

Tanden'an Temple (Rakugakidera)

Tanden'an Temple is popularly known as Rakugakidera, "the graffiti temple." In an unusual tradition, visitors write their wishes or prayers directly on the inside walls of its Daikokudo hall to help the enshrined deity Daikokuten see them better. This replaces the more common practice of writing wishes on small wooden tablets and hanging them outside a shrine or temple hall.

Daikokuten is a god of wealth and one of the Seven Gods of Fortune. The small statue at Tanden'an is called Hashiri Daikoku, "the running Daikokuten," because the deity is carved as if mid-stride. According to temple legend, the statue was made from a piece of the *kusunoki* camphor tree that Kusunoki Masashige (1294?–1336), a prominent warrior and military commander, donated to the nearby Iwashimizu Hachimangu Shrine in prayer for victory in battle.

The origins of Tanden'an are unknown, but existing records show that it was reestablished in 1711 by Zuio (1664–1734), a monk from the Myoshinji school of Rinzaï Zen Buddhism. The temple was relocated several times and eventually fell into disrepair in the early twentieth century. With support and donations from the community, it was revived in its present form in the 1950s.