

## **Main Shrine (*Honden*)**

The Main Shrine is the most sacred part of Tsurugaoka Hachimangu. It is where the semi-mythical Emperor Ojin is enshrined as Hachiman, the guardian deity of both the warrior class and the nation of Japan, together with Ojin's mother Empress Jingu and the goddess Himegami. The sanctuary has stood on this site since 1191, when it was rebuilt on the mountainside after a fire destroyed the previous structure at the bottom of the hill. The current building dates to 1828 and is designated an Important Cultural Property. The main shrine includes the worship hall (*haiden*), offering hall (*heiden*), and main sanctuary (*honden*) under one roof in a variant of the *gongen-zukuri* style that was popular during the Edo period (1603–1867) and employed at many shrines favored by the ruling warrior class. The Main Shrine is entered through the Romon Gate, which houses the statues of two guardian deities who protect the sanctuary from evil spirits. **To the left of the main shrine is Takeuchi Shrine, where Emperor Ojin's famously long-lived retainer Takeuchi Sukune is enshrined as a deity of health and long life. Next to this shrine is the Museum of Shrine Treasures, in which are displayed documents, weapons, and other historical artifacts related to Tsurugaoka Hachimangu.**