

# Walking Around Taishi Town

## Tourist Guide & Map



Famous Ikaruga-dera Temple associated with Prince Shotoku

### 1 "Ikaruga-dera Temple"

In the era of Empress Suiko, Prince Shotoku lectured on the Shoman-gyo Sutra and the Hokke-kyo Sutra to the Emperor. The Emperor was very pleased and gave him rice fields in Harima Province. Prince Shotoku donated the fields to Horyu-ji Temple in a hope to make Buddhism flourish. Later in the Heian era, this place became Ikaruga-no-sho (the Ikaruga shoen estate) in Harima Province (the estate of Horyu-ji Temple). As the core existence of the shoen (manor) management, the Ikaruga-dera Temple was built along with the mandokoro (administrative board), and it has served as the center of faith in Prince Shotoku in the region since then. The Ikaruga-dera Temple, as a branch temple of the Horyu-ji Temple, had the magnificent Shichidogaran (seven major structures) and dozens of iraka roofs of monk's hermitages, however the complex was burned to the ground in an accidental fire on April 7th, 1541, when the Harima Province was confused by the invasion of the Amago clan in Izumo Province. After that, with the donation from Masahide Akamatsu, the lord of Tatsuno-jo Castle and others, which Enkoin Shosen of Mt. Sasa Ensho-ji Temple and others called for, the Garan (Buddhist temples), such as the lecture hall, three-storied pagoda, Taishi mido palace, and Nio-mon gate were reconstructed. Although the temple joined the Tendai sect after the Edo era, it is still worshiped by people in the neighborhood who endearingly call it "Otaishi-san."

#### Who is Prince Shotoku?

Prince Shotoku was a regent of the Asuka period in Japan. He established the Twelve Level Cap and Rank System and the Seventeen-article constitution. He sent Japanese official diplomatic delegations to China during the Sui dynasty and opened diplomatic relations, and tried to introduce the continental culture to Japan. He also made many achievements such as the construction of Horyu-ji Temple, now a World Heritage.



#### Three-Storied Pagoda [National important cultural property] built in 1565

It was reconstructed in 1565. On the rohan (the metal part at the top of the pagoda), a prayer to God for world peace by Masahide Akamatsu, the lord of Tatsuno-jo Castle, is inscribed. Among the Ikaruga-dera Garan (Buddhist temples), the three-storied pagoda is the only one which remained intact since the reconstruction after they were burned down in 1541.



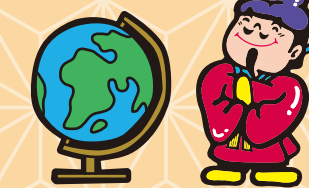
#### Front Hall of Shotoku Palace [Cultural property designated by prefecture] built in 1665

The Honzon (principal image of worship) enshrined in the odo-hall is a statue of Prince Shotoku at the age of 16 years. As the statue represents the figure of Prince Shotoku practicing religious asceticism called Jogyo-zanmai for seven days and nights without a brake praying for recovery of his ill father, the Emperor Yomei, standing at his bedside carrying a egouro (handy incense-burner), it is called "holy statue of Prince Shotoku in his filial duty," or also called "statue of Prince Shotoku with implanted hair," as the statue was implanted with hairs of Prince Shotoku. The main hall was burned down in 1541, rebuilt in 1551 and repaired in 1665. In 1916, the central hall and back hall (Hakkaku-Niju-Endo) imitating the Yume-dono hall of Horyu-ji Temple was additionally constructed in 1916.



#### Prince Shotoku's Globe

The continents of North and South America, Eurasia, Antarctica, and Mu are drawn like reliefs on the surface. There exists a description of "Chichuseki," (literally meaning a stone in the Earth) in Jiho Mokuroku (a catalog) named "Jojumotsu-cho" (list of objects that is used in everyday life) created in 1856, which is considered to refer to the globe.

