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Shikoku 88 Temple Pilgrimage – Part 2



14 Days/13 Nights

Shikoku 88 Temple Pilgrimage – Part

Tour Overview

The Shikoku 88 Temple Pilgrimage - Part 2 tour is perfect for those people searching for an active, off-the-beaten-path, culturally immersive Japanese experience. Pilgrimages have been considered the heart and soul of Japanese spirituality for more than 1,000 years. In addition to authentically participating in the pilgrimage, this is also a great way to see the beautiful, rural island of Shikoku. Shikoku has been blessed with a rich cultural and natural heritage, friendly locals, soothing hot springs, and delicious cuisine. Don't have 3 weeks to spare for all 88 temples? Break up the pilgrimage into two parts. This tour will visit from Temples 37 to 88 on the pilgrimage. Part 1 visits Temples 1 to 36.

Destinations

Temples 37 to 88 of the Shikoku Pilgrimage, Osaka, Kochi, Uwajima, Matsuyama, Dogo Onsen, Takamatsu

Tour Factors

Cultural Immersion

★★★★★

Pace

★★★☆☆

Physical Activity

★★★★☆

Tour Details

It is not clear how the pilgrimage began, but it is thought that Kobo Daishi established the pilgrimage in the 9th century by either creating or visiting many of the temples on the pilgrimag. The pilgrimage became popular during the 17th century when the first guidebook was published. It is said that as you follow the pilgrimage route, Kobo Daishi will accompany you and will always be there for comfort and protection.

The objective of the Shikou 88 temple pilgrimage (also called “Henro”) is simple: retrace the footsteps of Kobo Daishi whille traveling the approximately 800 miles (1200 kilometers) and visit all 88 temples. The motives for doing this pilgrimage are varied. Some come for religious reasons, some to pray for healing or safety in the home, or some in memory of those who have passed away. Or some come just to get away from regular life, some for recreation, or some to spend time in reflection and to find oneself.

One of the most charming attributes of the pilgrimage is “o-settai”, or gift-giving. For hundreds of years, locals have supported the pilgrims by giving pilgrims small gifts of food and drinks. This gives you numerous opportunities to meet with the locals one-on-one, making the pilgrimage and this tour a once in a lifetime experience you will treasure forever.

What is the Shikoku 88 Temple Pilgrimage Tour?

This tour is not a highlights tour. You will be visiting Temples 37 to 88 by chartered van/taxi.

This tour is also a great way to see the beautiful, rural island of Shikoku. We have included a free day in the island’s two major cities of Matsuyama and Takamatsu.

Tour Highlights	✔ Visit all 88 Temples ✔ Free Day in Matsuyama and Takamatsu
Tour Inclusions	✔ Travel Guard Gold Policy (for American tour members only) ✔ Meeting service at the arrival airport ✔ Sending service to the appropriate train station ✔ Electronic version of Tour Handbook and Japanese History
Tour Exclusions	✖ Airfare is NOT included. ✖ A printed itinerary is not included ✖ Alcoholic beverages, soft drinks and desserts are NOT included

Map



Tour Destinations

Osaka

Kochi

Uwajima

Matsuyama

Shikoku Chuo

Takamatsu

Itinerary

Day 1 Arrive in Osaka

You will be staying overnight in the city of Osaka. You will be met at Osaka's Kansai Airport or Osaka's Itami Airport, and escorted to the hotel in Osaka. We will leave a message for you at the hotel informing you of the meeting time for the next day. If you would prefer to arrive in Tokyo, contact us for the details. No meals included.

Travel: 1-1/2 Hours; Walking: Light

Day 2 Travel to Kochi

You will travel on your own from Osaka to Kochi. Your train tickets will be waiting for you at your hotel in Osaka. If you are flying into Tokyo, let us know and we can arrange the train tickets from Tokyo for you. Breakfast at the hotel is included.

Day 3 Temple 37 to 40 by van; Cape Ashizuri; Overnight Uwajima

We will visit Temples 37 to 40 by van today. Temple 38 is located near the tip of Cape Ashizuri, the southern-most point of Shikoku. We will also take some time to walk a 2 km (1 1/4 miles) walking path along the top if the 80 meter cliffs covered by sub tropical plants overlooking the waters of the Pacific Ocean. Later in the afternoon, we will drive to the city of Uwajima where we will stay overnight. Breakfast and dinner at the hotel included.

Travel Time – 5 Hours and 45 Minutes
Overnight – Uwajima

Temple 37 – Iwamotoji (Rocky Root Temple)

This was originally a complex of seven temples founded by Gyoki at the order of Emperor Shomu in the 8th century. The number seven stood for the seven good fortunes and for the seven stars described in the Ninnokyu Sutra. This is said to be the start of the Star Festival (Hoshi Matsuri). Kobo Daishi created the five main statues with legends growing up around each one related to its own miraculous powers.

