# THE WORLD HERITAGE SHRINES and TEMPLES of

Nikko Toshogu Shrine

TAKE

FREE

Nikko-zan Rinno-ji Temple

Nikko Futarasan Jinja Shrine







at) at the entrance of Tokugawa

eyasu's tomb. The carving rep-

world as peaceful as a



↓ The approximately 220 meters





The brilliant vermillion painted

Me shrines and tempes of Nikko" An in-depth look at World Heritage Sites

Nikko Toshogu Shrine Nikko-zan Rinno-ji Temple Nikko Futarasan Jinja Shrine

The Shrines and Temples of Nikko were registered as a UNESCO Cultural World Heritage Site in 1999. We will unravel the history and navigate the precincts of Nikko Toshogu Shrine, Nikko-zan Rinno-ji Temple, and Futarasan Jinja Shrine, which make up the core of the Shrines and Temples of Nikko.

# Two key people deeply involved in Nikko's 1,250 years of history

Nikko Toshogu Shrine, Nikko-zan Rinno-ji Temple, and Futarasan Jinja Shrine, which are collectively known as Nikko's two shrines and one temple, are famous as tourism destinations internationally. and have also been registered as World Heritage Sites. The origin of the site is said to lie with the Shihon Ryuji Temple (presently one of the halls of current day Nikko-zan Rinno-ji Temple) built in year 2 of the Tenpyo-jingo Era (766) by the monk Shodo Shonin who was born in Shimotsuke Province (present-day Moka City, Tochigi Prefecture). The Japanese have also revered and venerated mountains since ancient times, and at the time, worship of Kannon, the Goddess of Mercy, was

very active. Shodo Shonin thought that Kannon's paradise ("pure land") could be found on the peak of Mt. Nantai.

When he reached the dreamed of summit in year 2 of the Ten'o Era (782), he built a small shrine there (the "okumiva" or "rear shrine" of present-day Nikko Futarasan Jinia Shrine). The main shrine was said to have been constructed in year 9 of the Enryaku Era (790) which was the origin of Nikko Futarasan Jinia Shrine. The "shinbutsu bunri" (state ordered separation of Shinto from Buddhism) in the Meiji Era separated the various facilities into either Buddhist "temples" or Shinto "shrines", however the core of faith at Nikko since ancient times has always been Mt. Nantai itself, and this did not change. Nikko-zan Rinno-ji Temple, which had fallen into decline for a time, was restored during the Azuchi-Momoyama Period by Tenkai, a Buddhist Priest of the highest rank, who became the chief abbot of the temple in year 8 of the Keicho Era (1613). Tenkai was said to be a very compassionate person who was an expert in both politics and economics, and served three shoguns, leyasu, Hidetada, and lemitsu, as the brain trust of the Tokugawa family. Tenkai was also closely involved in the construction of Nikko Toshogu Shrine, and it is not an exaggeration to say he was the individual who laid the foundations of what we know of today as the Shrines and Temples of Nikko.

#### Why was Tokugawa leyasu enshrined at Nikko?

It is said that Tokugawa leyasu never visited Nikko while he lived. However, his last will and

testament stated, "On the first anniversary of my death, construct a small hall in Nikko and re-enshrine my remains there", and in year 3 of the Genna Era (1617) he was enshrined at Tosho-sha Shrine (present-day Nikko Toshogu Shrine) as Tosho Daigongen. This was carried out by Daisojo (a Buddhist Priest of the highest rank) Tenkai, who was a master of both Onmyodo ("The Way of Yin and Yang") and Feng shui. The leading theory for the reason why Nikko was chosen is because it was located true north of Edo Castle, and so Tokugawa had the grand wish to became a "kami" (god) against the backdrop of the north star, which was revered as the center of the universe since ancient times, to allow him to heal the world. In year 13 of the Kanei Era (1636), the "great Kanei Era rebuilding" was carried out in order to realize

levasu's final wishes of peace for the land and prosperity for the Tokugawa family, leading to the creation of the lavish shrine pavilions.

