



Keishun-in: A Subtemple of Myōshin-ji

A nationally designated garden and a discreet legacy of tea culture



Main Entrance Gate, Keishun-in

At a Glance

FOUNDED 1598

LOCATION Ukyō Ward, Kyoto

PRINCIPAL IMAGE Yakushi Nyorai, the Medicine Buddha

FOUNDER

Tsuda Hidenori

PRESENT TEMPLE COMPLEX

Largely established in 1631–1632

KNOWN FOR

Its garden, Kanō-school paintings, and Kihaku-an tea room

Overview & History

Keishun-in is a subtemple in Kyoto's Myōshin-ji temple complex. Tsuda Hidenori, the second son of Oda Nobutada, founded it as Kenshō-in in 1598. From 1631 to 1632, Ishikawa Iki-no-kami Minamoto no Sadamasa developed the principal buildings, including the hōjō, kuri, shoin, and tea room.

Sadamasa renamed the temple Keishun-in by combining kei (桂), from his father's posthumous Buddhist name, with shun (春), from his mother's. Its early Edo-period architecture, paintings, gardens, and tea culture remain closely intertwined.

Highlights

The temple's Zen traditions, historic architecture, and tranquil gardens come together to create a setting for contemplation and spiritual practice.

01

The Hōjō and Kanō-school Paintings

Built in 1631, the hōjō enshrines Yakushi Nyorai as the temple's principal image. Its rooms retain monochrome fusuma paintings by Kanō Sansetsu, including landscapes, a crow on a withered tree, an old pine, and a waterfall.



One of Keishun-in's Four Gardens

02

Keishun-in Garden

Nationally designated as a Place of Scenic Beauty, Keishun-in Garden combines a dry landscape garden south of the hōjō with roji-style gardens to the east. The garden comprises four distinct sections representing the stages of a practitioner's path toward enlightenment. Their plantings and atmosphere change with the seasons.



Kanō-school Paintings in the Hōjō

03

Kihaku-an Tea Room and the Roji

Kihaku-an is discreetly set behind the shoin. Because Myōshin-ji historically emphasized seated Zen meditation and discouraged monks from pursuing tea ceremony and other arts, the tea room and its water basin were deliberately concealed. Its approach passes through outer, middle, and inner roji, creating an atmosphere of quiet austerity.

04

Temple Treasures

The temple preserves works of calligraphy by prominent Zen monks, along with tea bowls, water jars, and tea scoops associated with Sen no Rikyū and Fujimura Yōken. A calligraphic work by Wuming Huixing is designated as an Important Cultural Property.
