

Pre-workshop GI tour in Kyoto (optional)

13th of March (Sun)

8:00 EXPO-Park→ (monorail) →Minami-Ibaraki→ (Hankyu Railway) →Karasuma(Kyoto)
→ (Bus) →Nijo-jo／90min

9:30～11:00 **Nijo-Castle Visit**

11:30 Lunch (at ANA Hotel)

Nijo-jo→ (Bus) →Kinkakuji

13:00～14:30 **Kinkakuji Temple Visit**

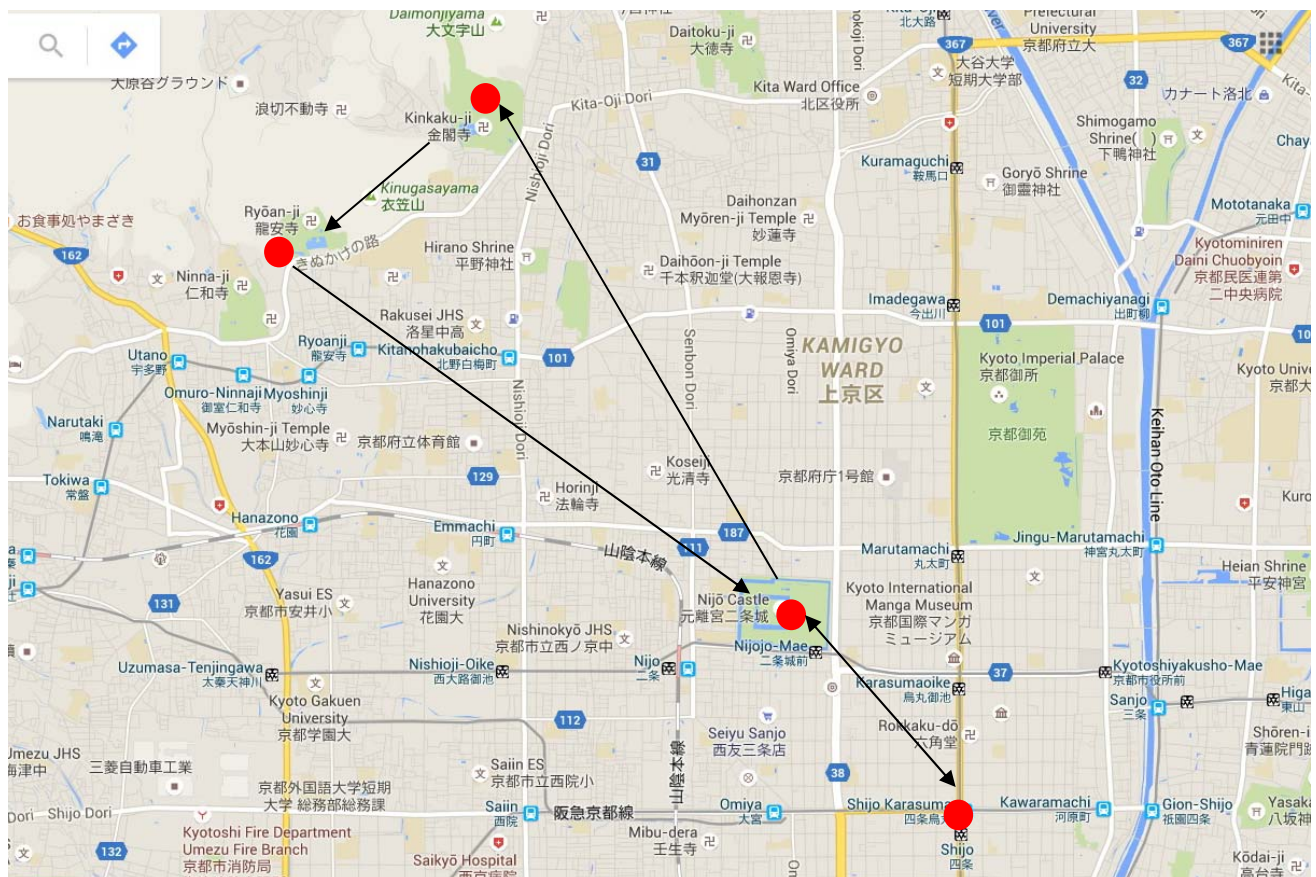
Kinkakuji→ (walk) →Ryoanji

15:00～16:30 **Ryoanji Temple Visit**

Ryoanji→ (Bus) →Senbon-Imadegawa→ (Bus) → Karasuma(Kyoto)
→ (Hankyu railway) →Minami-Ibaraki→ (Osaka Monorail) →EXPO Park

18:00

Senri-Chuo



Nijō Castle

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

Nijō Castle (二条城 Nijō-jō) is a flatland castle in Kyoto, Japan. The castle consists of two concentric rings (Kuruwa) of fortifications, the Ninomaru Palace, the ruins of the Honmaru Palace, various support buildings and several gardens. The surface area of the castle is 275,000 square meters, of which 8000 square meters is occupied by buildings.

It is one of the seventeen Historic Monuments of Ancient Kyoto which have been designated by UNESCO as a World Heritage Site.

