

Hosenji Temple

Welcome to Hosenji Temple. To follow the tour, please use the guide map accompanying this text. The numbers on the map correspond to the numbers in this text. To start, please go to the area labeled number 1 on the guide map.



1. (at the entrance to Hosenji Temple grounds)

Before we begin the tour, first, please listen to a short history of the temple.

Historical Background

Located in the northern part of the Kanto Plain, Hosenji is a Soto Sect Zen Buddhist temple, established in the year 1574 by Yura Narishige, the lord of Kiryu, Ota and Tatebayashi. The fact that Lord Yura established such a family temple during this Period of Warring States is a testament to his deep religious conviction.

Since its establishment, more than 450 years have passed, during which time the temple has become steeped in the teachings of Buddha. Over the centuries, Hosenji has managed to avoid destruction by fire or other natural disasters and has maintained its original appearance. Hosenji possesses many important cultural assets, not only pertaining to the history of Kiryu, but of Gunma Prefecture as well.

Given its beautiful natural environs and its monastic architecture, Hosenji has achieved the status of one of the most distinguished temples in the east Gunma area. Hosenji, however, has not always enjoyed a propitious history. Having been established as a family temple by the local lord, the temple was subject to the changing times as local administrators rose and fell in power. Yura Narishige died just five years after the temple was founded. A crisis was avoided when his successor, Kunishige, assumed control after him.

In the year 1590, the temple's principal defender, Lord Yura Kunishige, having incurred the anger of Shogun Toyotomi Hideyoshi, was suddenly exiled to Ushiku in Ibaraki Prefecture, leaving the administration of the temple in a state of crisis. Lord Tokugawa Ieyasu was appointed in his stead, and thanks to him, the temple was saved from decline. Time and time again, the temple faced crises, however, the abbots always rose to the occasion to protect and preserve the monastery.

By the time of the 7th and 8th generation abbots at Hosenji, most of the temples associated with its sect had been established. There were over 40 monks and itinerant priests living and studying Zen practices at Hosenji during this era, making it one of the foremost temples in the area.

Hosenji fostered many outstanding monks during this era. In 1688, during the administration of the 11th generation abbot, Hosenji received a temple ranking second only to its parent temple, Eihei-ji. Broadly speaking, this means that the temple had received Imperial sanction and was an honored site. During the Edo Era, the Soto Sect defined various ranks for its affiliated temples. This ranking remains in effect today and Hosenji stands in the rank just below the head temple.

During the Meiji Era, an anti-Buddhist movement led to the destruction of many temples. "*Shinbutsu bunri*," was a law which forbade the syncretism of Shinto and Buddhism. An effort was

made to create a clear division between Shinto and Buddhism on one side, and Buddhist temples and Shinto shrines on the other. As a result, the teaching of Buddhism was rejected and Shinto was designated the national religion by the government. With the effort to separate shrines from temples, there arose a movement to reject Buddhism.

Despite many crises over the years, Hosenji has managed to overcome these difficulties not simply by resisting the tides of change, but rather by strictly adhering to the teachings of Buddha. Generation after generation of Hosenji abbots have dedicated themselves unreservedly to the administration of the temple, thereby leaving their mark on its history, and contributing to the deep devotion of the temple's faithful followers.

The temple is located in a truly spiritual setting of great natural beauty. The name, Hosenji, is derived from the words of the Chinese scholar, Hakusan, who, upon seeing the location of the temple, pronounced it a place where the imaginary phoenix of Chinese lore soars through the air and where the spirits of holy hermits dwell. As a token of good fortune, the site was named "Kiryu-Zan" and designated the Yura family temple.

When the temple was first established, in addition to its current buildings, there was an Imperial Envoy Gate (*chakushimon*); a Zazen Hall (*zazendo*); a dormitory (*shuryo*); a library (*shoin*); a storehouse (*soko*); and an enclosed passageway linking all these buildings together, making it a truly magnificent monastery.

