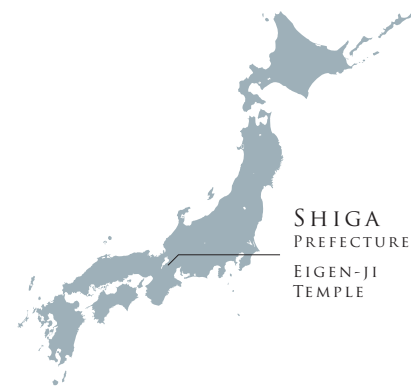


## About Shiga Prefecture

This prefecture is located in central Japan and boasts a rich natural environment. Lake Biwa, the largest lake in the country, occupies about one-sixth of the prefecture, and half of the remaining land is covered with many mountainous and forested areas, such as the Suzuka Mountains. Also, long an important point for land transportation, Shiga has been at the forefront of Japan's cultural and economic development. As a result, it became the base of Omi merchants, who were active throughout the country, and the sight of many battles. Its historical buildings, such as shrines, temples, and castles, are still cherished and preserved for present and future generations. Nature and history intersect in this prefecture, giving rise to many unique spots.



## About Higashiomi City

Located in the southeastern part of Shiga, with the Suzuka Mountains to the east, Lake Biwa to the west, and the Echi River flowing through the center, Higashiomi is like a condensed version of its prefecture's natural environments. Most of the Echi River watershed is within the city limits, so it also retains culture unique to waterfront areas. Furthermore, many precious places related to Japanese history remain in the city. In addition to ancient tombs and historical buildings, it is also said to have the most folklore related to Prince Shotoku, a famous historical figure, in Japan.



## Eigen-ji Temple

The Eigen-ji school is one of the 15 schools that comprise the Rinzaï and Obaku sects, denominations of Zen Buddhism. Eigen-ji Temple, the school's head temple with 127 branch temples throughout Japan, is a historic training center for zazen meditation, self-cultivation, and prayers for peace and safety in the world. A long time ago, a temple complex was built, with Zen master Jakushitsu Genko being brought in as the founder. This was the beginning of Eigen-ji Temple. The temple continued to attract eminent priests, and under the patronage of the Sasaki clan, boasted as many as 2,000 training priests in its heyday. Its rich scenery—such as the foliage that envelops the temple approach and main gate in autumn—is the most beautiful in Omi. Throughout the entire temple complex, visitors can enjoy a vibrant natural environment. Eigen-ji Temple is a component cultural asset of the Lake Biwa and its Surrounding Waters of Japan Heritage.