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Nijō Castle

二条城

Kyoto, Japan



The karamon main gate to Ninomaru Palace

Type	Plains castle (平城)
Site information	
Owner	Kyoto
Open to the public	yes
Site history	
Built	1626
Built by	Tokugawa shogunate
In use	1626–1939

History

In 1601, Tokugawa Ieyasu, the founder of the Tokugawa Shogunate, ordered all the feudal lords in Western Japan to contribute to the construction of Nijō Castle, which was completed during the reign of Tokugawa Iemitsu in 1626. Parts of Fushimi Castle, such as the main tower and the karamon, were moved here in 1625–26.^[1] It was built as the Kyoto residence of the Tokugawa Shoguns. The Tokugawa Shogunate used Edo as the capital city, but Kyoto continued to be the home of the Imperial Court. Kyoto Imperial Palace is located north-east of Nijo Castle.

The central keep, or Tenshu, was struck by lightning and burned to the ground in 1750.

In 1788, the Inner was destroyed by a city-wide fire. The site remained empty until it was replaced by a prince's residence transferred from the Kyoto Imperial Palace in 1893.

In 1867, the Ninomaru Palace was the stage for the declaration by Tokugawa Yoshinobu, returning the authority to the Imperial Court. Next year the Imperial Cabinet was installed in the castle. The palace became imperial property and was declared a detached palace. During this time, the Tokugawa hollyhock crest was removed wherever possible and replaced with the imperial chrysanthemum.

In 1939, the palace was donated to the city of Kyoto and opened to the public the following year.

In the 21st century, typhoons have periodically caused sections of plaster to peel off the walls after exposure to rain and wind.^[2]

Fortifications

Nijō Castle has two concentric rings of fortifications, each consisting of a wall and a wide moat. The outer wall has three gates while the inner wall has two. In the southwest corner of the inner wall, there are foundations of a five-story keep, destroyed by a fire in 1750. The inner walls contain Honmaru Palace with its garden. Ninomaru Palace, the kitchens, guard house and several gardens are located between the two main rings of fortifications.

Ninomaru Palace

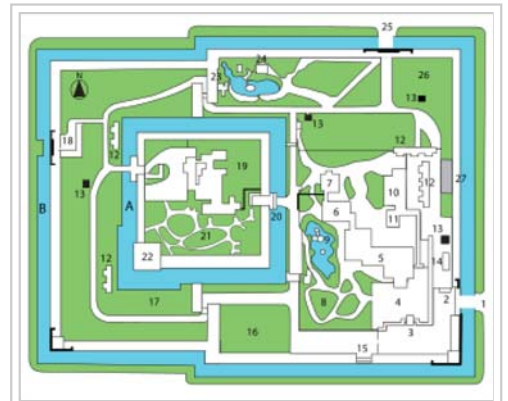


Ninomaru palace of Nijō Castle

The 3300 square meter Ninomaru Palace (二の丸御殿 Ninomaru Gōten) consists of five connected separate buildings and is built almost entirely of Hinoki cypress. The decoration includes lavish quantities of gold leaf and elaborate wood carvings, intended to impress visitors with the power and wealth of the shoguns. The sliding doors and walls of each room are decorated with wall paintings by artists of the Kanō school.

The castle is an excellent example of social control manifested in architectural space. Low-ranking visitors were received in the outer regions of the Ninomaru, whereas high-ranking visitors were shown the more subtle inner chambers. Rather than attempt to conceal the entrances to the rooms for bodyguards (as was done in many castles), the Tokugawas chose to display them prominently. Thus, the construction lent itself to expressing intimidation and power to Edo-period visitors.

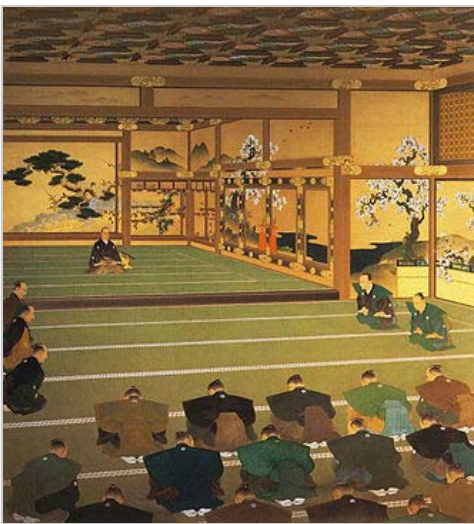
The building houses several different reception chambers, offices and the living quarters of the shogun, where only female attendants were allowed. One of the most striking features of the Ninomaru Palace are the "nightingale floors" (uguisubari) in the corridors. To protect the occupants from sneak attacks and assassins, the builders constructed the floors of the corridors in such a way as to squeak like birds when anyone walks on them.



Present plan of Nijō Castle (click for detailed view)



Inner walls and moat of the Nijō Castle



Tokugawa Yoshinobu in the Kuroshoin

Some of the rooms in the castle also contained special doors where the shogun's bodyguard could sneak out to protect him.

