

## **Miei Pictures**

A miei is a slip of paper with a picture of a Buddhist deity on it. After a temple clerk has stamped and signed a pilgrim's nokyocho notebook (and/or kakejiku scroll) as proof that the pilgrim has prayed at the temple, the clerk will return the nokyocho and give the pilgrim a miei depicting the temple's principal deity. Each temple has its own miei, and many pilgrims collect these pictures along their journey. The regular miei is black and white, but color versions are also available at all temples and can be purchased for an additional 200 yen. Pilgrims who have assembled the full set of 88 pictures sometimes keep them in special folders, attach them to a kakejiku scroll, or have them framed side by side and displayed on a wall. A miei is thought to contain the spirit of the deity it depicts, and some devotees use the pictures as amulets. Exceptionally dedicated pilgrims who have visited all 88 temples several times occasionally hand out surplus miei to fellow wayfarers, or place them in the casket of the deceased at funerals.