

Lotus Hall (Hokkedō)

The Lotus Hall is named after the *Lotus Sutra* (*Hokkekyō*), a core text of Mahayana Buddhism that is widely revered across East Asia. The hall's principal image is a gilded statue of Fugen (Sanskrit: Samantabhadra), the Bodhisattva of Right Conduct. Fugen is depicted seated upon a lotus blossom in a classic meditative posture, holding a lotus flower in his hand and wearing an elaborate bronze crown. The supporting podium has a narrow chamber that contains a carving of an elephant. The elephant is black, a break from conventional representations of Fugen, which generally depict him accompanied by a white elephant. Behind Fugen rises a gilded mandorla which, like a halo, symbolizes the emanation of sacred power.

The hall's coffered lattice ceiling is raised in the space directly above the icon, creating a symbolic division that expresses the importance of the deity. Golden decorations that hang from the ceiling bear inscriptions of the mantra of infinite light written in the Indian Siddham script. The present building and its principal image are from the Edo period (1603–1867).