The room sequence starting at the entrance is:

- Yanagi-no-ma (Willow Room),
- Wakamatsu-no-ma (Young Pine Room)
- Tozamurai-no-ma (Retainers' Room)
- Shikidai-no-ma (Reception Room)
- Rōchu-no-ma (Ministers' Offices)
- Chokushi-no-ma (Imperial Messenger's Room)

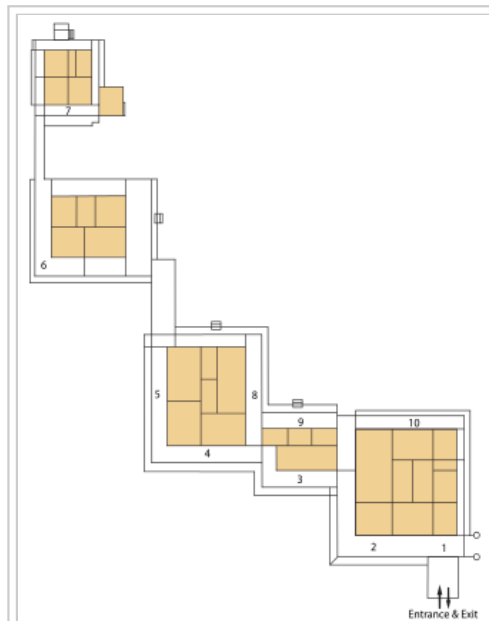
The Ōhiroma (Great Hall) is the central core of the Ninomaru Palace and consists of four chambers:

- Ichi-no-ma (First Grand Chamber)
- Ni-no-ma (Second Grand Chamber)
- San-no-ma (Third Grand Chamber)
- Yon-no-ma (Fourth Grand Chamber)

as well as the Mushakakushi-no-ma (Bodyguards' Chamber) and the Sotetsu-no-ma (Japanese fern-palm chamber).

The rear sections are the Kuroshoin (Inner Audience Chamber) and Shiroshoin (Shogun's living quarters)

The main access to the Ninomaru is through the karamon, a court and the mi-kurumayose or "honourable carriages



Map of the Ninomaru Palace (click for detailed view and explanation)



Detail of the ceiling of Ninomaru Palace

approach".^[1]

Honmaru Palace

Honmaru Palace (本丸御殿 Honmaru Goten) has a surface area of 1600 square meters. The complex has four parts: living quarters, reception and entertainment rooms, entrance halls and kitchen area. The different areas are connected by corridors and courtyards. The architectural style is late Edo period. The palace displays paintings by several famous masters, such as Kanō Eigaku.

Honmaru Palace was originally similar to Ninomaru Palace. The current structure was known as Katsura Palace before being relocated to the present site in 1893 when it was renamed. Originally the palace had 55 buildings, but only a small part was relocated. In 1928 the enthronement banquet of the Showa Emperor (Emperor Hirohito) was held here.^[3]

Gardens

The castle area has several gardens and groves of cherry and Japanese plum trees. The Ninomaru garden was designed by the landscape architect and tea master Kobori Enshu. It is located between the two main rings of fortifications, next to the palace of the same name. The garden has a large pond with three islands and features numerous carefully placed stones and topiary pine trees.

The Seiryū-en garden is the most recent part of Nijō Castle. It was constructed in 1965 in the northern part of the complex, as a facility for the reception of official guests of the city of Kyoto and as a venue for cultural events. Seiryū-en has two tea houses and more than 1000 carefully arranged stones.

See also

- List of Special Places of Scenic Beauty, Special Historic Sites and Special Natural Monuments
- Historic Monuments of Ancient Kyoto (Kyoto, Uji and Otsu Cities)
- List of National Treasures of Japan (residences)

References

- Schmorleitz, pg. 82
- "Typhoon Rains Kill at Least 25 and Maroon Thousands in Japan,"

(<http://www.nytimes.com/2011/09/05/world/asia/05japan.html>) New York Times. September 5, 2011; retrieved 2011-09-05; see also 台風6号で、二条城の重文櫓の漆喰はがれる (Typhoon #6, The Plaster Peels at the Tower, Nijo Castle's Important National Treasure"), Yomiuri Shimbun. 20 July 2011.

- Schmorleitz, pg. 82.

Literature

- Schmorleitz, Morton S. (1974). Castles in Japan. Tokyo: Charles E. Tuttle Co. pp. 81–83. ISBN 0-8048-1102-4.
- Motoo, Hinago (1986). Japanese Castles. Tokyo: Kodansha. pp. 200 pages. ISBN 0-87011-766-1.

External links

- Satellite view at Google Maps ([http://maps.google.com/maps?f=q&hl=en&q=kyoto-](http://maps.google.com/maps?f=q&hl=en&q=kyoto-nijo_castle,+japan&ie=UTF8&z=17&ll=35.01383,135.748594&spn=0.004578,0.01075&t=k&om=0)

[nijo_castle,+japan&ie=UTF8&z=17&ll=35.01383,135.748594&spn=0.004578,0.01075&t=k&om=0](http://maps.google.com/maps?f=q&hl=en&q=kyoto-nijo_castle,+japan&ie=UTF8&z=17&ll=35.01383,135.748594&spn=0.004578,0.01075&t=k&om=0))

- Nijo Castle (<http://www.city.kyoto.jp/bunshi/nijojo/>)
- Japan-Guide.com (<http://www.japan-guide.com/e/e3918.html>)



Honmaru Palace



Honmaru Palace



The pond of the Ninomaru Garden



Wikimedia Commons has media related to Nijō Castle.