Now, please proceed to the area labeled number 2 on the right side of the road.

2. Hilltop Shrine for Three Tutelary Gods (*chinju sansha*)

About 100 meters beyond the main entrance to Hosenji grounds, there is a narrow footpath on the right hand side which leads up to the top of the mountain. If you choose to hike up to the top of the hill, please watch your step, both on the way up as well as on the way down. On the top of this mountain there are three shrines dedicated to Shinto gods who serve as the tutelary gods, or *kami* in Japanese, of Hosenji.



At the peak there is a fine stone *torii*, an iconic Shinto gate usually found at the entrance of a sacred area. Beyond the gate are three shrines dedicated to "Tenjinyama Goho Daizenshin," the Defender of Religion; "Hakusan Myori Daigongen," the Protector of Splendid Precepts (*gongen* refers to a Buddhist god that chooses to appear as a Japanese *kami* in order to take the Japanese to spiritual salvation); and "Tochigo Garanshin," the Protector of Temple Grounds. The shrines were reconstructed in the years between 1772 and 1780 by the 18th Hosenji abbot.

Now, please proceed a short way ahead and look to the left to find the cherry tree and statue of Jizo labeled number 3 on the guide map.

3. "Summer Siege of Osaka Castle" Cherry Tree (*Osaka natsunojin sakura*) and "Falling Rain Jizo"

(amefuri jizo)

After returning to the road which leads up to Hosenji, and just before reaching the waterfall on the right, you will notice a single cherry tree and a statue of Jizo on the left hand side of the road. Jizo is the guardian of children, particularly children who died before their parents. Statues of Jizo are often seen wearing red votive bibs and hats. This particular statue of Jizo is called *amefuri jizo* in Japanese which means “Falling Rain Jizo”. The cherry tree is called “The Summer Siege of Osaka Castle Cherry” or *Osaka natsunojin sakura* in Japanese.

The summer siege of Osaka Castle, a protracted battle between the two generals, Toyotomi Hideyori and Tokugawa Ieyasu, took place in the year 1615. Hideyori, about to face defeat, committed suicide; his son was beheaded, with Ieyasu, emerging victorious. Upon hearing the results of this protracted siege, someone commissioned a statue of Jizo to be sculpted and when it was completed, had it dedicated at a memorial service performed for the spirits of all the soldiers who had died in the siege. In addition, a cherry tree was planted in their memory.

The statue of Jizo is called “Falling Rain Jizo” because, even on days when there is not a sign of a cloud in the sky and no rain has fallen, the statue looks as though it has been rained upon. This story drew national attention and many reporters and TV crew came to see the peculiar statue. For a time, the publicity attracted many visitors, however, the story has faded from the limelight, and the statue has been allowed to return to its originally tranquil appearance.



Now, please proceed to the site marked number 4 on your guide map, located on the right hand side of the road.

4. Itoku Waterfall (*itoku no taki*)



The head of Itoku Waterfall is located along the right side of the footpath to the Shinto shrines on the top of the hill, about 200 meters past the stone entrance to Hosenji Temple. The word “*itoku*” in Japanese means virtue and influence. About midway down the waterfall there is a statue of Fudo Myo’o, the Immovable One. Fudo converts anger into salvation; has a furious, glaring face, and seeks to frighten people into accepting the teachings of Buddha. Occasionally in the summertime, Buddhist followers can be seen purifying themselves in the waterfall.

Now, please proceed to the site labeled number 5 on your guide map.

5. Imperial Envoy Gate (*chokushimon*)

The Imperial Envoy Gate was constructed at Hosenji in 1574, during the reign of Yura Narishige and is a reflection of the virtue and influence of the first abbot of Hosenji, and the important status of the temple.

Imperial envoys were official representatives of the Emperor and were thus accorded a



reception worthy of the emperor, such as using a special entrance. In modern times, imperial envoys continue to be used in Japan.

