

# Chūson-ji Temple



中尊寺

## Four-Temple Journey

Visit four major Tohoku temples attributed to Jikaku Daishi Ennin, an exemplary priest of the Tendai sect, and collect stamps at each one to receive a certificate from the priests. The temples are Chūson-ji and Mōtsū-ji in Hiraizumi, Zuigan-ji in Matsushima and Risshaku-ji (Yamadera) in Yamagata.



## Seasonal Events

Setsubun [2/3]

Spring Fujiwara Festival [5/1~5]

Bonfire Noh [8/14]

Daimonji Festival [8/16]

Chrysanthemum Festival [10/20~11/15]

Fall Fujiwara Festival [11/1~3]

## Along the Way

Arriving at the top of Tsukimizaka (the Moon Viewing Slope) the great roof of Chūson-ji's Hondō is visible on the right. Here you can get the traditional vermilion stamp pilgrims receive at temples and shrines, and purchase some Kanzan incense and healthy, delicious Kōnencha tea.



## Chūson-ji Office

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# Chūson-ji Temple

Hiraizumi is seeking U.N.E.S.C.O. World Heritage inscription in 2008. Then, it is hoped that the philosophy of peace espoused by the Ōshū Fujiwara family, who ruled Hiraizumi in the 12<sup>th</sup> century, will be recognized worldwide.

In the latter half of the 11<sup>th</sup> century two bitter wars were fought in Ōshū, the northeastern area of Japan. The first Fujiwara lord Kiyohira lost his father, wife and children in these conflicts, yet he realised that hatred and revenge could never heal the sorrow.

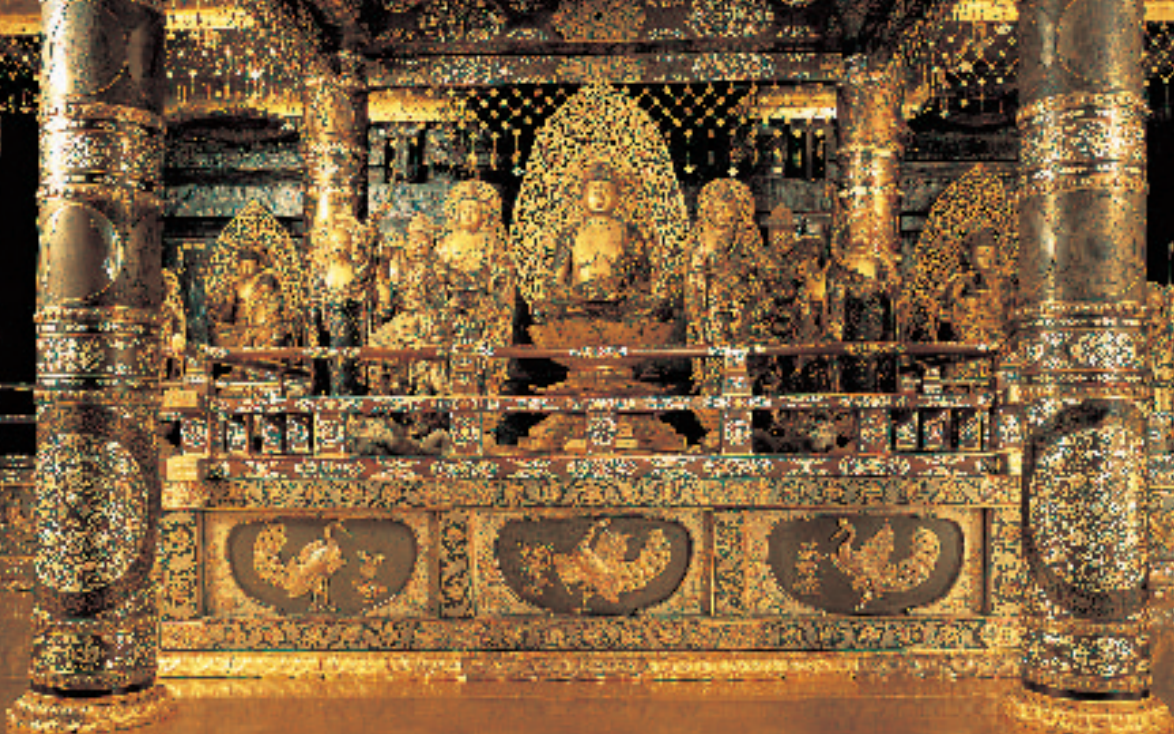
Instead he offered a pledge before Buddha to console the spirits of the dead, whether friend or foe, human or animal.

## Kyōzō (Sutra Repository) 《Important Cultural Property》

The Sutra Repository stands next to the Konjikidō (Golden Hall). It was built by Kiyohira to house an



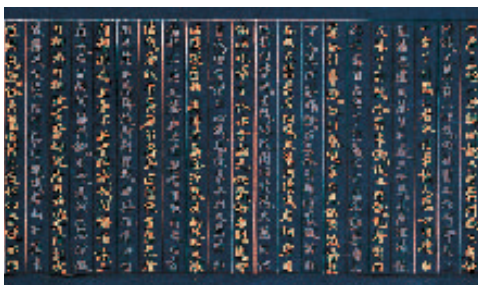
extraordinary collection of copies of the Buddhist canon known as the Chūson-ji Kyō (Chūson-ji Sutras). Visit in the fall when Chūson-ji's red maple leaves are at their most beautiful.



## Chūson-ji Kyō (Chūson-ji Sutras)

《National Treasure》

Complete transcriptions of the holy canon of Buddhism on deep blue paper in gold ink or alternating lines of gold and silver ink. Three generations of the Ōshu Fujiwara devoted their lives to the meritorious act of sutra transcription.



## Hondō (Main Hall)

The centre for services and rituals at Chūson-ji Temple. Almost all Buddhist services take place in the Main Hall. Additionally, members of the general public are able to copy the sutras and practice Zen seated meditation here.



Hondō (Main Hall)

## Sankōzō (Museum)

The museum contains more than 3,000 treasures from the time of the Ōshu Fujiwara. Among them are three massive seated Buddhas, burial accessories from the Konjikidō (Golden Hall) and sections of the Chūson-ji Sutras.



Sankōzō (Museum)

## Konjikidō (Golden Hall) 《National Treasure》

The Konjikidō (Golden Hall) was completed in 1124. The principal image is of Amida (Buddha of Infinite Light) and the magnificent decoration is meant to represent his Pure Land western paradise. The inlay work of iridescent shells, the Southeast Asian rosewood and African ivory show the extensive trade network at that time.

The Konjikidō is the only remaining example of a building from the Fujiwara-era to be found at Chūson-ji Temple. Between 1962 and 1968, extensive preservation and restoration work was carried out on the Konjikidō, returning it to its former brilliance.

The mummified remains of four generations of Fujiwara lords rest inside the daises.