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Categories: [Castles in Kyoto Prefecture](#) | [World Heritage Sites in Japan](#)

[National Treasures of Japan](#) | [Buildings and structures in Kyoto](#) | [Visitor attractions in Kyoto](#)

[Gardens in Kyoto Prefecture](#) | [Special Places of Scenic Beauty](#)

[Important Cultural Properties of Japan](#) | [Historic Sites of Japan](#)

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Coordinates: 35°02′22″N 135°43′46″E﻿ / ﻿

Kinkaku-ji

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

Kinkaku-ji (**金閣寺**, lit. "Temple of the Golden Pavilion"), officially named **Rokuon-ji** (**鹿苑寺**, lit. "Deer Garden Temple"), is a Zen Buddhist temple in Kyoto, Japan.^[2] It is one of the most popular buildings in Japan, attracting a large number of visitors annually.^[3] It is designated as a National Special Historic Site and a National Special Landscape, and it is one of 17 locations comprising the Historic Monuments of Ancient Kyoto World Heritage Site.^[4]

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History



Painted photograph of the Golden Pavilion in 1885.



Golden Pavilion following the 1950 arson.

The site of Kinkaku-ji was originally a villa called *Kitayama-dai* (**北山第**), belonging to a powerful statesman, Saionji Kintsune (ja:西園寺公経).^[5] Kinkaku-ji's history dates to 1397, when the villa was purchased from the Saionji family by Shogun Ashikaga Yoshimitsu, and transformed into the Kinkaku-ji complex.^[5] When Yoshimitsu died, the building was converted into a Zen temple by his son, according to his wishes.^{[3][6]}

During the Onin war (1467-1477), all of the buildings in the complex aside from the pavilion were burned down.^[5]

On July 2, 1950, at 2:30 am, the pavilion was burned down by a 22-year-old novice monk, Hayashi Yoken, who then attempted suicide on the Daimon-ji hill behind the building. He survived, and was subsequently taken into custody. The monk was sentenced to seven years in prison, but was released because of mental illnesses (persecution complex and schizophrenia) on September 29, 1955; he died of tuberculosis ^[7] During the fire, the original statue of Ashikaga Yoshimitsu was lost to the flames (now restored). A fictionalized version of these events is at the center of Yukio Mishima's 1956 book *The Temple of the Golden Pavilion*.^[2]

The present pavilion structure dates from 1955, when it was rebuilt.^[2] The pavilion is three stories high, approximately 12.5 meters in height.^[8] The reconstruction is said to be a copy close to the original, although some doubt such an extensive gold-leaf coating was used on the original structure.^[3] In 1984, the coating of

Japanese lacquer was found a little decayed, and a new coating as well as gilding with gold-leaf, much thicker than the original coatings (0.5 μm instead of 0.1 μm), was completed in 1987. Additionally, the interior of the building, including the paintings and Yoshimitsu's statue, were also restored. Finally, the roof was restored in 2003. The name Kinkaku is derived from the gold leaf that the pavilion is covered in. Gold was an important addition to the pavilion because of its underlying meaning. The gold employed was to mitigate and purify any pollution or negative thoughts and feelings towards death.^[9] Other than the symbolic meaning behind the gold leaf, the Muromachi period heavily relied on visual excesses.^[10] With the focus on the Golden Pavilion, how the structure is mainly covered in that material, creates an impression that stands out because of the sunlight reflecting and the effect the reflection creates on the pond.

Design details

The Golden Pavilion (**金閣** *Kinkaku*) is a three-story building on the grounds of the Rokuon-ji temple complex.^[11] The top two stories of the pavilion are covered with pure gold leaf.^[11] The pavilion functions as a *shariden* (**舍利殿**), housing relics of the Buddha (Buddha's Ashes). The building was an important model for Ginkaku-ji (Silver Pavilion Temple), and Shōkoku-ji, which are also located in Kyoto.^[2] When these buildings were constructed, Ashikaga Yoshimasa employed the styles used at Kinkaku-ji and even borrowed the names of its second and third floors.^[2]

Architectural Design

Rokuon-ji 鹿苑寺



The *shariden* at Rokuon-ji, commonly known as the Golden Pavilion (*Kinkaku*)

Information

Mountain name	<i>Hokuzan</i>
Denomination	Zen, Rinzai sect, Shōkoku-ji school
Venerated	Kannon Bosatsu (Avalokiteśvara)
Founded	1397

People

Founder(s)	Ashikaga Yoshimitsu
Founding priest	Musō Soseki

Location

Address	1 Kinkakuji-chō, Kita-ku, Kyōto, Kyoto Prefecture ^[1]
Country	Japan
Website	http://www.shokoku-ji.jp/k_about.html#

The pavilion successfully incorporates three distinct styles of architecture which are shinden, samurai, and zen, specifically on each floor.^[8] Each floor of the Kinkaku uses a different architectural style.^[2]

The first floor, called *The Chamber of Dharma Waters* (法水院, Hou-sui-in), is rendered in *shinden-zukuri* style, reminiscent of the residential style of the 11th century Heian imperial aristocracy.^[2] It is evocative of the Shinden palace style. It is designed as an open space with adjacent verandas and uses natural, unpainted wood and white plaster.^[8] This helps to emphasize the surrounding landscape. The walls and fenestration also affect the views from inside the pavilion. Most of the walls are made of shutters that can vary the amount of light and air into the pavilion^[8] and change the view by controlling the shutters' heights. The second floor, called *The Tower of Sound Waves* (潮音洞, Chou-on-dou),^[2] is built in the style of warrior aristocrats, or *buke-zukuri*. On this floor, sliding wood doors and latticed windows create a feeling of impermanence. The second floor also contains a Buddha Hall and a shrine dedicated to the goddess of mercy, Kannon.^[8] The third floor is built in traditional Chinese *chán* (Jpn. zen) style, also known as *zenshū-butsumiden-zukuri*. It is called the *Cupola of the Ultimate* (究竟頂, Kukkyou-chou). The zen typology depicts a more religious ambiance in the pavilion, as was popular during the Muromachi period.^[8]

