

Shozoin Temple

Until the Edo period (1603–1867), monks lived and trained at 12 temple buildings at Yamadera, on the slopes of Mt. Hoju. Shozoin is one of just four that remain. Images of Amida Nyorai, the Celestial Buddha, and Bishamonten (one of Buddhism's Four Heavenly Kings) are the objects of worship within this hall. The statue of Amida is said to have been carved by Yamadera's founder, the monk Ennin (794–864). The figure of Bishamonten is the work of Unkei (1150–1223), one of the most distinguished sculptors of Buddhist statuary of his time.

The temple also contains a mortuary tablet for Yoshihime (1548–1623), the mother of Date Masamune (1567–1636), a powerful daimyo who controlled a large part of northeastern Japan, and founded the nearby city of Sendai in Miyagi Prefecture.