

Statue of Amida Buddha

This statue of Amida, the Buddha of Immeasurable Light and Life, dates back to the Kamakura period (1185–1333) and is a nationally designated Important Cultural Property. The statue (2.8 m), made of Japanese cypress, portrays Amida with both hands held in a symbolic gesture of teaching. The halo (4.8 m) features another 13 small Buddhist images and still bears traces of the gold foil that originally covered parts of the statue. There is no creator's signature, but researchers suggest that this statue of Amida could be a work of the renowned Kamakura-period sculptor Kaikei.

This is one of the rare surviving Buddhist sculptures from the long period when Iwashimizu Hachimangu was a shrine-temple complex practicing syncretic Shinto and Buddhist worship. The statue was originally enshrined at the Hakkakudo hall within the complex. When the Meiji government ordered the separation of Shinto and Buddhism in 1868, all Buddhist-related objects had to be removed from Iwashimizu Hachimangu. To save Hakkakudo and the statue of Amida, a retired chief abbot of Shoboji had them moved to an ancient burial mound near the temple in 1870. In 2008, the statue was transferred to the Ho'unden hall for protection and preservation.