Well over four centuries have passed since the construction of the chokushimon. Now, only the traces of its former location remains, but it is said to have been an outstanding Imperial Envoy Gate, located in a beautiful natural setting. A stone monument stands at the place where the gate once stood.

Now, please proceed to the building marked number 6 on your guide map.

6. Hosenji Rotating Sutra Repository (*rinzo*)

The repository was constructed in 1783 and has an area of 33 square meters. It was designated an Important Cultural Asset by the city of Kiryu on August 10, 1979. The repository is enclosed in a building with white walls, a style known as *sayado* in Japanese. There are eight beams spanning out from the axis beam, allowing the whole structure to be rotated by hand. A collection of 6,700 scrolls of Buddhist sutras and precepts are stored on seven sides of the octagonal structure with a statue of Sorin Daishi, the inventor of rotating repositories, on the remaining side. Even today, the structure rotates smoothly on its main axis. The posts at each corner of the railing around the octagon are inverted lotus blossoms.



The scrolls of sutras in the repository are those whose printing was overseen by the Zen master, Tetsuden Doko, who lived from 1630 to 1682 and is responsible for the first complete woodcut edition of Chinese Buddhist sutras in Japan.

Please proceed to the building labeled number 7 on your guide map.

7. The Temple Gate (*Sanmon*)

The temple gate is called “*sanmon*” in Japanese, which is short for *sangedatsumon*, meaning “Gate of the Three Liberations.” Its three openings symbolize the three gates to enlightenment. Entering, one can be freed from the three passions: greed, hatred and foolishness. Hosenji’s temple gate was completed in August 1704 and is 49.5 square meters in area. The gate is 10.53 meters high and has three bays. Wooden boards form the walls of the bays on each side of the center bay. The side bays contain wooden statues of two of the Four Heavenly Kings, the four guardian gods in Buddhist mythology. As you face the temple, Zochoten (Guardian of the South) is to the left and Jikokuten (Guardian of the East) is to the right.



There are 4 main columns along with 8 supporting columns. All of them are round. Other than the two main columns at the back, the other 10 columns are gently tapered at the base and head in the Zen style known as “*chimaki*.” The base of each column is made of wood. Only the two main columns in back (the side closest to the temple) have tapered heads and stand on cut rock bases. The

passageway is traversed across the bottom by a wooden beam which signifies the separation of sacred space from profane. On the upper floor there are 10 round columns, each of which has a tapered head.

The twelve animals of the Chinese Zodiac cycle are represented in carved relief just above the center bay and continue around the circumference of the gate.

A carving of a dragon has been installed on the wooden beam located between the two supporting columns within the gate.

In 1888 the gate's original thatched reed roof was replaced with tiles.

Hosenji Temple Gate is a magnificent example of Zen-style construction, demonstrating a fine sense of proportionality, gorgeous embellishments and superior design, unparalleled in the Kiryu area. The gate was designated an Important Cultural Asset by the city of Kiryu on October 5, 1988.



The Four Heavenly Kings

The Four Heavenly Kings belong to the group known as the Six Tembu, heavenly beings who are faithful servants and guardians of Buddhist law. The Four Heavenly Kings stand at the corners of the Buddhist mandala. Two of them, Jikoku-ten and Zochoten, are standing in Hosenji Temple Gate.



These two statues date back to the Muromachi Era, or the period between 1338 and 1572.

The Wooden Statue of Jikokuten

Jikokuten is the Guardian of the East. His name literally means "Guardian of the Nation." Jikokuten is the Keeper of the Kingdom, the Upholder of the Country, and the Protector of the World. He carries a sword in his right hand, with a closed left hand resting on his hip. He is resting his foot on the head of a demon.



The Wooden Statue of Zochoten

Zochoten is the Guardian of the South. His name literally means "Lord who expands, lord who enlarges." This is to indicate his role as a catalyst of spiritual growth. Like the other Heavenly Kings, Zochoten is dressed in armor and stands atop a demon. He holds a halberd in his left hand and holds his right hand on his hip.

