

Miidera Temple

Miidera Temple was historically one of four key Buddhist temples responsible for the spiritual protection of Kyoto. It was founded in 672 by Prince Otomo Yota, son of Emperor Kobun (648–672), to mourn his late father. The temple has been destroyed several times throughout its history but has always been rebuilt. Its 300-acre grounds include 40 significant buildings. Some of these are among the 10 designated National Treasures and 42 Important Cultural Properties on the grounds. Many of Miidera's treasures are housed in the modern Cultural Property Storehouse, including a series of 24 gold-foil-pressed panels.

One Important Cultural Property is the Daimon (Great Gate), built in 1452 and moved to Miidera when the temple was reconstructed in 1601. Other particularly noteworthy buildings are the bell tower with its sweeping gabled roof and the scripture storehouse with its traditional rotating octagonal library of sutras. Kannondo Hall, on a plateau overlooking Lake Biwa, offers sweeping views of the lake and central Otsu.