The roof is in a thatched pyramid with shingles.^[12] The building is topped with a bronze phoenix (phoenix) ornament.^[11] From the outside, viewers can see gold plating added to the upper stories of the pavilion. The gold leaf covering the upper stories hints at what is housed inside: the shrines.^[9] The outside is a reflection of the inside. The elements of nature, death, religion, are formed together to create this connection between the pavilion and outside intrusions.



The fishing deck and a small islet at the rear of the pavilion.



Roof ornament.

Garden Design

The Golden Pavilion is set in a magnificent Japanese strolling garden (回遊式庭園 *kaiyū-shiki-teien*, lit. a landscape garden in the go-round style).^[6] The location implements the idea of borrowing of scenery ("shakkei") that integrates the outside and the inside, creating an extension of the views surrounding the pavilion and connecting it with the outside world. The pavilion extends over a pond, called *Kyōko-chi* (鏡湖池 *Mirror Pond*), that reflects the building.^[5] The pond contains 10 smaller islands.^[8] The zen typology is seen through the rock composition, the bridges, and plants are arranged in a specific way to represent famous places in Chinese and Japanese literature.^[8] Vantage points and focal points were established because of the strategic placement of the pavilion to view the gardens surrounding the pavilion.^[10] A small fishing deck (釣殿 *tsuri-dono*) is attached to the rear of the pavilion building, allowing a small boat to be moored under it.^[5] The pavilion grounds were built according to descriptions of the Western Paradise of the Buddha Amida, intending to illustrate a harmony between heaven and earth.^[6] The largest islet in the pond represents the Japanese islands.^[5] The four stones forming a straight line in the pond near the pavilion are intended to represent sailboats anchored at night, bound for the *Isle of Eternal Life* in Chinese mythology.^[5]

The garden complex is an excellent example of Muromachi period garden design.^[11] The Muromachi period is considered to be a classical age of Japanese garden design.^[10] The correlation between buildings and its settings were greatly emphasized during this period.^[10] It was a way to integrate the structure within the landscape in an artistic way. The garden designs were characterized by a reduction in scale, a more central purpose, and a distinct setting.^[13] A minimalistic approach was brought to the garden design, by recreating larger landscapes in a smaller scale around a structure.^[13]

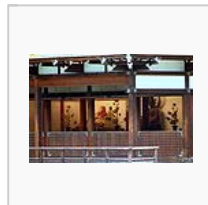
Gallery



1930s travel poster.



Kinkaku-ji in snow.



Interior.



The lower pond

See also

- List of Special Places of Scenic Beauty, Special Historic Sites and Special Natural Monuments
- Historic Monuments of Ancient Kyoto (Kyoto, Uji and Otsu Cities)
- Ginkaku-ji
- Shōkoku-ji
- The Temple of the Golden Pavilion*
- Wikimedia Commons Gallery of Kinkaku-ji
- Tourism in Japan

Notes

^[1] The pavilion is a Zen Buddhist temple complex in Kyoto, Japan, and is one of the most famous landmarks in the city.

2. "Kinkakuji Temple - 金閣寺, Kyoto, Japan". *Oriental Architecture*. Retrieved 2010-07-13.
3. Bornoff, Nicholas (2000). *The National Geographic Traveler: Japan*. National Geographic Society. ISBN 0-7922-7563-2.
4. "Places of Interest in Kyoto (Top 15 most visited places in Kyoto by visitors from overseas)". Asano Noboru. Retrieved 2010-07-15.
5. "Kinkaku-ji in Kyoto". Asano Noboru. Retrieved 2010-07-15.
6. Scott, David (1996). *Exploring Japan*. Fodor's Travel Publications, Inc. ISBN 0-679-03011-5.
7. Albert Borowitz (2005). *Terrorism for self-glorification: the Herostratos syndrome*. Kent State University Press. pp. 49–62. ISBN 978-0-87338-818-4. Retrieved 1 July 2011. See: Herostratos syndrome
8. Young, David, and Michiko Young. *The art of Japanese Architecture*. North Clarendon, VT: Turtle Publishing, 2007. N. pag. Print.
9. Gerhart, Karen M. *The material culture of Death in medieval Japan*. N.p.: University of Hawaii Press, 2009. N. pag. Print.
10. "Pregil, Philip, and Nancy Volkman. *Landscapes in History: Design and Planning in the Eastern and Western tradition*. Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons Inc., 1992. N. pag. Print."
11. *Eyewitness Travel Guides: Japan*. Dorling Kindersley Publishing (2000). ISBN 0-7894-5545-5.
12. Young, David, Michiko Young, and Tan Hong. *The material culture of Death in medieval Japan*. North Clarendon, VT: Turtle Publishing, 2005. N. pag. Print.
13. Boults, Elizabeth, and Chip Sullivan. *Illustrated History of Landscape Design*. Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons INC., 2010. N. pag. Print.

