

### **Temple 13: Dainichiji**

It is said that Kukai founded this temple in 815 on the divine instructions of the deity Dainichi Nyorai (the Cosmic Buddha or Mahavairocana). Legend says that Kukai sculpted a statue of this supreme deity of esoteric Buddhism and enshrined it as the main object of worship. After an 1868 imperial order formally separated Buddhism and Shinto, a statue of the Eleven-Headed Kannon (Avalokiteshvara) was relocated here from an adjacent Shinto shrine. Kannon then became the main deity, and Dainichi Nyorai the subdeity.

Standing near the entrance to the temple is another statue of the bodhisattva Kannon, which people pray to for happiness and good luck. Dainichiji Temple is also notable for having a Korean woman, Kim Myoseon, as its current head priest. She is the first woman and foreign national to perform this role at any of the 88 temples of the Shikoku Pilgrimage.