#### nportant points about the wo shrines and one temple

103 buildings and structures of Nikko's two shrines and one temple and surrounding ruins and relics (cultural landscapes) are registered as the Shrines and Temples of the Nikko World Heritage Site. The Toshogu Shrine Yomeimon gate, which was restored in the "great Heisei Era restoration" which took many years, and the Rinno-ji Temple Sanbutsudo (Three Buddha Hall), in particular should not be missed. The area of the Shrines and Temples of Nikko is surprisingly large, so it is recommended to



The solemn beauty of the mishin-michi road which leads from Toshogu Shrine to Futarasan

Jinja Shrine

# ↓ 4 colorful demons on the Taiyu-in Yashamon Gate guard the



→ This bronze statue southeast section of Rinno-ii Temple precin

> visit starting with Nikko-zan Rinno-ji Temple, which is closest to Nikko Station, then proceed to Nikko Toshogu Shrine, Nikko Futarasan Jinja Shrine, and Rinno-ji Temple Taiyu-in Mausoleum, in that order. You can also hire a guide from the "Nikko Tour Guide Association" (the official guides of the Shrines and Temples of Nikko; starting at ¥6,000 for 2 hours) to guide you through the area. These guides can provide detailed explanations of both architectural highlights and the history of the Shrines and Temples of Nikko. You can also rent audio guides for Nikko Toshogu Shrine (¥500 rental fee and ¥500 deposit).

# Nikko Toshogu Shrine

### Perpetual peace and prosperity, the famous shrine dedicated to Tokugawa Ieyasu

At a size of approximately 49,000 m<sup>2</sup>, the mausoleum is one of the largest in Japan, and was a symbol of the power and authority of the Tokugawa Shogunate and served as the heart of pilgrimages to Nikko during the Edo Period. The great Heisei Era restoration restored the Yomeimon gate to its former glory and it is definitely one of the area's must-see sights.

#### The gorgeous and brilliantly colored shrine pavilions are a textbook of both history and morality

The splendor of the shrine pavillions of Nikko Toshogu Shrine gave rise to the proverb, "never say 'kekko' (wonderful), until you've seen Nikko", and were built during the great Kanei Era rebuilding. At current costs, the construction took a total of approximately 40 billion yen, with approximately 4,540,000 individuals involved in the construction, all in a construction period of just 1 year and 5 months. A number of experts from various fields, including artists from the Kano School, led by the shogunate-employed artist Kano Tanyu, participated in the construction. The 5,173 carvings that decorate the site deserve special mention. The carvings included those of sacred beasts and wise men with command over peace incorporated the wishes for the perma-

nence of the shogunate, as well as those which taught life lessons, like the three wise monkeys (see no evil, hear no evil, speak no evil). It is now as adults, especially, that it is important that we meditate on the meanings and value of these teachings.

† Carvings of ryu (dragons), iki (alligators or dragons with nostrils on the upper lip), ryuba (horse dragons), karajishi (Chinese lions), and other sacred beasts protect the sanctuary

#### **Five story** pagoda



† The central pillar inside the first laver is open to the public. There is a ¥300 admission fee to see the interior





This colorful pagoda, covered in lines of

carvings of the Chinese zodiac signs of the

The pagoda was originally dedicated by Sakai Tadakatsu, and then later reconstructed by Sakai Tadavuki, both lords of ne Wakasa Obama doma



that this unique depiction of elephants was because he had never actually seen a real elephant



 Part of the roof is intentionally left missing to make imperfect because it was believed that perfect things would be destroyed

omeimon

gate



Shuko Choso, one of the carvings of

→ Great care was taken

with the selection of all of

the materials used, includ-

ing natural pigments, and

native Japanese lacquers

↓ A three dimensional effect

is created using a technique

called "okiagezaishiki"

nermits on the south side of the gate

gate

Nikko Toshogu Shrine example course

#### Five story pagoda 🔳 Front gate This approximately 36 meter This is the first gate of Totall building was reconstructshogu Shrine. Admission fees ed in 1818. It sits at the same are required to proceed past this point. This is also known elevation above sea level as as the "Niomon" or "Deva

Tokyo Skytree® at 634 meters gate" because of the two en-

shrined Deva kings



Kamijinko

Houses the sacred horse said to be a messenger of the gods (from April to November) Shown below is a portion of the 8 scene "Three Wise Monkeys" which depict the lifespan of monkeys



Shinkyusha Omizuya This small pavilion houses a trough or basin of water for visitors to purify their body and spirit before worshipping. Toshogu Shrine was the first