Now, please proceed to the spot labeled number 8 on your guide map.



8. The Temple Belfry (*heisei no kane*)

The temple belfry stands immediately to the left of the Temple Gate as you face the Main Hall. It covers an area of 9.5 square meters. The original temple bell, having been designated an Important Cultural Asset, was moved inside the temple for protection and was replaced by the current bell. This bell is rung



on a daily basis, its resonant peals heard throughout the vicinity. The text inscribed on the bell is a prayer for world peace, the promotion of the temple, and the prosperity of the temple members. The bell weighs 680 kilograms and has been named “Heisei Bell.”

Because the bell has been cast in copper, it has a wonderful tone, with long reverberation. The bell was dedicated at a ceremony conducted on December 27, 1991.

Please proceed to the spot labeled number 9 on your guide map.

9. Mani Prayer Wheel (*maniguruma*)

The mani prayer wheel is a cylinder engraved with sutras mounted on a stone base. The cylinder can be rotated by hand. The prayer wheel is a Tibetan Buddhist tradition. It is said that if you rotate the cylinder for one full rotation, it is the same as chanting all the prayers engraved on it. In addition, the wind caused by the rotation of the wheel carried the prayer to heaven.

There is a bell mounted above the prayer wheel. According to proper procedure, the bell should first be rung to announce that you are about to pray. Next, rotate the wheel once, adding your own prayers at the end. Please feel free to rotate the prayer wheel if you wish. The Mani prayer wheel was erected here in August 2002.

Now, please proceed to the area labeled number 10 on your guide map.



10. Temple Lanterns (*toro*)

In front of Hosenji there are two lanterns of particular note. One is constructed of gilt bronze and the other is stone. The stone lantern is one of only a few such lanterns found in Japan.



Now, please proceed to the spot labeled number 11 on your guide map.



11. Japanese Nutmeg Tree (*kaya no ki*)

The Japanese nutmeg tree, located in front of the Main Temple, is over 460 years old and was the first tree to be designated a protected tree by the city of Kiryu. It is said that the first abbot of Hosenji planted this tree. The tree stands about 30 meters in height and its trunk is approximately 4 meters in circumference. The 33rd abbot of Hosenji is said to have reported that the nuts of this tree were carried all the way by litter as a gift to the shogunate in Edo, or present day Tokyo.



Now, please proceed to the spot labeled number 12 on your guide map.

12. Stone Monument with Traces of Cinnabar (*sekido*)

This stone monument, located in front of the Main Sanctuary, is carved with multiple faces of Jizo Bosatsu, a guardian deity. No one knows its history; however, the date, September 1644, is engraved on the statue itself. It is a multi-storied lantern; carvings of Jizo appear in the part of the lantern where a fire would normally be lit. Traces of cinnabar can be seen on the carvings of Jizo.

Now, please proceed to the spot labeled number 13 on your guide map.

13. Statue of Ichiyo Kannon



Ichiyo Kannon is one of the 33 forms of Kannon Bosatsu. Kannon, the Goddess of Mercy, is portrayed sitting on a lotus leaf, floating on the ocean. This god is said to protect people from water hazards. This statue was placed at the temple in 2009.

Now, please proceed to the site labeled number 14 on your guide map.

14. Cloud-shaped Gong (*unpan*)

The cloud-shaped gong was used to signal mealtimes in Zen monasteries. The gong was forged in 1755, during the Edo Era. This particular shape of gong was introduced in Japan during the Kamakura Era and is commonly found in Zen or Soto Sect monasteries.



Now, please proceed to the building labeled number 15 on your guide map.

15. Hosenji Main Hall (*hondo*)



The Main Hall of Hosenji Temple was designated an Important Cultural Asset by the city of Kiryu on March 12, 2002. This one-storey building was constructed before 1726 in the “*irimoya*” or gabled style with copper roofing and has an area of 330 square meters.