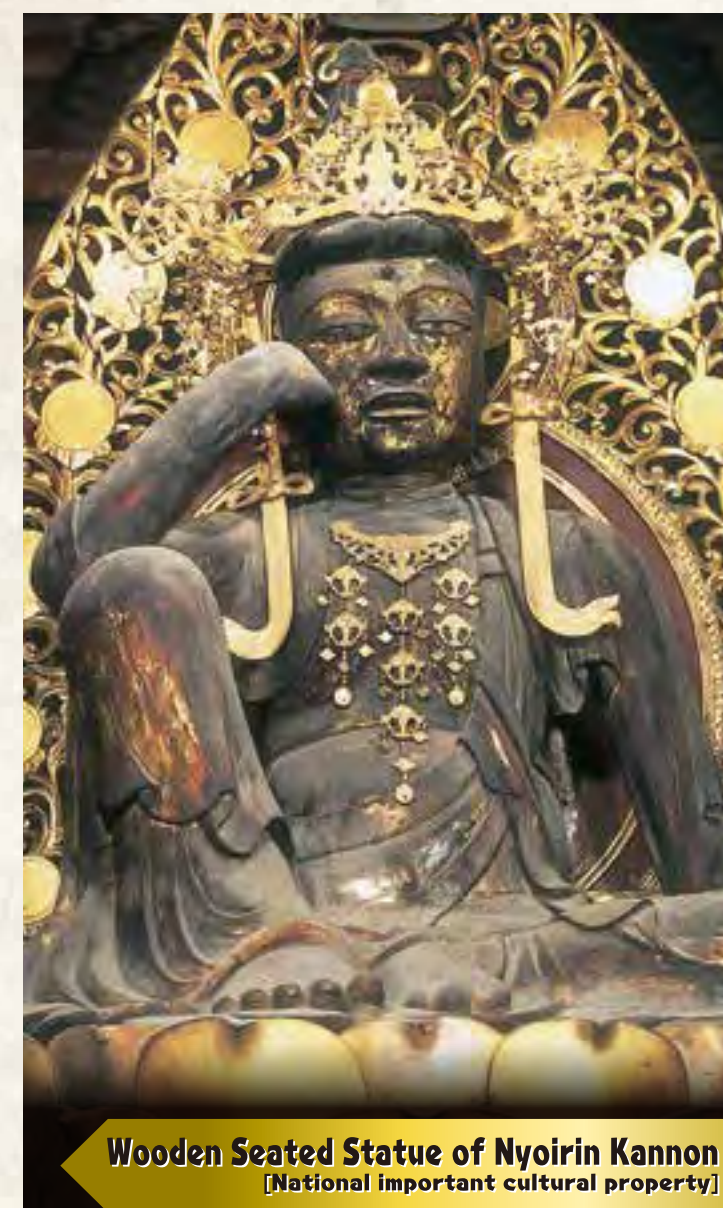


#### Shotoku Taishi Lecturing on the Shomangyo [National important cultural property]

It represents a scene of Prince Shotoku giving a lecture on scriptures on April 15th in 598 which is recorded in the "Horyu-ji Garan Engi narabini Ruki Shizai Cho" (The notebook of the history of Horyu-ji Temple and the record of the materials). Designated as an important cultural property, it is considered to be made in the early Kamakura period. A total of five related persons including Prince Yamashiro no Oe, or Prince Shotoku's son, Koguryo monk Eiji who Prince Shotoku looked up to as his mentor, Dr. Baekje, Gatsuka, Soganoumako, and Ononoimoko surrounding Prince Shotoku appear in the painting. It also depicts a miraculous scene of lotus petals fluttering down to cover all over at the end of the lecture on the third day.



#### Statue of Two-Year-Old Prince Shotoku



Wooden Seated Statue of Nyoirin Kannon  
[National important cultural property]



Wooden Seated Statue of Shaka Nyorai  
[National important cultural property]



Wooden Seated Statue of Yakushi Nyorai  
[National important cultural property]

In the lecture hall, there are three statues as the honzon (principal image of worship): the wooden seated statue of Shaka Nyorai positioned in the center (190 cm in height), the wooden seated statue of Yakushi Nyorai on the right (206 cm in height), and the wooden seated statue of Nyoirin Kannon on the left (245 cm in height), when facing them. The statues were created by imitating the style of the Asuka period somewhere between the beginning of the Muromachi period and the end of the Kamakura period. They are hibutsu (Buddhist statues rarely shown to the public) and unveiled to the public only in the "Harueshiki" (spring ceremony) to be held on the anniversary of Prince Shotoku's death, on February 22nd and 23rd every year.



