

Higashi Hongū (Eastern Main Shrine)

The main sanctuary of Higashi Hongū, which ranks second among the seven shrines at Hiyoshi Taisha Shrine, enshrines the deity Ōyamakui no kami, who is the protector of Mt. Hiei. The deity has been worshipped here since the reign of the legendary Emperor Sujin (conventionally 97–30 BCE). It is unclear when the first permanent structure for Ōyamakui was built here, but it followed the construction of Nishi Hongū (Western Main Shrine) in the late seventh century.

The current structure was built in 1595 in the *hie-zukuri* style. *Hie-zukuri* has several unique features, such as the low-ceilinged room beneath the main hall. This room was used for Buddhist worship until the latter half of the nineteenth century. The two wooden wands with zigzag paper streamers (*gohei*) placed in front of the doors are offerings to Ōyamakui, and they indicate that the hall is a sacred space.

The main sanctuary is designated a National Treasure.