Temple 38 – Kongofukuji (The Temple of Everlasting Happiness)

Founded by Kobo Daishi with the aid of Emperor Saga, the temple is located on the tip of Cape Ashizuri and commonly called Ashizurisan. It is modeled after the Pure Land of Kannon. It is believed one can set sail for the pure land of paradise where Kannon lives from here because Kobo Daishi saw Kannon when looking at the sea. Located on the bluff looking out over the sea, the temple has always enjoyed the patronage of aristocrats, warriors, and noble clans.

Temple 39 – Enkoji (Emitting Light Temple)

Temple 39 was founded by Gyoki in 725 on the orders of Emperor Shomu and later reestablished in 795 by Kobo Daishi when he came and struck a spring in the compound. The spring was known as Hoisui, Treasure Medicine Water. The mountain is called Sekkizan which means Red Turtle Mountain. Legend says that in 911 a red turtle came out of the sea and brought a bell to the temple by carrying it on its back. The pond on the temple grounds (Kame no Ike) is where the turtle lived while it was here.

Temple 40 – Kanjizaiji (The Temple of Kannon)

The temple was founded by Kobo Daishi and he is said to have carved three statues (Yakushi, Amida, and Juichimen Kannon) from the same piece of wood while making three full prostrations before each stoke of the knife. The Hakkaku displays various temple treasures. The Hachitai-butsu is said to fulfill your wish if it is covered with water. This temple is the furthest away from Ryozenji (Temple #1).

Day 4 Temple 41 to Temple 47 by van; Overnight at Matsuyama

We will visit Temples 41 to 47 by van, and then drive to Matsuyama, where we will be staying overnight. Breakfast at the hotel and dinner at a local restaurant included.

Travel Time – 6 Hours
Overnight – Matsuyama

Temple 41 – Ryukoji (Dragon's Ray Temple)

According to legend, Kobo Daishi met Inari-myojin (Rice God) here in 807, in the form of an old white-haired man and founded the temple. Inari, though originally a Shinto divinity, became popular here during the Edo Period. During that time, people would pray to the Rice God for an abundant harvest, however, today many people pray for prosperity in their businesses. This temple has always had many donors and believers, from merchants to samurai. The temple has become the head temple of Inari worship in Japan.

Temple 42 – Butsumokuji (The Temple of Buddha's Tree)

According to legend, in 807, when Kobo Daishi was passing here, he was offered a ride on a cow. While riding, he saw a jewel in the branches of an old camphor tree, and immediately recognized it as a jewel that he had thrown from China. From the same tree Kobo Daishi carved an image of Dainichi Nyorai, placed the jewel on its forehead, and established it as the main statue of the temple. Where Temple 41 is dedicated to rice growing, this temple is dedicated to animal husbandry. Of interest is the belfry with a straw thatched roof and the row of statues representing the seven gods of luck (Shichifukujin) in the temple courtyard.

Temple 43 – Meisekiji (Brilliant Stone Temple)

This temple was founded in the 6th century by Shochu Enjun, under the orders of Emperor Kinmei. Later, a disciple of Enno Gyoja dedicated the gods of the twelve Kumano shrines here and made this the Dojo of the practice for followers of Shugendo. Minamoto Yoritomo (the first Kamakura Shogun) constructed buildings and donated a Sutra mound in the early years of the 13th century. The temple is popularly called Ageshisan (Brilliant Rock Mountain).

Temple 44 – Taihoji (Great Treasure Temple)

In 701, a monk who returned from Korea placed a Kannon statue in the mountain. Two brothers founded the temple while hunting. At the main gate, there are a pair of huge straw sandals that are remade every 100 years. The sister of Emperor Go-Shirakawa was once the chief nun here during his reign in the 12th century. The temple was destroyed by fire in 1873 but later restored. The temple is located in the town of Kuma at an elevation of 1,600 ft. and situated in a calm and quiet forest of cedar trees.

Temple 45 – Iwayaji (Rock Cave Temple)

Legend states that the temple was donated to Kobo Daishi by a mysterious female recluse named Hokke-Sennin. Kobo Daishi carved two statues of Fudo, one in stone and kept in a cave at the rear of the temple, and the other in wood and enshrined in the main hall. By keeping the stone statue in the cave, Kobo Daishi ensured that the entire mountain needed to be worshipped in order to worship the statue. This way the mountain remained sacred, just as it had been in Shintoism.

