

Haiden (Worship Hall)

The Haiden is where rituals are conducted and prayers are offered to Ōkuninushi no Kami, the main deity enshrined at Izumo Ōyashiro Shrine. Unlike the Honden (main sanctuary), the Haiden is often open to the public for ceremonies such as purification rituals, prayers for health and prosperity, and the dedication of offerings. The current Haiden was built in 1959 after a fire destroyed the previous structure six years earlier. It is among the largest traditional wooden shrine buildings constructed after World War II.

The Haiden is roughly 485 square meters in area and 12.9 meters in height. It is built mainly in *taisha-zukuri* style, the oldest form of shrine architecture, but also has elements of *kirizuma-zukuri* style. In a typical *taisha-zukuri* structure like the Honden, the building's entrance would be located on a gable end wall (one of the structure's shorter sides). In keeping with this, the Haiden has a roofed portico (*kōhai*) and a large *shimenawa* rope on the southeastern corner. However, this is not the building's true entrance. Instead, the Haiden is entered through a door on the long, western wall of the building, as is typical of *kirizuma-zukuri* structures.

The frame and walls of the Haiden are constructed from *hinoki* cypress, and its roof is covered in copper plate with decorative copper fittings (*oniita*). The foundation stones supporting the central gable-end pillars weigh 13 metric tons and were transported over 400 kilometers from Okazaki in Aichi Prefecture.

During repairs to the Honden, the Haiden serves an additional purpose: it becomes the temporary dwelling of Ōkuninushi. The deity's *goshintai* (a sacred object that houses a Shinto deity) is transferred from the Honden to the Haiden for the duration of the restoration.

A sacred well is located immediately to the west of the Haiden. The water drawn from it is used to prepare the offerings of food presented daily to the deities enshrined in the Honden.