

## **Butsuden (Buddha Hall)**

Prayers for world peace are offered twice a day in the Butsuden, at the center of the main temple compound (*garan*). The hall's architecture is based on the Buddha hall at Tiantong Temple on Mt. Taibai, where Zen Master Dōgen (1200–1253) studied during his sojourn in China.

The hall's central altar displays a set of three statues of Buddha. The central, principal statue is Shakyamuni Buddha, who is flanked by Amitabha Buddha on the right and Maitreya Buddha on the left. Together, these three Buddha represent the infinite, continuous connection between the Buddha and all living beings that stretches across the past, present, and future. Amitabha is the infinite, eternal, and omnipresent celestial Buddha, Shakyamuni is the living Buddha of human history, and Maitreya is a Buddha who will appear in the distant future. They are collectively referred to as the Sanzebutsu, or "Buddha of the Three Worlds."

The wooden panels above the altar are decorated with a series of intricate carvings. The carvings depict scenes from the history of Zen Buddhism and its transmission from Shakyamuni Buddha to the Chinese Zen masters.