Temple 46 – Joruriji (Pure Emerald Temple)

The temple was founded by Gyoki in 708 and later restored by Kobo Daishi. The temple was destroyed by fire in the 17th century but rebuilt 80 years later by the priest Gyu-on, a famous social worker who constructed eight bridges on the Tosa highway. In addition to a 1,000 year old tree, you will find stone images of the Buddha's foot prints at this temple. If you stand on the Buddha's foot prints (with bare feet, of course), any pain in your feet will immediately disappear. Emon Saburo, who is credited as being the first person to complete the 88 temple pilgrimage (see Temple 51), came from this area. Look for a large stone engraved with a haiku written by Masaoka Shiki, one of Japan's greatest poets.

How long the spring day is!
Remembering Emon Saburo
At Joruriji.

Temple 47 – Yasakaji (The Temple of Eight Slopes)

In Kobo Daishi's time, eight paths led up the mountain to the temple and hence the name, the Temple of Eight Slopes. The statue of Amida, attributed to Eshin Sozu of the 11th century, and the statue of Bishamon-ten, of 13th century origin, are classified as Important Cultural Properties. There is also a stone pagoda and stupa from the same time period. This temple has prospered as a place for Shugendo training. The temple is dedicated to the gods manifested at Mt. Kumano in Wakayama-ken.

Day 5 Free Day in Matsuyama

Today is a free day to tour Tokushima or to just rest. Breakfast at the hotel included.

Day 6 Visit Temples 48 to 51

We will walk from temples 48 to 51. Breakfast at the hotel is included.

Travel Time – 1 Hour
Overnight – Matsuyama

Temple 48 – Sairinji (West Forest Temple)

Founded by Gyoki in 741 several kilometers from here, the temple was moved to its present location by Kobo Daishi in 807, at which time he carved and enshrined the statue of Kannon. The main statue, which has never been shown to the public, has been placed facing backwards. So most people go to the back of the main hall to worship. To the right of the main hall, there is a "parent bamboo" and a "child bamboo" which are believed to assist with harmony at home. As he did at many of the other temples on the pilgrimage, Kobo Daishi created a spring at this temple by striking his staff into the ground.

Temple 49 – Jodoji (Pure Land Temple)

The temple was founded by Gyoki as a place for Empress Koken to pray and at one time was quite large, with 66 branch halls and 7 affiliated temples. All were burned in 1416 and later rebuilt by the Kono clan of Iyo Province on a much smaller scale. Kuya Shonin (903-972), the founder of the Kuya School of Tendai Buddhism, stayed here for three years. The local people were so sorry to see him leave, they asked that he carve a statue of himself. Kuya's grave is only 1 cho (109 meters or about 357 feet) from the temple and pilgrims are supposed to visit.

Temple 50 – Hantaji (The Temple of Great Prosperity)

This temple is commonly called Hata-dera (Farm Temple) and was founded by Gyoki. Kobo Daishi changed the name to its present name while he spent considerable time here. Ippen Shonin, founder of the Jisho Sect trained and studied here in the 13th century. At one time it had 36 temple buildings and governed 120 sub-temples, but little of that remains after the effects of both fires

and war. Within the Shoten Hall, there is a deity which is said to assist with passing exams, having a prosperous business, warding off misfortune and assuring a good relationship between husband and wife. As you approach the temple, look for the sixty-meter concrete statue of Kobo Daishi on the mountain ridge behind the temple.

Temple 51 – Ishteji (Stone Hand Temple)

Legend states that a rich and stingy man, named Emon Saburo, lived in Ebara village, Iyo Province (today's Ehime Prefecture). One day someone came to his door begging for food. Saburo refused and pushed him away. The next day he came again and Saburo again pushed him away, this time a little more forcefully. This continued in the same manner until the eighth day when Saburo completely lost his temper and threw the monk's begging bowl to the ground shattering it into eight pieces. The beggar said nothing and simply walked away. It was at this time Saburo learned the beggar was actually Kobo Daishi.

The next day one of Saburo's eight sons died for an unknown reason. Each day thereafter another of his sons died until by the eighth day he had lost all his sons. Realizing what he had done, Saburo repented his stingy ways and made up his mind to repent for all the sins he had committed before and find Kobo Daishi to beg his forgiveness.

Saburo began walking around the island in a clockwise manner looking for him. Not finding him on his first trip around he began again. He walked the complete pilgrimage 20 times, but had still had not found him. So he decided to walk it in reverse order, hoping that this would allow their paths to cross. On this, his 21st pilgrimage, he met Kobo Daishi at the base of the mountain leading to Temple 12. However, by this time he was completely worn out and was dying.