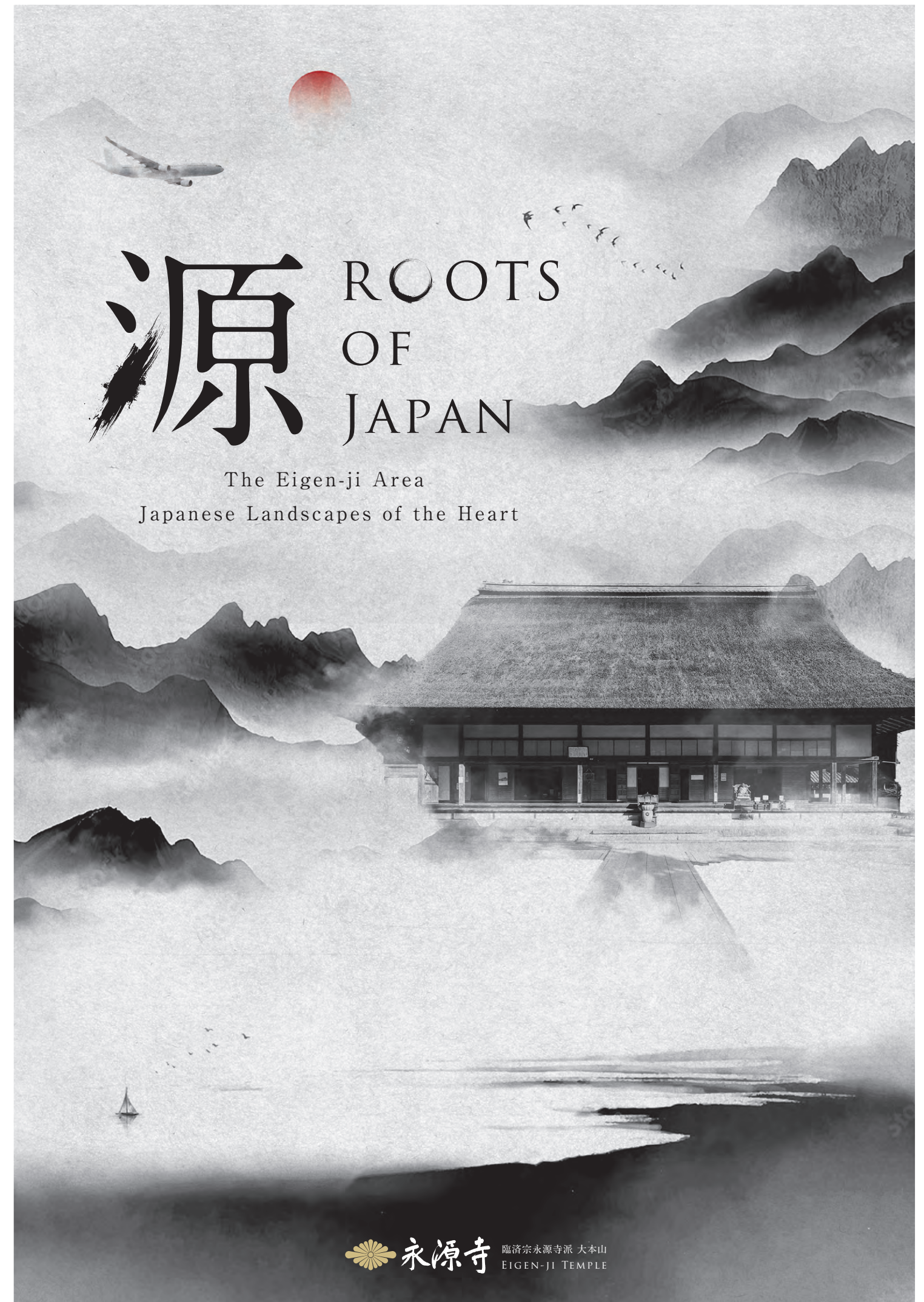


永源寺

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永源寺 臨濟宗永源寺派 大本山  
EIGEN-JI TEMPLE





源 ROOTS OF JAPAN  
The Eigen-ji Area  
Japanese Landscapes of the Heart

Eigen-ji Temple, located in Shiga Prefecture's city of Higashiomi, is the head temple of the Eigen-ji school of the Rinzai sect, a Zen Buddhist denomination. It has long been revered by many people. All around, one experiences scenes dear to Japanese people's hearts. There's the fall foliage, green summer leaves, and other seasonal sites of natural beauty. Close to the temple flows the Echi River, the source of Lake Biwa. Mandokoro tea, cultivated the same way for about 600 years, still conveys what is wonderful about tea grown from old tea trees. Various experiences and programs that draw from these and other wonderful characteristics of Shiga's Eigen-ji area are offered. Here, you are invited to experience the roots of Japan.

Eigen-ji Area Experiences



Zazen Meditation

The history of zazen is very old. It is said to have begun with the practice of the founder of Buddhism, Shakyamuni Buddha. At Eigen-ji Temple, face yourself through this meditation practice that unifies the mind while sitting upright. A priest will carefully explain zazen and its techniques, so those doing it for the first time can feel comfortable participating.

- Details**
- Time required**  
About 1 hour
  - Capacity (reservations)**  
4-15 persons
  - Periods**  
April to July and September to October



Mandokoro Tea

Mandokoro Tea has been cultivated for more than 600 years. It is a well-known choice tea with a long history. It is said that this type of tea had its beginnings when Zen master Ekkei Shukaku, the fifth head priest of Eigen-ji Temple, introduced and encouraged tea cultivation in the Mandokoro area, as it was suitable for tea cultivation. This tea continues to be cultivated from old tea trees that still grow here even today. Some of the trees are more than three hundred years old. The tea is grown completely organically, without pesticides, following traditional cultivation methods. It has a clean and refreshing taste.

- Details**
- Time required**  
About 2 hour
  - Capacity (reservations)**  
4-12 persons
  - Periods**  
April to July and September to October



Buddhist Vegetarian Cuisine

Buddhist vegetarian cuisine is food that avoids ingredients that kill animals or disturb the mind. It is used in Buddhism for religious training. The cuisine is characterized by the use of only ingredients suitable for Buddhist cultivation, such as vegetables, grains, seaweed, beans, nuts, and fruits. In this program, a famous chef from Shiga puts a modern spin on this cuisine to make it more enjoyable. Participants can enjoy a variety of dishes, including tea porridge made with Mandokoro tea, a rare and choice tea grown at Mandokoro in the Eigen-ji area.

- Details**
- Time required**  
About 1 hour
  - Capacity (reservations)**  
4-15 persons
  - Periods**  
April to July and September to October



Sencha Tea Ceremony

Sencha tea ceremony is part of Japan's traditional culture. It uses tea leaves, mainly sencha. The tea is brewed with water boiled in a teapot and then served. Around the 18th century, the Zen priest Baisao helped popularize it as a type of tea ceremony not caught up in forms, and it spread amongst not only the upper classes but also commoners. Baisao said, "Savor a cup of tea more deliciously and more enjoyably. And through tea, cherish each other's hearts and minds." This expresses the philosophy of sencha tea ceremony.

- Details**
- Time required**  
About 1 hour
  - Capacity (reservations)**  
5-20 persons
  - Periods**  
April to July and September to October  
(offered intermittently)

