

Shoin Tea House

The Shoin tea house is named after pine trees, considered an auspicious symbol because they retain their green foliage in the cold winter, staying strong and resilient. The building contains a replica of the tea room from a unique tea house called Kan'unken ("the tea house floating in the clouds") that once stood in Takimotobo Temple on Mt. Otokoyama. The use of tall posts supporting the original Kan'unken on the mountainside made it seem to be floating in midair. The tea room, raised seven meters above the slope, and the drawing room offered a panorama of Yawata and Kyoto beyond.

It is said that the daimyo Kobori Enshu (1579–1647), a famed tea master and landscape architect, designed Kan'unken for his friend Shokado Shojo (1584–1639), then the chief abbot of Takimotobo. The tea house was lost to fire in 1773, but historic building plans served as the basis for this reconstruction.

Shoin is the largest of the three tea houses in the outer part of the Shokado Garden. The building has an entranceway, two tea rooms, and spaces between for preparation and storage of tea utensils. Practitioners of *chanoyu* use this tea house to hold events and give lessons.