Shoro & Koro Yomeimon gate The Shoro on the right houses hanging bells, while the Koro on the left houses taiko drums Both buildings were built in



This is the east main gate of This building houses the 3 mikoshi portable shrines for Toshogu Shrine, and is one of the best-known symbols of levasu, Toyotomi Hideyoshi the shrine. It has also been and Minamotono Yoritomo which are used during grand called the "higurashi-no-mon" (gate of sunset), because one festivals in the spring and au could spend the entire day tumn. It can be vie gazing at the gate and not

The reborn and refreshed 508 carvings

Fascinating visitors throughout time





ved fror

Shinyosha

4 Refer to P.10 for map and facility data



#### The manifest of the **Tokugawa Shogunate** on the main gate

→ The depictions of ancien Chinese emperors and Emperor Shun express a political ambi tion for a peaceful world

#### Symmetrical towers dedicated to drums and bells



Shoro (bell tower) & Koro (drum tower)

t The koro (drum tower) viewed from the omizuva roofed purification trough The towers feature characteristic gable ornamentation, with the Shoro (bell tower) featuring cranes, and the Koro (drum tower) featuring turtles

The portable shrines which serve as vehicles of the gods stored in this building decorated with dancing heavenly maidens



Mikoshi portable shrines for leyasu (center), Toyotomi Hideyoshi (right), and Minamotono Yoritomo (left) are enshrined here. The paintings of the celestial maidens on the ceiling are a must-see sight

Shinyosha

#### Karamon gate

This gate features 611 carvings, including human figures which are colored white with limewash. This is a sacred gate which is only opened for extremely special occasions



#### Haiden & Honden

The Shogun Seating Hall, which only those of daimyo rank and above could ente during the Edo Period, is usually closed to the public but is sometimes used for worship of the head of the Tokugawa Household and other occasions



#### Okusha

This is the grave of Tokugawa levasu, where only those of daimyo rank and above were wed to worship during the Edo Period The haiden (hall of worship) is completely coated in black Japanese lacquer and a small bronze pagoda in the back houses the forme shogun's ashes.



# Nikko-zan Rinno-ji Temple

The Budda manifestations of the three Sanbutsudo mountains of Nikko are overwhelmingly resplendent and majestic

> † You can also see a seated image of Jigen Daishi (chief monk Tenkai) in the inner sanctuary → The principal image of worship Kokuzo Bosatsu (Akasagarbha Bodhisattva) protector of those born in . the years of the Ox and Tige

Daigomado (fire offering





The most sacred spot in the Kanto region, counted as one of the three great temples of the Tendai Buddhism Sect

This old temple was reconstructed under the instruction of chief monk Tenkai, and is one of the leading temples of the Tendai Sect along with Hiezan Enryaku-ji Temple and Toeizan Kanei-ji Temple. The Sanbutsudo (three Buddha hall) which enshrines the three glittering gold Buddhas, is the largest building among the Shrines and Temples of Nikko. There is also a daigomado (fire offering hall) where fire offerings are made every day.

#### The true manifestations of the Buddha of the three mountains of Nikko. Three enshrined golden Buddha

Rinno-ji Temple is a collective name for 15 temples and other buildings scattered throughout the Nikko-zan and Oku Nikko areas. The sohondo main hall, which was constructed during the Heian Period, is the core of these buildings and is a hall built in the Esoteric Tendai style of which there are only a few examples in the entire country. The building which was constructed under Tokugawa lemitsu in year 2 of the Shoho Era (1645) was renovated during the great Heisei Era restoration. The building is named the Sanbutsudo (three Buddha hall) because its inner sanctuary enshrines Senju Kannon (Kannon with One Thousand Arms) as Nantai-san (Mt. Nantai), Amida Nyorai (Amitabha Tathagata) as Nyoho-san (Mt. Nyoho), and Bato Kannon (Horse-headed Kannon) as Taro-san (Mt. Taro), collectively revered as the "Honjibutsu" or "True Manifestations" of the three mountains of Nikko. Collectively the statues are the largest wooden sitting statues in Eastern Japan at approximately 7.5 meters each. In addition, the Kakebotoke (a round plaque carrying the image of a Buddha) called the "Tosho Sanshogongen Honjibutsu" is also jointly enshrined as the honzon (principal object of worship). In front of the hall is the Kongo

cherry tree, which is an approximately 500 year old cherry tree that has been designated a Natural Monument, and which blooms around the beginning of May each year.

