

Kezoin Temple

Until the Edo period (1603–1867), monks lived and trained at 12 temple buildings at Yamadera, on the slopes of Mt. Hoju. Kezoin is one of just four that remain. Several deities are enshrined at Kezoin, including Kannon, the bodhisattva of compassion. On the altar within the hall is a statue of Kannon said to have been carved by Ennin (794–864), the founder of Yamadera. Outside the temple, in an alcove carved into a nearby rock face, is a 2.5-meter-tall, three-story pagoda. The pagoda is a distinct vermilion color, with gilded filigree decorating the woodwork of the eaves. It was built in 1519 and designated an Important Cultural Property in 1952. It is the smallest three-story pagoda in Japan and houses a statue of the Amida Nyorai, the Celestial Buddha.