The sanctuary is unusually large in scale, having 8 rooms, making it a valuable representative of traditional Soto Sect Main Hall architecture. In addition, this building is among the oldest wooden structures in Kiryu and is the largest of its kind. It is important both stylistically and for being an example of traditional temple construction techniques.

Now, please go inside the Main Hall and proceed to the spot labeled A on the detailed map of the Main Hall.

A. The Temple Bell (*bonsho*)

Forged in the year 1641, this is the oldest temple bell in Kiryu. The bell stands 117 centimeters high and is located to the right of the main hall as you enter the building. Although the bell is resting on a table, originally, it was suspended in the belfry next to the Temple Gate. It has been brought inside to protect it against the forces of nature. Normally, it would be suspended from its “*horo*” handle, which is in the form of a dragon cast on the top. Dragons are said to like to roar, so they are traditionally depicted on the top of temple bells.



The bell is ornamented with four fields of sixteen bosses or raised spikes. These can be filed to alter the bell’s pitch. Below the bosses are four fields, separated by double sashes, the lines of which are quite accurate. Lotus flowers are engraved in a band around the base of the bell, below which there is a thick band forming the edge. The medallion on the side of the bell, which is where the bell is struck by a mallet wooden when rung, is engraved with a lotus in full bloom.

This temple bell is an excellent example of cast iron craftsmanship during the early Edo Era, of which there are few comparable examples, making it a precious cultural asset. The bell’s most distinguishing characteristic is that it was crafted by a famous and gifted master of the era, named Eda, and is the only remaining complete bell of its kind. It was designated an Important Cultural Asset by the city of Kiryu on November 13, 1989.

Now, please proceed to the left side of the temple to the spot labeled B on the detailed guide map of the main hall.

B. Edo Era Litter (*kago*)

This *kago* or litter dates back to the Edo Era, that is, the mid 17th century. Such *kago* were often used to transport the warrior or samurai class and nobility during that time. This particular litter was used to transport the temple abbot.



Now, please proceed to the spot labeled C on the detailed map of the Main Hall.



C. Kiryu Seven Gods of Good Fortune: Bishamonten

Bishamonten is a god of treasure, a bringer of wealth, a defender of the nation, the scourge of evil doers and a healer of illness. Typically, Bishamonten wears armor and carries a spear and a treasure pagoda. Bishamonten is also one of the Four Heavenly Kings, along with Jikokuten and Zochoten, whose statues are located in the Temple Gate.

At Hosenji, Bishamonten is worshipped as a god of material wealth, good fortune, a protector against misfortunes, and success in academic pursuits.

This statue of Bishamonten is the sixth station on the pilgrim's tour of the Seven Gods of Good Fortune in Kiryu city. The statue of Bishamonten dates back to the Edo Era.

Now, please proceed to the spot labeled D on the detailed guide map of the Main Hall.

D. Bodhisattva Jizo Buddha (located in the room to the right of the Main Hall)

This large head of Buddha, crafted during the Kamakura Era (between the years 1192 and 1333), is said to have been taken as bounty by Nitta Yoshisada when, on behalf of Emperor Godaigo, he destroyed the Kamakura Shogunate in the year 1333. This trophy of the war is said to have come to Hosenji through its founder, Yura Narishige, a descendant of Nitta Yoshisada. Many hundreds of years have passed since the head was carved, nevertheless, the gold leaf still gleams.



Now, please proceed to the spot labeled E on the detailed guide map of the Main Hall.

E. Muromachi Chest (*hako'oi*)

This chest, constructed during the Muromachi Era, a period between the 14th and 16th centuries, was typically used for storing clothing or pottery by monks in training at the monastery.



Now, please proceed to the spot labeled F on the detailed guide map of the Main Hall.