Rinno-ji Temple is also known as a place of prayer for the Homa ritual (fire offering ritual). Homa rituals are held 3 times a day at the Daigomado (fire offering hall) located behind the Sanbutsudo (three Buddha hall), and anyone can participate if they register in advance. After worshipping, it might also be nice to visit the Homotsuden (shrine treasure house) and adjacent Shoyo-en Japanese garden to enjoy a relaxing stroll while taking in the scenery and beauty of the season in the mountains of Nikko.



This garden was said to have been created by Kobori Enshu during the early Edo Period and was heavily renovated in year 12 of the Bunka Era (1815).



t The three Buddha's represent a family with the Seniu Kannon (Kannon with One Thousand Arms) depicting the father Amida Nyorai (Amitabha Tathagata) the mother, and Bato Kannon (Horse-headed Kannon) the child

#### Homotsuden (shrine treasure house Temples of Nikko

Houses numerous priceless treasures which convey the history of the Shrines and

Shovo-en garden



Houses approximately 30,000 ems which include National reasures, Important Cultural Properties, and Art Treasures. Approximately 50 items are exnibited at any given time Treasures handed down from ne Tokugawa Family are also manent displav



6 Refer to P.10 for map and facility data





1,000 Buddhist scriptures are contained within the pillar, and on the outside are inscriptions of Saicho founder of the Tendai Sect, and Tenkai

# One of Japan's most prominent Homa ritual (fire offering ritual) sites

#### A famous garden against the backdrop of the scenery of the seasons in the mountains of Nikko

→ Late October to mid-November is the best seaso for viewing the autumnal changing of the leaves. During this period the area is decorated with lights for a limited time to create a truly fantastical evening





Nitenmon gate

The two deva kings ("niten") stand guard with their gazes at the largest gate among the Shrines and Temples of Nikko



↑ A red-bodied Zochoten guards the south while green-bodied Jikokuten protects the east

The 140 ceiling paintings, Haiden. said to be collaborative works from the Ai no ma. Kano School, are truly masterpieces Honden THREE TEN

t It is worth seeing the dragon ceiling paintings of the 64 tatami mat size haiden (hall of worship) at least once. The wall paintings of karajishi (Chinese lions) are the works of the brothers Kano Tanyu and Kano Yasunobu



Depictions of a rising dragon and descending dragon clutching spheres in their claws

# **Rinno-ji Temple** TOJU-IN The restrained beauty of the mausoleum of Iemitsu

If you head further into the Shrines and Temples of Nikko, you will encounter the mausoleum where Tokugawa Iemitsu rests. Just ahead of the approach to the temple is the hon-den hall (main shrine) which is also known as the "Kinkakuden" (golden pavilion). This is a truly mystical place where one can ee Iemitsu's respect for his grandfather in every detail.

#### The mausoleum is a must see example of early Edo Period architecture

"Taivu-in" is a "shigo" or "posthumous name" granted to Tokugawa lemitsu after his death by Emperor Go-Komyo. The mausoleum was constructed in year 2 of the Jo'o Era (1653) under the command of the 4th Shogun Tokugawa letsuna, son of Tokugawa lemitsu, based on his father's dying wish that he be able serve Tokugawa leyasu for eternity.

Hon-den halls (main shrines) are normally constructed facing the south, however despite the belief in "kimon" meaning the "demon's gate" a superstitious belief that the northeast is unlucky, the Taiyu-in honden is built facing Toshogu to the northeast. Both the scale and decoration were kept modest so as not to encroach upon the prestige and influence of Tokugawa leyasu, however it does make profuse use of gold, and

Rinno-ji Temple Taiyu-in example course

Niomon Gate 📄 Nitenmon gate 📄 Yashamon gate 📄 Karamon gate An 11.6 meter high gate which enshrines Jikokuten and Zo-The Taiyu-in Mausoleum tem-Also known as the "botan mon" ple gate with the two devas Agyo and Ungyo standing to the left and right. choten, two of the four heavenly kings. Statues of Fujin (god of the wind) and Raijin land new party new party land party land (god of thunder) are enshrined on the other side



