

Minobusan Kuonji Museum

Minobusan Kuonji Temple has a rich history of over 700 years, dating back to the end of the Kamakura period (1185–1333). A Treasure Hall was built in 1926 to house the centuries-old paintings, scriptures, and artifacts in the temple's collection. As part of the Nichiren Shonin 700th Anniversary Project in 1985, the Minobusan Kuonji Museum was built in the basement of the main hall; the artifacts were then moved from the Treasure Hall to the Museum.

The collection contains about 5,000 items, and strict rules and permissions are required for borrowing items by other institutions. In 1973, through collaboration with the Agency for Cultural Affairs, the Prefectural Board of Education, and Minobusan Junior College, the items were catalogued by the Minobu Library of Documents and Paintings.

Some of the most famous paintings on display include the *Mandala Honzon*, completed in 1281, and the *Mikage of Hakiri*, a portrait of Nichiren Shonin dating to 1282. Other famous works include *Saint Nichiren* by Sumiyoshi Jokei (1599–1670). The museum also houses paintings by various Chinese artists and works of original calligraphy by Tokugawa Ieyasu and members of his family.

With all these important paintings, scriptural items, and artifacts, the museum attracts around 60,000 visitors annually.

The admission fee also gives visitors access to the museum's Sutra Calligraphy Experience, where they can try their hand at traditional Japanese calligraphy by tracing over the lines of sutras revered by the Nichiren sect. English instructions are not necessary: simply use the brush to trace the kanji shown in pale ink on the page. Even Japanese language beginners can participate.

Please note that photography is not allowed in the museum.