

Tainai-kuguri and Tainai Hall

The Tainai Hall is a small, single-story building constructed on the side of a cliff in the upper reaches of Yamadera. Priests would reach the building by crossing a crevasse spanned by a worn, horizontal wooden ladder, and then crawling through a narrow stone grotto called the Tainai-kuguri. *Tainai* literally means “womb,” and passing through the grotto is considered symbolic of spiritual rebirth.

The hall was used for meditation and other ascetic practices, and enshrines six images of the bodhisattva Jizo, the savior of all sentient beings. It is closed to the public.