

Yosenji Temple

Yosenji Temple is a branch of Kaneiji, a Tendai Buddhist temple in Ueno, Tokyo. It is the twenty-fifth stop on the Mogami pilgrimage, a circuit of 33 local temples dedicated to Kannon, the bodhisattva of compassion. The year of Yosenji's founding is unknown, but it was renovated in 1688, and reconstructed after burning down in 1895. The temple commands a sweeping view of nearby rice fields, with Mt. Gassan and Mt. Chokai towering in the distance.

The great haiku poet Matsuo Basho (1644–1694) lodged at Yosenji Temple for seven nights during his 2,400-kilometer journey from Edo (present-day Tokyo) through northern Japan in 1689. The Suzushizuka, a stone monument inscribed with a brief biography of Basho and a poem he composed during his stay, stands on the temple grounds:

<i>suzushisa o</i>	Making the coolness
<i>waga yado ni shite</i>	My abode, here I lie
<i>nemaru nari</i>	Completely at ease.

(Translated by Donald Keene)