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- Boults, Elizabeth, and Chip Sullivan. *Illustrated History of Landscape Design*. Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Son, 2010.
- Gerhart, Karen M. *The Material Culture of Death in Medieval Japan*. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2009.
- Pregil, Philip, and Nancy Volkman. *Landscapes in History: Design and Planning in the Eastern and Western Tradition*. Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons, 1992.
- Young, David, and Michiko Young. *The Art of Japanese Architecture*. North Clarendon, VT: Turtle Publishing, 2007.
- Young, David, Michiko Young, and Tan Hong. *Introduction to Japanese Architecture*. North Clarendon, VT: Periplus, 2005.

Further reading

- Schirokauer, Conrad; Lurie, David; Gay, Suzanne (2005). *A Brief History of Japanese Civilization*. Wadsworth Publishing. ISBN 978-0-618-91522-4. OCLC 144227752.

External links

- Official site of Kinkaku-ji (Japanese language) (<http://www.shokoku-ji.jp/>)
- Live camera feed of Kinkaku-ji (Japanese language) (http://www.shokoku-ji.jp/k_live.html)
- Oriental Architecture - Kinkakuji Temple (<http://www.orientalarchitecture.com/japan/kyoto/kinkakuji.php>)
- Kinkaku-ji video (<http://robpongi.com/pages/comboKINKAKUJI.html>)
- Kinkaku-ji (<http://photosynth.net/view.aspx?cid=1387bd6c-b1f6-4cb1-9fd1-c60829043c8d&i=0:2:13&z=1306.93908000000003&g=2&p=0:0&m=false&c=-0.57568:0.293278:-0.0127651&d=-1.12678:1.21354:1.29525>) Photosynth view of Kinkaku-ji (requires Silverlight)



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Categories: 14th-century Buddhist temples | Religious buildings completed in 1955 | 20th-century Buddhist temples | Buddhist temples in Kyoto | World Heritage Sites in Japan | Myoshin-ji temples | Special Places of Scenic Beauty | Special Historic Sites | Places of worship destroyed by arson | Important Cultural Properties of Japan | Rebuilt buildings and structures in Japan

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Ryōan-ji

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

Ryōan-ji (Shinjitai: 竜安寺, Kyūjitai: 龍安寺, The Temple of the Dragon at Peace) is a Zen temple located in northwest Kyoto, Japan. It belongs to the Myōshin-ji school of the Rinzai branch of Zen Buddhism. The Ryōan-ji garden is considered one of the finest surviving examples of *kare-sansui* ("dry landscape"),^[1] a refined type of Japanese Zen temple garden design generally featuring distinctive larger rock formations arranged amidst a sweep of smooth pebbles (small, carefully selected polished river rocks) raked into linear patterns that facilitate meditation. The temple and its gardens are listed as one of the Historic Monuments of Ancient Kyoto, and as a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

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History

The site of the temple was an estate of the Fujiwara family in the 11th century. The first temple, the Daiju-in, and the still existing large pond were built in that century by Fujiwara Saneyoshi. In 1450, Hosokawa Katsumoto, another powerful warlord, acquired the land where the temple stood. He built his residence there, and founded a Zen temple, Ryōan-ji. During the Ōnin War between the clans, the temple was destroyed. Hosokawa Katsumoto died in 1473. In 1488, his son, Hosokawa Matsumoto, rebuilt the temple.

Ryōan-ji 龍安寺



The *kare-sansui* (dry landscape) zen garden at Ryōan-ji

Information

Mountain name	Daiunzan
Denomination	Zen, Rinzai sect, Myōshin-ji school
Venerated	Shaka Nyorai (Śākyamuni)
Founded	1450
People	
Founder(s)	Hosokawa Katsumoto
Founding priest	Giten Genshō
Location	
Address	13 Ryoanji Goryonoshita-chō, Ukyō-ku, Kyoto, Kyoto Prefecture
Country	Japan
Website	http://www.ryoanji.jp/

The temple served as a mausoleum for several emperors. Their tombs are grouped together in what are today known as the "Seven Imperial Tombs" at Ryōan-ji. The burial places of these emperors — Uda, Kazan, Ichijō, Go-Suzaku, Go-Reizei, Go-Sanjō, and Horikawa—would have been comparatively humble in the period after their deaths. These tombs reached their present state as a result of the 19th century restoration of imperial sepulchers (*misasagi*) which were ordered by Emperor Meiji.^[2]

There is controversy over who built the garden and when. Most sources date the garden to the second half of the 15th century.^[3] According to some sources, the garden was built by Hosokawa Katsumoto, the creator of the first temple of Ryōan-ji, between 1450 and 1473. Other sources say it was built by his son, Hosokawa Masamoto, in or around 1488.^[4] Some say that the garden was built by the famous landscape painter and monk, Sōami (died 1525),^[5] but this is disputed by other authors.^[6] Some sources say the garden was built in the first half of the 16th century.^[7] Other authors say the garden was probably built much later, during the Edo Period, between 1618 and 1680.^[6] There is also controversy over whether the garden was built by monks, or by professional gardeners, called *kawaramono*, or a combination of the two. One stone in the garden has the name of two *kawaramono* carved into it.

