for the tea and for entry to the bamboo grove.