

### **Fudōdō Hall**

The small structure located on a raised stone dais near the entrance to the inner sanctum (*okunoin*) is Fudōdō Hall. Although the building's exterior is plain, the images it enshrines are of great religious significance. Principal among them is a statue of Fudō Myō-ō (Sanskrit: Acala), one of the five Wisdom Kings. His fierce scowl and protruding fangs give him an expression that starkly contrasts his reputation for limitless compassion. Fudō Myō-ō is deeply revered within the Tendai and Shingon sects of Esoteric Buddhism. He is said to be a powerful deity who protects the faithful by burning away karmic impediments and defilements. In typical fashion, the statue holds a straight sword in its right hand and a noose in its left. As a hallmark of his key role as a dharma warrior and karmic purifier, Fudō Myō-ō is frequently depicted engulfed in flames and seated on a solid rock base.

Engyōji has a particularly strong association with Fudō Myō-ō through its connection to Ototen and Wakaten, the temple's protector deities. Ototen is considered an avatar of Fudō Myō-ō who, together with Wakaten, features prominently in temple traditions, including the Festival of Peace and Bounty held each year on January 18. Ototen and Wakaten are enshrined in the Gohōdō, two small shrines that neighbor Fudōdō Hall.

Fudōdō Hall was originally built in 1678 but collapsed in 1967. It was rebuilt a decade later using a portion of the original materials.