F. Sumi-e Door Panels in the Main Hall

There are stunning India ink paintings on the door panels located at the back of the Main Hall. These panels were painted in 1992 by Aisin Gioro Yuhuan, a nephew of Aisin-Gioro Puyi, the last Qing Dynasty Emperor of China, and a prominent traditional Chinese artist and musician. There are 18 paintings in all, ten of which have been made into sliding door panels and four of which are mounted on a folding screen. The artwork is breath-taking and gives a feeling of profound beauty and calm.

Now, please proceed to the spot labeled G on the detailed guide map of the Main Hall.

G. Sanctuary Altar and Statues of Buddha

The focal point of the Main Hall is the statue of Shaka Nyorai, the Japanese name for Shakyamuni or Gautama Buddha. To one side of this statue is Fugen Bosatsu, sitting on a white elephant. Fugen is considered the God of Praxis and the protector of those who teach



Buddhism. On the other side of Shaka Nyorai is Monju Bosatsu, the Bosatsu of Wisdom and Beautiful Splendor, sitting on a lion. He dispels ignorance with a sword, is the God of education, and governs intelligence. These three statues constitute Shaka Sanzon, the Shakyamuni Trinity, or the three statues representing Gautama Buddha.

Shaka Nyorai embodies the two virtues of mercy and wisdom and leads followers to enlightenment. He is considered one of the four holiest people in human history. Fugen Bosatsu governs over truth and virtue, while Monju Bosatsu governs over wisdom.

These statues of Buddha have been in the temple since it was established over 460 years ago. They represent the deep faith of the followers whom they have led to salvation. These statues are the temple's greatest treasures.

Now, please look at the gorgeous gold canopy hanging over the seat where the abbot sits.

The Golden Canopy (*nintengai*)

The golden canopy hanging over the seat of the temple abbot is called a "*nintengai*". Tengai means umbrella or canopy. The use of this canopy originates from the custom long ago of always providing a protective cover over the head of dignitaries. For example, Japanese aristocrats were always carried in a litter; in India, whenever a maharajah went out, he was followed by servants who provided an umbrella-like canopy over his head if he wasn't riding in something with a roof. This covering was meant as a protection from the elements as well as from falling objects. In Buddhist theology, the symbol of the Sacred Umbrella represents protection from harmful forces and illness. It represents the canopy or firmament of the sky and therefore the expansiveness and unfolding of space and taking refuge in the Dharma or enlightenment. The ornaments hanging on the canopy are all carved from wood and covered in gold leaf. There is a similar canopy hanging over the altar. This is called the "*buttengai*" or Buddha canopy.

Now, please look up to the ceiling.

Main Hall Ceiling (*tenjo*)

The Main Hall has a coffered ceiling, each section of which was painted by Hayashi Aoyama. Over the inner sanctuary there are 9 large and 16 small coffered sections. The large sections have paintings of dragons with Aoyama's seal appearing on the side of each painting. The small sections have paintings of the 12 Chinese Zodiac animals, along with other representations of flowers, birds and animals. Over the main area of the sanctuary there are 42 coffered sections, each of which is painted with flowers, birds or animals. The sections over the hanging canopy, however, cannot easily be seen.



Over the passageway at the entrance of the Main Hall there are 4 rows and 29 columns of coffered

sections, painted with various personages, 18 of which are representations of the Seven Lucky Gods (*shichifukujin*) and others. Another 98 sections are painted with flowers, birds and animals. The sections above the litter and temple plaque to the left cannot easily be seen.

Now, please look at the statues located above the floor and surrounding the center area of the main hall. There are sixteen statues in all, representing the 16 arhat.

Sixteen Arhat (*Arahan*)

The ceiling area around the canopy is surrounded on 3 sides by 16 statues of Arhat, or spiritual practitioners. In Buddhist teaching, practitioners have not achieved complete enlightenment, but are accorded respect for their particular achievements because they have transcended the mundane world. According to tradition, the 16 Arhat are intermediaries between mortal humans and Buddha, and have been ordered by Buddha to remain in the world to help bring all humans to salvation. These Arhat statues have been in the temple since it was founded in the 16th century.