He begged forgiveness and repented all his wrong-doings. Kobo Daishi told him that his hard work on the pilgrimage and his repentance had washed away his sins and asked if he had any last wishes. Saburo told him that he hoped he would be reborn as the lord of Iyo Province so that he would have the power to do good. He swore that in his next life he would atone for all the wrong-doings he had done in this life.

Kobo Daishi picked up a small stone, wrote something on it, and placed it in Saburo's hand, at which time he passed away quietly. Kobo Daishi buried his body beside the trail and marked the grave by planting Saburo's staff in the ground. That staff eventually grew into a great cedar tree.

Later, in the early 17th century, the wife of Ikitoshi Kono (the daimyo of Yuzuki castle) gave birth to a son but the child was never able to open his left hand, even after three years. At last the chief priest of Annyuji (the former name of Temple 51) was called and he succeeded in opening the hand through prayer. When the hand opened, they found a stone on which was written "Incarnation of Emon Saburo."

When this child became an adult he took over as the ruler of Yuzuki Castle and the temple was renamed Ishiteji.

Of interest is the tiny stone that the baby boy held in his hand, a temple museum, and a memorial monument of haiku poems. The temple is in the heart of the city and very near to Dogo Onsen. The main hall and main gate are classified as a National Treasure.

Day 7 Temple 52 to 59 by van

Today we will visit temples 52 to 59 by van. Breakfast at the hotel included.

Travel Time – 4 Hours 15 Minutes
Overnight – Matsuyama

Temple 52 – Taisanji (Big Mountain Temple)

The temple was built by Mano Kogoro, a wealthy merchant from Kyushu. He built it to honor

Juichimen Kannon for saving him from shipwreck on a voyage to Osaka in the 6th century. When he washed ashore after the wreck, he saw a bright light on the mountain's peak and followed it. When he arrived, he found the statue of Juichimen Kannon and founded the temple on the same spot. The temple holds a festival every year on March 17th in memory of Mano. The main hall is considered a National Treasure and is constructed without the use of a single nail. Legend states that it was built in a single night. This temple has had the patronage of emperors since the time of Emperor Shomu. In the compound is the Hyakudo Ishi (One hundred times stone). It is a large boulder with a hundred pieces of bamboo in a ring on its top. You take a piece of bamboo, walk with it to the main hall, return to the stone, praying continuously as you walk back and forth. After one hundred repetitions, the prayer is sure to be granted.

Temple 53 – Enmyoji (The Temple of Circular Illumination)

The temple was originally founded by Gyoki. At one time this was a monastic community of seven shrines but these burned down in the wars of the 16th century. It was later rebuilt by the feudal lord Shigehisa Suga. The temple houses an interesting statue of the Virgin Mary disguised as Mariya Kannon, which was worshipped by secret Christians during the persecutions of Christians during the Tokugawa Period.

Temple 54 – Enmeiji (The Temple of Long Life)

Located in the hills around Imabari harbor, the temple was founded by Gyoki. Originally, it was located on the top of Mt. Chikami but, as with other temples, was burned down by the warriors of Chosokabe. It was moved to its present location in 1727.

The temple is remembered as the place where the medieval Buddhist scholar Gyonen stayed and wrote a book called The Essential Philosophical Analysis of Eight Buddhist Sects. This is the only temple on the whole pilgrimage with two belfries. One of the bells of this temple was once taken to Matsuyama Castle. However, legend states that once it was there, when it was rung, it's sound sounded like the word "home" so it was promptly returned to the temple.

Temple 55 – Nankoboji (The Temple of Southern Lights)

Founded in the 8th century by Gyoki. When it was founded, it was associated with the Oyamazumi Shinto Shrine of Omishima Island. This association was due to the 9th century theory of Honji-suijaku (True Nature-manifestations) in which Shinto Kami are considered to be manifestations of the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas. It was because of this theory that temples and shrines were usually combined and/or coexisted side by side. This lasted until the early years of the Meiji Period when they were forcibly separated and Shinto was established as the state religion.

Temple 56 – Taisanji (Peace Mountain Temple)

The temple and main statue are both attributed to Kobo Daishi. This temple, like others, was once located on the top of the mountain and later moved to the base. The river near here often floods and has caused great damage and loss of life. On the request of the local people, Kobo Daishi tamed the river by performing a secret ritual on its banks, at which time Jizo Bosatsu appeared. He then built the river's levee, carved a statue of Jizo, and enshrined it in the temple. In front of the Daishi Hall, is a pine tree said to be planted by Kobo Daishi.

