

Other Sacred Treasures

Isonokami Jingū Shrine has been a repository of swords, armor, and other sacred treasures since early in its history. Its role as a storehouse of both practical and ritual arms reflects its close ties to the Mononobe clan, who oversaw both military and religious affairs for the imperial court. Today, many of the shrine's treasures are important historical artifacts.

Hinomi Shields

This pair of iron shields is believed to date to the mid-fifth century. The shields were ritual items used symbolically to protect the temporary shrine erected for the enthronement of a new emperor. At approximately 140 centimeters tall and 70 centimeters across, the shields were large enough to cover an adult, but the thinness of the metal clearly indicates they were never meant to be carried into battle. (Due to their age and fragility, the shields are not publicly displayed.)

Haramaki Armor with Multicolored Lacing

This suit of *haramaki* armor is made from many hundreds of interlaced strips of toughened leather and steel. Elements of the design, such as the nine-section skirt and curvature of the chest, suggest it was made in the 1500s or 1600s. The armor is notable for its red, white, yellow, and purple lacing, as well as the differing designs of the strips in the shoulder guards, chest guard, and helmet. The armor is currently stored at the Nara National Museum.

Armor Storage Crate

This pinewood crate sits against the wall that surrounds the worship hall.

Despite its plain appearance, the crate is a historical artifact. An inked

message on the underside of the crate's lid indicates it was made in 1369.

Though not sacred or precious in the traditional sense, it is remarkable for being a 650-year-old object that visitors can walk up to and touch.