The conclusive history, though, based on documentary sources, is as follows: Hosokawa Katsumoto (1430–1473), deputy to the shogun, founded in 1450 the Ryoan-ji temple, but the complex was burnt down during the Onin War. His son Masamoto rebuilt the temple at the very end of the same century. It is not clear whether any garden was constructed at that time facing the main hall. First descriptions of a garden, clearly describing one in front of the main hall, date from 1680–1682. It is described as a composition of nine big stones laid out to represent Tiger Cubs Crossing the Water. As the garden has fifteen stones at present, it was clearly different from the garden that we see today. A great fire destroyed the buildings in 1779, and rubble of the burnt buildings was dumped in the garden. Garden writer and specialist Akisato Rito (died c. 1830) redid the garden completely on top of the rubble at the end of the eighteenth century and published a picture of his garden in his *Celebrated Gardens and Sights of Kyoto* (*Miyako rinsen meisho zue*) of 1799, showing the garden as it looks today. One big stone at the back was buried partly; it has two first names carved in it, probably names of untouchable stone workers, so called *kawaramono*.^[8] There is no evidence of Zen monks having worked on the garden, apart from the raking of the sand.

Zen garden

The temple's name is synonymous with the temple's famous 'Zen garden', the *karesansui* (dry landscape) rock garden, thought to have been built in the late 15th century.

The garden is a rectangle of 248 square meters. Young and Young put the size at twenty-five meters by ten meters. Placed within it are fifteen stones of different sizes, carefully composed in five groups; one group of five stones, two groups of three, and two groups of two stones. The stones are surrounded by white gravel, which is carefully raked each day by the monks. The only vegetation in the garden is some moss around the stones.

The garden is meant to be viewed from a seated position on the veranda of the *hōjō*, the residence of the abbot of the monastery.^[10]

The stones are placed so that the entire composition cannot be seen at once from the veranda. They are also arranged so that when looking at the garden from any angle (other than from above) only fourteen of the boulders are visible at one time. It is traditionally said that only through

attaining enlightenment would one be able to view the fifteenth boulder.

The wall behind the garden is an important element of the garden. It is made of clay, which has been stained by age with subtle brown and orange tones. In 1977, the tile roof of the wall was restored with tree bark to its original appearance.^[6]

When the garden was rebuilt in 1799, it came up higher than before and a view over the wall to the mountain scenery behind came about. At present this view is blocked by trees.^[11]

The garden had particular significance for the composer John Cage, who composed a series of works and made visual art art works based on it.^[12]



Ryōan-ji dry garden. The clay wall, which is stained by age with subtle brown and orange tones, reflects "wabi" and the rock garden "sabi", together reflecting the Japanese worldview or aesthetic of "wabi-sabi".^[9]

Meaning of the garden

Like any work of art, the artistic garden of Ryōan-ji is also open to interpretation, or scientific research into possible meanings. Many different theories have been put forward inside and outside Japan about what the garden is supposed to represent, from islands in a stream, to swimming baby tigers to the peaks of mountains rising above to theories about secrets of geometry or of the rules of equilibrium of odd numbers. Garden historian Gunter Nitschke wrote: "The garden at Ryōan-ji does not symbolize anything, or more precisely, to avoid any misunderstanding, the garden of Ryōan-ji does not symbolize, nor does it have the value of reproducing a natural beauty that one can find in the real or mythical world. I consider it to be an abstract composition of "natural" objects in space, a composition whose function is to incite meditation."^[13]

Scientific analysis of the garden

In an article published by the science journal *Nature*, Gert van Tonder and Michael Lyons analyze the rock garden by generating a model of shape analysis (medial axis) in early visual processing.

Using this model, they show that the empty space of the garden is implicitly structured, and is aligned with the temple's architecture. According to the researchers, one critical axis of symmetry passes close to the centre of the main hall, which is the traditionally preferred viewing point. In essence, viewing the placement of the stones from a sightline along this point brings a shape from nature (a dichotomously branched tree with a mean branch length decreasing monotonically from the trunk to the tertiary level) in relief.

The researchers propose that the implicit structure of the garden is designed to appeal to the viewer's unconscious visual sensitivity to axial-symmetry skeletons of stimulus shapes. In support of their findings, they found that imposing a random perturbation of the locations of individual rock features destroyed the special characteristics.^[14]

Centuries after its creation, the influences of the dry elements at Ryōan-ji continue to be reflected and re-examined in garden design — for example, in the Japangarten at the Art Museum at Wolfsburg in Germany.^[15]

Other gardens of Ryōan-ji

While the rock garden is the best-known garden of Ryōan-ji, the temple also has a water garden; the Kyoyochi Pond, built in the 12th century as part of the Fujiwara estate. Cherry trees have recently been planted northwest of the pond.