#### Back Hall of Shotoku Palace built in 1916



#### Nio-mon Gate [Cultural property designated by prefecture] built in 1673





## The Birth Legend of Miyamoto Musashi

### ② “Sekkai Shrine”

The Saijin (enshrined deity) is the Imperial Prince Toneri. Although the precise date of its foundation is unknown, a large camphor tree growing thickly, old lanterns, and ema (votive picture tablet) shows the history of the shrine. The main hall was rebuilt in 1899.

#### ● Who is Miyamoto Musashi?

Miyamoto Musashi, an expert swordsman in the early Edo period, developed "Nito-ryu," a swordsmanship style of using two swords. Tradition says that he never lost in any duels, including the duel with Sasaki Kojiro performed at Ganryu-jima Island. "Gorin no sho (A book of five rings)," written by Miyamoto Musashi is a famous military strategy book depicting esoteric techniques of the Budo martial arts.

#### ■ Monument to Miyamoto Musashi's Birth Place

According to "Harima Kagami" (topography of Harima Province) completed in 1762, Miyamoto Musashi was born in Miyamoto Village, Taishi Town.

In "Gorin no sho," written by Musashi in his later years, he calls himself "a samurai warrior in Harima Province (present Hyogo Prefecture), his birth place. Unfortunately, a large part of the village and most of the historical materials, ancient documents, and genealogical records related to Musashi were destroyed in a fire in the Horeki era (1751 to 1764). And, another big fire in 1887, reduced all the remaining historical materials and ancient documents to ashes. Currently, only an old unused well remains at the place which is said to be former site of Miyamoto family's residence. ※A muku tree (a type of elm) with tragic scars standing in the grounds of Kiyoshikojin-Seichoji Temple which people call "Kojin-san," tells the story of big fires.



### ③ “Kurooka Shrine”

Surprised by a sudden attack by the Shilla's warship in 764, the Imperial Court ordered Sadakuni Fujiwara who was skilled in archery and said to be able to shoot through even an iron target to put down the great army, by giving him the family name of "Ikuwa," literally meaning the "target," and the title of Seitaishogun (Supreme Commander in Chief). He set off to war with the help of the strong wind and successfully cut off the head of the opponent's leader.

Sadakuni was granted five districts in Harima Nishi region as an award for his great achievement and settled down in Ota-go Takohara, and thrived there for a long time under the name of Ikuwa. Later, Sadakuni was worshiped and defied as the god of Kurooka-myojin.

Sugawara no Michizane who is known as deity of scholarship, is also enshrined in Kurooka Shrine due to a connection that he once temporarily stayed in Takahama of Hirohata and visited the shrine on his way to Tsukushi (a region in southern part of Japan).

### ④ Saint Tokudo Hall & Ubuyu no Ido (the water well used for the first bath of Saint Tokudo)



There is a hall of Saint Tokudo in the western end of Yatabe, Taishi town, who founded the thirty-three holy places in the Kansai region of Japan for the Goddess of Mercy which is the oldest pilgrimage routes with a history of about 1,300 years. According to "Hosoki," topography of Harima Province, Saind Tokudo was a native of Yatabe village, Ibo-gun, Harima. The water well used for the first bath of Saint still remains in the grounds of Seiko-ji Temple.

#### ● Who is Saint Tokudo?

Saint Tokudo was a monk in the Nara period who established Hase-dera Temple in Yamato Province and also involved in the construction of shrines and temples in various places, such as Kinosaki Onsen-ji Temple, contributing to inspire religious faith in people and to spread Buddhism.

### Place of Prince Shotoku and Miyamoto Musashi

#### Walking Around Historical Site

#### Access to Ikaruga-dera Temple

- Get off at Aboshi Station, JR Sanyo Main Line.  
◀North Exit▶ Taxis available.
- ◀South Exit▶ Take Shinki Bus bound for Yamasaki for about 10 mins. get off at Ikaruga bus stop, and walk about 300 meters.
- Take Shinki Bus bound for Tatsuno from Himeji Station-mae for about 30 mins. get off at Ikaruga bus stop, and walk about 300 meters.

