

Seirinji Temple

Seirinji was originally established as a family temple for the ruler of Kamimiyazu Castle in 1577. It later developed amicable ties with the powerful Hosokawa family when they gained control of the region in 1580. This relationship put Seirinji in a unique position to hold a memorial service for Akechi Mitsuhide (1528–1582), the infamous samurai responsible for the death of Japan's first great unifier Oda Nobunaga (1534–1582). Although the Hosokawa family remained loyal to Nobunaga, Mitsuhide's daughter had married into the Hosokawa family before her father's treacherous act. After Mitsuhide was assassinated in revenge, his head was brought to Miyazu and is believed to be buried in the temple cemetery.

Seirinji has moved twice since its founding, and arrived at its current hillside location in 1685. With the exception of minor repairs, the temple structures have changed little over time. The main hall holds statues of a Buddha Triad, an image of the founding priest, and other temple treasures. A Muromachi-period (1336–1573) silk painting of the reclining Buddha is displayed each February to commemorate Shakyamuni Buddha's death. The temple's two-storied main gate, which also functions as a bell tower, is reached via a set of stone stairs. The temple garden is a place of serenity, featuring a natural spring fountain emerging from an unusually shaped rock, a carp pond, and ample greenery.