Ryōan-ji also has a teahouse and tea garden, dating to the 17th century. Near the teahouse is a famous stone water basin, with water continually flowing for ritual purification. This is the Ryōan-ji tsukubai (蹲踞), which translates literally as "crouch;" because of the low height of the basin, the user must bend over to use it, in a sign of reverence and humility.^[16] The kanji written on the surface of the stone basin, 五, 隹, 止, 矢, are without significance when read alone. Though the water basin's frame is circular, the opening in the circular face is itself a square (口). If each of the four kanji is read in combination with 口 (the square-shaped radical is pronounced kuchi, meaning "mouth" or "aperture"), which the square opening is meant to represent, then the characters become 吾, 唯, 足, 知. This is read as "ware, tada taru (wo) shiru", which translates literally as "I only sufficiency know" (吾 = ware = I, 唯 = tada = merely, only, 足 = taru = be sufficient, suffice, be enough, be worth, deserve, 知 = shiru = know)^[16] or, more poetically, as "I know only satisfaction". Intended to reinforce Buddhist teachings regarding humility and the abundance within one's soul, the meaning is simple and clear: "one already has all one needs". Meanwhile, the positioning of the tsukubai, lower than the veranda on which one stands to view it, compels one to bow respectfully (while listening to the endless trickle of replenishing water from the bamboo pipe) to fully appreciate its deeper philosophical significance. The tsukubai also embodies a subtle form of Zen teaching using ironic juxtaposition: while the shape mimics an ancient Chinese coin, the sentiment is the opposite of materialism. Thus, over many centuries, the tsukubai has also served as a humorous visual koan for countless monks residing at the temple, gently reminding them daily of their vow of poverty. Notwithstanding the exquisite kare sansui rock garden on the opposite side of the building, the less-photographed Ryōan-ji tea garden is one of the most sublime and valued cultural treasures the temple offers to the world.



Ryōan-ji's tsukubai (蹲踞), the basin provided for ritual washing of the hands and mouth

Images of Ryōan-ji



Entrance to the Temple territory



Close up of the zen garden



Kyoyochi Pond, created in the 12th century as a water garden



Sanmon gate to the temple



Temple bell at Ryōan-ji



Gardens of Ryōan-ji



The garden outside the teahouse (winter)



Lake and bridge outside the Kuri, the main hall (summer)



Interior of the Kuri, the main temple building

See also

- List of Special Places of Scenic Beauty, Special Historic Sites and Special Natural Monuments
- Higashiyama Bunka in Muromachi period
- Japanese garden
- Japanese rock garden
- For an explanation of terms concerning Japanese Buddhism, Japanese Buddhist art, and Japanese Buddhist temple architecture, see the Glossary of Japanese Buddhism.
- Tourism in Japan
- List of compositions by John Cage

Notes

1. Nitschke, *Le Jardin japonais*, pg. 88–89
2. Moscher, G. (1978). *Kyoto: A Contemplative Guide*, pp. 277–278.
3. See, for example, Michel Baridon, *Les Jardins*, Nitschke, *Le Jardin Japonais*, and Elisseff. *Jardins Japonais*
4. Nitschke, *Le Jardin Japonais*, pg. 89
5. Danielle Elisseeff, *Jardins japonais*, pg. 61.
6. Young and Young, *The Art of the Japanese Garden*, pg. 108–109.
7. Miyeko Murase, *L'Art du Japon*, pg. 183.
8. Kuitert, *Themes, Scenes, and Taste*, in the *History of Japanese Garden Art*, pg. 114–124 and 293–295.
9. 森神逍遥『侘び然び幽玄のこころ』桜の花出版、2015年 Morigami Shouyo, "Wabi sabi yugen no kokoro: seiyo tetsugaku o koeru joi ishiki" (Japanese) ISBN 978-4434201424
10. Nitschke, *Le Jardin Japonais*, pg. 90.
11. Kuitert, *Themes, Scenes, and Taste*, in the *History of Japanese Garden Art*, pg. 122, 124
12. Whittington, Stephen. "Digging in John Cage's Garden – Cage and Ryoanji". *Malaysian Music Journal*. Retrieved 12 November 2015.
13. Nitschke, *Le jardin Japonais*, pg. 92. Translation of this citation from French by D.R. Siefkin.



Wikimedia Commons has media related to Ryoanji.

14. Van Tonder, Gert J.; Michael J. Lyons; Yoshimichi Ejima (September 23, 2002). "Perception psychology: Visual structure of a Japanese Zen garden". *Nature* 419 (6905): 359–360. doi:10.1038/419359a. PMID 12353024.
15. Kunstmuseum Wolfsburg (<http://www.kunstmuseum-wolfsburg.de/>), Japanese garden (<http://www.kunstmuseum-wolfsburg.de/special/8/>); Kazuhisa Kawamura, "Japangarten im Hof des Kunstmuseums Wolfsburg" (Japanese garden in the courtyard of the Museum of Art at Wolfsburg); (<http://www.kawa-mura.de/garten/kunstmuseumwolfsburg.html>) excerpt, "Die Proportion, die Dimension und die Art der Gestaltung beider Gärten sind fast identisch." (The proportion, the dimension and nature of the design of both gardens are almost identical).
16. Gustafson, Herb L. (1999). *The Art of Japanese Gardens: Designing & Making Your Own Peaceful Space*, p. 78. (http://books.google.com/books?id=oGirDImSIJwC&pg=PA78&dq=Tsukubai&lr=&client=firefox-a&sig=ACfU3U2o-eRkCuxYKY53911T78_T_BgRKA)

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External links

- Ryōan-ji website (<http://www.ryoanji.jp/>)
- Yamasa Institute's Ryoan-ji: History & Impressions (<http://www.yamasa.org/japan/english/destinations/kyoto/ryoanji.html>)
- Owners URL (<http://www.ryoanji.jp/smph/eng/>)
- GooglePlus (<https://plus.google.com/118291358215540184020/about?hl=en-US>)
- Visit Guide Map (<http://www.ryoanji.jp/smph/eng/guide/grounds.html>)
- jGarden (<http://www.jgarden.org/gardens.asp?ID=24>)
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