Although small, the pillars and beams are magnificently The public can enter up to the coated in gold foil. The gate Haiden (hall of worship) which

features openwork lattice orbranches of the Tokuqawa Family. The hon-den hall (main shrine) is not open to the public but can be viewed from outsid

#### Haiden, Ai no ma, 📄 Kokamon gate This gate is located at the en-

trance to the okunoin (inner shrine) where Tokugawa lemit su is laid to rest, but only the gate is open to the public. The gate uses architectural styles from Min Dynasty China



# **NIKKO** The guardian deity of Nikko venerated as the sacred land of mountain worship Futarasan Jinja Shrine This shrine features a more reserved construction than much of the rest of the Shrines and Temples of Nikko, but the sanctuary area stretches across approximately 3,400 hectares including the Nikko mountains. The shrine has been venerated as the center of Nikko's mountain worship since ancient

#### The shrine is dedicated to Futara-san Okami, who is a deification of the three mountains of Nikko

The origin of the shrine name stems from when Shodo Shonin thought that Mt. Nantai, was "fudarakusan", the paradise of Kannon, the Goddess of Mercy, and so the name was taken from the name for the paradise. The objects of worship of the shrine are the three mountains of Nikko Nantai-san (Mt. Nantai), Nyoho-san (Mt. Nyoho), and Taro-san (Mt. Taro), which are enshrined as the diety Futara-san Okami. The hon-den hall (main shrine) was constructed under the patronage of the 2nd Tokugawa Shogun Tokugawa Hidetada in year 5 of the Genna Era (1619), and is the oldest building among the Shrines and Temples of Nikko and the only building which still maintains the same appearance and form as at the time of its original construction. After worshipping at the Haiden (hall of worship), visit the Shinen Garden which unfolds to the rear of the shrine grounds. This is a sacred area with several "power spots" including the Futara reisen (Futara miracle spring) filled by two pure, sacred springs.



↓ The principal enshrined deity, Onamuchi no Mikoto, is another name for Daikokusama (Okuninushi no Mikoto, god of magic and medicine



#### Futarasan Jinja Shrine example course

# Shinmon gate 📄 Haiden, Honden 📄 Baketoro lantern 📄

The Shinmon gate stands in front of the Otorii gate, and was built in commemoration of the 1,200 anniversary of the enshrinement of the okumiv (rear shrine) at the summit of Mt Nantai

Daikokuden

(Daikoku hall





The lantern still bears the marks of multiple katana cuts which are said to result from when warriors standing around the lantern mistook the flames of the lantern for evil spirits





is the only building belonging to Rinno-ji Temple

which is designated a National Treasure. The 5 gates on the grounds are also very impressive and worth studying down to the finest details.



no Hato" dove decorations

Yashamon

gate

Honden

features gifts of the main three

gate presided over by yasha demons in the cardinal directions

a golden axe.

A brilliant and gaudy

† Kendara, who is enshrined on the right of the back of the gate, is a yasha demon who protects the westerly direction. He holds The gate features numerous carvings of peonies, which are considered a mbol of wealth



times, and is currently also known as place of matchmaking miracles.

† The building is coated completely in Japanese lacquer and was reconstructed during the Shoho Era (1644-1648). The general public can go up the stairs to worship at the Haiden (hall of worship



Futara reisen (Futara miracle spring)

#### This spring is said to grant wisdom and beauty

↓ Enjoy matcha powdered green tea made with water from the famous spring at the nearby Azumava cafe





The Yakushi no Reisui (healing Buddha sacred spring) which runs from the hill pehind the hon-den hall (main shrine) and Sake no Izumi (alcohol spring) which runs om Takino' o Jinia Shrine meet here

#### Daikokuden

One of the subordinate shrines, it contains an ita'e panel painting called "Nikko of Maneki Daikoku" which depicts the gesture of drawing in luck with a hand



#### 📄 En musubi no sasa 🔲

This sasa bamboo grass is said to call luck for making good matches. Write you wish on a matchmaking plate (¥200) and tie it to the sasa bamboo grass



#### Futara reisen

Pure water fills this spring made from stones from th Daiya River. Take home some of the water using the dedi cated PET bottles (¥300)



