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 structure was built in 1959. Six years before, a fire had destroyed the previous Haiden along with several neighboring structures. Prince Takamatsu (1905–1987), the younger brother of Emperor Shōwa (r. 1926–1989), led the reconstruction initiative. A nationwide campaign raised a total of over ¥100 million in donations, demonstrating wide-ranging support for the project. Architectural historian Fukuyama Toshio (1905–1995), who designed the hall, hoped it would also serve as a monument to national unity. It is among the largest traditional wooden shrine buildings constructed after World War II.

The Haiden is built mainly in *taisha-zukuri*, the oldest form of shrine architecture. However, the gable roof and side-gable orientation are the hallmarks of a style called *kirizuma-zukuri*. The building is constructed from *hinoki* cypress harvested from the Kiso Mountains in central Japan. The central gable-end pillars stand on foundation stones weighing 13 metric tons; they were transported from Okazaki in Aichi Prefecture, over 400 kilometers away. The building's southeastern portico is decorated with a *shimenawa*, a large straw rope marking the boundary between sacred and profane space.

Roughly every 60 years, the shrine buildings undergo major restorations. While repairs are being made to the Honden, the Haiden functions as a temporary dwelling for Ōkuninushi. During this time, it is referred to as the Okariden (temporary hall). Ōkuninushi's *goshintai* (a sacred object that houses a Shinto deity) is ceremonially transferred from the Honden in a curtained procession (shielding the deity from view) and enshrined in an interim altar within the Haiden for the duration of the restoration work. This occurred in 2008 for repairs to the Honden roof.