



ISHIKIRI TSURUGIYA JINJA



History

Ishikiri Tsurugiya Jinja (Shinto Shrine) traces its origins all the way back to 659 BC, the second year of the reign of Jimmu, Japan's founding emperor. This original jinja was located on what is now known as Mount Ikoma, and the deity Nigihayahi-no-mikoto was worshipped there. In the reign of Emperor Sujin, the deity Umashi-made-no-mikoto came to be worshipped at Shimo-no-sha, the current main shrine of Ishikiri Tsurugiya. From those ancient times up until this very day, the Ishikiri Tsurugiya Jinja has been a place of constant prayer and ritual duty whose aim is to secure the wellbeing of Japan's imperial family, the flourishing of the Japanese nation, and the peace and prosperity of the jinja's parishioners and worshippers.

Foundation

Before Emperor Jimmu's journey into eastern Japan, Nigihayahi-no-mikoto, a grandchild of the sun goddess Amaterasu, made his own journey eastward. Amaterasu bestowed upon Nigihayahi ten divine treasures, and entrusted him with the sacred task of establishing the country of Yamato. Riding on a divine ship, Nigihayahi descended from the heavens and came to a place called Takerugamine—present-day Mount Ikoma. The deity taught the various native peoples how to clear land and plant rice. This was the beginning of agriculture in Japan's Kinki region.



TOKUSA NO KANDAKARA

(THE TEN DIVINE TREASURES)

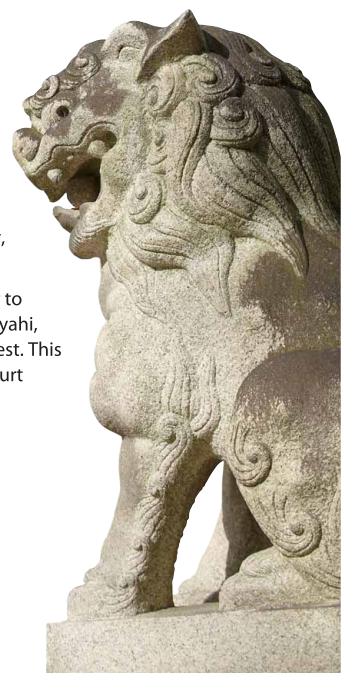
- OKITSU KAGAMI
- HETSU KAGAMI
- YATSUKA NO TSURUGI
- IKUTAMA
- TARUTAMA
- MAKARUKAHESI NO TAMA
- CHIKAHESI NO TAMA
- OROCHI NO HIRE
- HACHI NO HIRE
- KUSAGUSA NO MONO NO HIRE

Notice that the ten treasures are divided into four basic groups: mirrors (*kagami*), a sword (*tsurugi*), jewels (*tama*), and *hire*. *Hire* were light cloth garments that ancient Japanese women wore over their shoulders.

The *Sendai Kuji Hongi*, a Japanese historical chronicle, contains this passage: "The gods proclaimed the following, that if any should be afflicted, hold the ten treasures and count* to ten while swaying from side to side. Sway from side to side. Do this properly, and your dear departed will live again. This is the origin of *furu*, the sacred swaying."

In other words, if you have the ten divine treasures in your possession, you gain the power to bring the dead back to life. It is also written that Umashimade-no-mikoto, a child of Nigihayahi, used the ten divine treasures to lay the souls of both Emperor Jimmu and his empress to rest. This is said to be the origin of *chinkonsai*, a ceremony held to lay to rest the souls of imperial court members.

*In Japanese, the count goes like this: *hi-fu-mi-ya-i-mu-na-ya-kokono-tariya*



HONDEN

(MAIN SHRINE)

This building is where the jinja's chief deity dwells in peace and tranquility. Rituals and religious services are held here. The current main shrine building was constructed in 1932.



GO-SHINBOKU (SACRED TREE)

It is a widely held belief that a spirit dwells in this sacred 500-year-old camphor tree.



TORII (SHINTO SHRINE GATE)

Torii, the gates you see at a Shinto shrine, symbolize the division between the secular and sacred worlds. The instant you pass under a *torii*, your body and mind will be purified.



TEMIZUSHA (RITUAL CLEANSING FONT)

Before praying at a jinja, it is customary to wash your hands and rinse your mouth with water. Thus cleansed, you may now approach the chief deity.

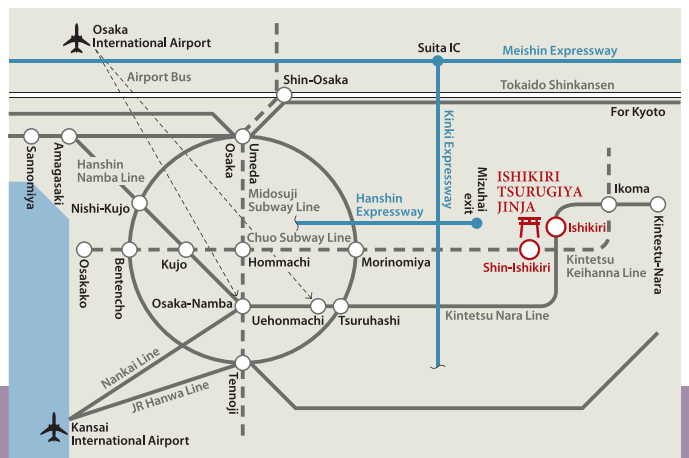
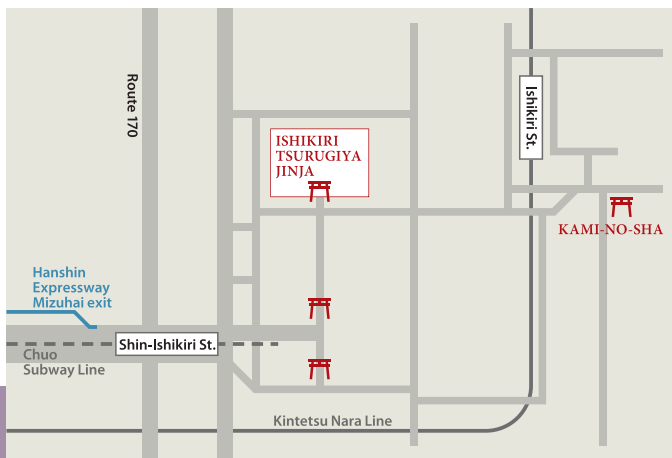


EMADEN

This building holds wooden votive tablets called *ema*, each of which bears an image, typically of a horse. If you would like the chief deity to consider your wish, write it on an *ema*. The current emaden building was constructed in 1961.



GETTING TO ISHIKIRI TSURUGIYA JINJA



From JR Osaka Station: approx. 45 minutes

- Take the Osaka Loop Line to Morinomiya Station
- At Morinomiya, transfer to the Chuo Subway Line train bound for Ikoma
- Get off the Chuo Subway Line at the Kintetsu Keihanna Shin-Ishikiri Station
- Ishikiri Tsurugiya Jinja is about a 7-minute walk from Shin-Ishikiri Station

From Osaka Namba Station: approx. 40 minutes

- Take the Kintetsu Railway semi-express train bound for Nara
- Get off the train at Ishikiri Station
- Ishikiri Tsurugiya Jinja is about a 15-minute walk from Ishikiri Station

From Hommachi Subway Station: approx. 35 minutes

- Take the Chuo Subway Line train bound for Ikoma to the Kintetsu
- Keihanna Shin-Ishikiri Station
- Ishikiri Tsurugiya Jinja is about a 7-minute walk from Shin-Ishikiri Station