

Honryuji Temple

[LEGENDS]

Honryuji is the chief temple of the Shinmon sect of Hokke Buddhism, founded in 1488 by a priest named Nichishin. Its main hall (*hondo*) and founder's hall (*soshido*), both built in 1658, are among the very few wooden buildings in Nishijin to predate 1788, when a fire laid waste to the area. These two structures are designated Important Cultural Properties.

The abundant cherry trees on the temple grounds bloom beautifully in spring, and the large pine trees nearby are thought to have soothing powers: their bark and leaves are said to stop children from crying at night when placed under their pillows.

The well in front of the main hall predates the temple and is said to be where the thirteenth-century noblewoman and nun Mugai Nyodai achieved enlightenment. She became the first Zen abbess, the first female Zen master, and one of the most influential priests of her time.