

Nationally registered tangible cultural property

# Jikoji Temple

Location Hiruno, Gosen City

Date of Designation February 23, 2012

Jikoji Temple is an ancient Soto Zen temple located at the foot of the sacred Mount Hakusan.

Although its exact founding date is unknown, it is believed to have been a central hub for the promotion of Hakusan worship since ancient times. Around 1403, the temple was founded by Zenshi Ketsudo Noushou, a direct descendant of the warlord Kusunoki Masashige from the Nanbokuchō period. Later, in the Edo period (1603 – 1868), the temple became one of the four most influential Soto Zen temples in the Echigo region.

At the heart of Jikoji Temple lies the main hall (hondō), with a meditation hall (zendō) and a communal hall (shūryō) located to the north. To the south, you'll find the bed quarters of the head priest and his family (kuri), as well as facilities for bathing (Tohsu/Yokusu) and a sutra library (kyōzō). A corridor extends from the north mountain gate to the south, serving as a connected space for the main hall, kitchen, meditation hall, and communal hall.

The buildings were rebuilt after a devastating fire in 1755. The main hall was completed in 1763, and the kitchen followed in 1759. The meditation hall, communal hall, gate, corridor, and sutra library were reconstructed during the late Edo period. Remarkably, these structures retain their original architectural features. Soto Zen temples with preserved corridors are quite uncommon in this prefecture, making this temple a rare and valuable treasure. Six of the buildings, including the main hall, the bed quarters, the meditation hall, the communal hall, the Sutra library, the gate, and the corridor, are registered as Tangible Cultural Properties of Japan.

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