# **BASIC INFORMATION**

# Nikko Toshogu Shrine

☎0288-54-0560 / 2301 Sannai, Nikko / Approximately 5 minutes' walk from the "Toshogu Higashisando Iriguchi Hotel Seikoen Mae" bus stop after taking the World Heritage Sightseeing Bus (Tobu Bus) from Tobu Nikko Station on the Tobu Nikko Line or JR Nikko Station / Approximately 3.8 km from the Nikko IC on the Nikko Utsunomiya Road / 9:00 to 17:00 (to 16:00 from November to March. Admission allowed up to 30 minutes before closing time) Open year-round



Price table	Adults	High school students	Elementary and junior high school students	Disability Discount
Toshogu Ticket (Covers all locations open to the public from the front gate to the okumiya rear shrine)	¥1,300	¥1,300	¥450	¥1,000
Toshogu Shrine / Museum Set Ticket	¥2,100	¥2,100	¥770	_
Museum Admission Fees	¥1,000	¥1,000	¥400	¥800
Art Museum Admission Fees	¥800	¥600	¥400	_

## Nikko-zan Rinno-ji Temple

☎0288-54-0531 / Sannai, Nikko / A short walk from the "Shodo Shonin Zo Mae" bus stop after taking the World Heritage Sightseeing Bus (Tobu Bus) from Tobu Nikko Station on the Tobu Nikko Line or JR Nikko Station / Approximately 3.6 km from the Nikko IC on the Nikko Utsunomiya Road / 8:00 to 17:00 (to 16:00 from November to March. Admission allowed up to 30 minutes before closing time) Open yearround



## Rinno-ji Temple Taiyu-in Mausoleum

20288-54-0531 (Nikko-zan Rinno-ji Temple) / 2300 Sannai, Nikko / Approximately 1 minutes' walk from the "Taiyu-in/Futarasan Jinja" bus stop after taking the World Heritage Sightseeing Bus (Tobu Bus) from Tobu Nikko Station on the Tobu Nikko Line or JR Nikko Station / Approximately 4.1 km from the Nikko IC on the Nikko Utsunomiya Road / 8:00 to 17:00 (to 16:00 from late November to March. Admission allowed up to 30 minutes before closing time) Open year-round

Price table	Adults/ high school students	Elementary and junior high school students
Rinno-ji Temple Ticket (Sanbutsudo (three Buddha hall)/Taiyu-in Mausoleum)	¥900	¥400
Sanbutsudo (Three Buddha hall) Ticket	¥400	¥200
Taiyu-in Mausoleum Ticket	¥550	¥250
Homotsuden (Shrine Treasure House)/ Shoyo-en Garden Ticket	¥300	¥100

# Nikko Futarasan Jinja Shrine

20288-54-0535 / Sannai, Nikko / Approximately 1 minutes' walk from the "Taiyu-in/Futarasan Jinja" bus stop after taking the World Heritage Sightseeing Bus (Tobu Bus) from Tobu Nikko Station on the Tobu Nikko Line or JR Nikko Station / Approximately 4.1 km from the Nikko IC on the Nikko Utsunomiya Road / 8:00 to 17:00 (9:00 to 16:00 from November to March. Admission allowed up to 30 minutes before closing time) Open year-round

|--|

Price Table *No charge for visits for worship purposes only	Adults	High school students	Elementary and junior high school students
Shinen Garden Admission Fee	¥300	¥100	¥100
Shinkyo Bridge Admission Fee	¥300	¥200	¥100

\*Some areas may be closed or restricted during some periods for festivals, events, exhibition changes, or other purposes.



#### Nikko Futarasan Jinja Shrine (P.9) The "Yoi en koma inu" (good Futara reisen relationship guardian dog) stands at the entrance to the Azumaya-Shinen Garden. You may be gifted with a good Daikokuden – relationship if you pet the dog! Hoto small

bronze pagoda (Tokugawa lemitsu's grave)

> Yashamon gate Karamon gate

Kokamon gat - Ai no ma londer

The jigendo hall is the final rest ing place of chief monk Tenkai A Buddhist memorial service is held on the anniversary of his death on October 2nd, each year (not open to the public)

## Rinno-ji Temple Taiyu-in Mausoleum (P.8)



# **Shrines and Guide and Map**



Ð