Now, please proceed to the building labeled number 16 on the guide map.

16. Tokiwaden



Tokiwaden, located to the left of the Main Hall, was completed on April 29, 2009 and is a little over 187 square meters in area. The building is connected to the Main Hall by a passageway. Within the Tokiwaden are mortuary tablets of founders Dogen and Keizan, former Hosenji abbots, including the first abbot; statues of the abbots; mortuary tablets of Yura Narishige and his family, along with his ancestor, Nitta Yoshisada and his family. There are also some sealed letters issued by Shogun Tokugawa Ieyasu and his family; and mortuary tablets of the builder of the temple, Nagasawa and his descendants.

Side by side with Tokiwaden is Akibado. This sanctuary was completed in 1881 when it was partitioned from Akiba Head Sanctuary in Shizuoka Prefecture. The sanctuary serves to provide relief to those who suffer the disasters of fire, a common occurrence in former times. Many people come to celebrate the festival of this sanctuary every year on October 16. Praying here is said to be efficacious for success in employment, family prosperity, and protection from fires.

Now, please follow the path behind the Tokiwaden and proceed to the gravesite labeled number 17 on your guide map.

17. The Gravesite of Yura Narishige

Yura Narishige defeated Kiryu Chikatsuna, the Lord of Kiryu Castle, in a battle on March 12, 1573. As a result, Yura became the new Lord of Kiryu. Narishige and his son, Kunishige, ruled over this area between the years 1573 and 1590. Narishige founded Hosenji Temple in commemoration of his



assuming control of the area and the hard work of his vassals. During his tenure, Narishige did much to develop Kiryu as a “*joka-machi*” or castle town. He died in the year 1578.

In the year 1727, the 6th generation descendant of Yura Narishige, a protocol officer of the Tokugawa Shogunate named Yokose Sada’akira, visited Hosenji on the 150th anniversary of Narishige’s death. He had Narishige’s memorial *gorinto* repaired and rededicated in a solemn ceremony. A *gorinto* is a type of stupa, common in Buddhist temples and cemeteries, consisting of five shapes: a cube, a sphere, a pyramid, a crescent and a lotus flower, placed one on top of the other, representing the five elements of Buddhist cosmology: earth, water, fire, wind and heaven. This same *gorinto*, 125 centimeters in height, continues to serve as Narishige’s gravestone. This monument was declared an Important Historical Site by the city of Kiryu on February 6, 1971.

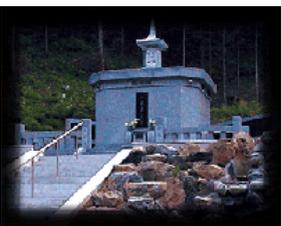
Now, proceed to the gravesite labeled number 18 on your guide map.

18. Gravesites of Hosenji Abbots

Here you can see the gravesites of all the former abbots of Hosenji temple.

Now, please proceed to the spot labeled number 19 on your guide map.

19. Hosenji Cemetery (*reien*)



Hosenji Cemetery is located behind the temple buildings and is flanked by a mountain to the back and faces south. There is parking available for those who visit by car.



The **Everlasting Memorial** (*eidai kuyo*) is a gravesite for those who do not have or do not wish to have their own cemetery plot. This building is located on the right, at the entrance to Hosenji Cemetery.

Now, please proceed to the location labeled number 20 on your guide map.

20. Choshosan Tea House (*choshosan chashitsu*)

“Choshosan tea house” is a relatively recent addition to the temple grounds. It is constructed entirely by traditional techniques, using only traditional tea house materials. In winter, the tea house presents a warm and welcoming atmosphere, while in summer, it is cool and relaxing. Tea ceremonies, an integral part of Zen life, are regularly held here. The building covers an area of 57 square meters.



Now, please proceed to the location labeled number 21 on your guide map.

21. The Abbot’s Residence

This is where the current Abbot lives.