Temple 57 – Eifukuji (The Temple of Good Luck)

The temple was founded by Kobo Daishi on the orders of Emperor Saga. The complex started off as a Shrine, but when Kobo Daishi prayed here for safety at sea and stopped a storm with his prayers, Amida Nyorai appeared to him. Kobo Daishi then converted it to a temple, carved the main statue of Amida, and enshrined it here. The temple has been destroyed by fire several times and was deserted for almost a century, but has always remained as a favorite location for people offering prayers for safety at sea, as is Konpira Shrine in Kagawa Prefecture. On each side of the main hall, there are copies of the "Buddhist feet rocks" from the temple in India where Shaka attained enlightenment.

Temple 58 – Senyuji (Hermit in Seclusion Temple)

Legend states that the hermit ascetic Abu recited sutras here for forty years before mysteriously disappearing one morning. The main statue was carved by a pious girl and became the guardian Buddha of Emperor Tenchi. Another legend states the main deitiy was carved by a dragon who swam up the Ryuto River from the ocean. Kobo Daishi made this the 58th temple on the pilgrimage and the Dojo of esoteric disciplining. Local people call this temple Osarei (carving while prostrating yourself) because of the legend that the girl prostrated herself once after every cut of the knife while she was carving. The temple is located at an elevation of 1, 300 ft (390 meters) on the top of the mountain.

Temple 59 – Kokubunji (Official State Temple)

Built by Gyoki on the orders of Emperor Shomu in 741 along with the State Temples in each of the other 66 provinces. The main statue is also attributed to Gyoki. Kobo Daishi is said to have stayed here and to have done a painting of five great deities for this temple. Of interest is the temple museum with its old manuscripts. The Tenno-matsu (Emperor Pine) is said to have been planted by Emperor Shomu as a prayer for cure. The grave of Nitta Yoshisada is here (famous for helping overthrow the Hojo at the end of the Kamakura Period). There is a statue of Kobo Daishi with which you can shake hands and make a wish.

Day 8 Temple 60 to 65 by van; Overnight in Shikoku Chuo

Today we will visit temples 60 to 65 by van. Breakfast at the hotel and dinner at the hotel or local restaurant included.

Travel Time – 5 Hours 30 minutes
Overnight – Niihama

Temple 60 -Yokomineji (Side Summit/Peak Temple)

In 651, En no Gyoja carved a statue of Zao Gongen (a Shinto Kami) and founded this temple. Kobo Daishi came here later and carved the main statue of Dainichi Nyorai, into which he placed the statue of Zao Gongen. The temple was originally an affiliated temple of the holy mountain Ishizuchi-san, which was worshipped as a Shinto Kami. By law, however, it became an independent Buddhist temple in 1869 at the start of the Meiji Period. It is said that through prayers said here, the brain illness of Emperor Kammu (781-806) was cured. At an altitude of 2,340 ft (709 metes), this temple is the second highest temple on the pilgrimage.

Temple 61 – Koonji (Incense Garden Temple)

Kobo Daishi made a vow here to protect children, ease child birth, to sacrifice himself for others and to allow women to become Buddhas. Because of the first of these vows, the temple is popularly known as Koyasu-Daishi, the Daishi of protecting children. The main statue is attributed to Kobo Daishi and it is said that he brought it back with him from China. Legend states that when he was here he relieved a woman of a difficult child-birth. Since then it has remained famous for aiding child-birth. In fact, this temple has, in two generations, gone from being the poorest to being the richest of the 88 temples on the pilgrimage based solely on women’s belief that prayers offered here will enable couples to have children.

Temple 62 – Hojuji (The Temple of Wealth and Happiness)

The temple is attributed to Kobo Daishi who built it on the orders of Emperor Shomu as a place to recite the sutras. Kobo Daishi is also attributed with having carved the main statue. It was carved in the likeness of Shomu’s Empress, Komyo, when she was sick. Shomu dedicated a sutra he had copied himself to the temple. The temple was abandoned in the early Meiji Period and restored by a henro named Ryohen in 1877. It is said the Senju Kannon stone monument, also carved by Kobo Daishi is the oldest stone monument on the pilgrimage.

Temple 63 – Kosshoji (The Temple of Mahasri/Laksmi)

The three statues of Bishamonten (worshipped as the god of wealth), Kichijoten, and Zennishidoji were all carved by Kobo Daishi. The temple was originally on the summit of the mountain, but after being destroyed in a battle between Chosokabe and Kobayakawa warriors, it was rebuilt at the present location. This is the only temple on the pilgrimage that has a main statue of Bishamonten and it was chosen because he was supposed to have appeared to Shutoku Taishi during a battle and to have saved his life. Like Temple 53, this temple also has a beautiful statue of Mariya Kannon (the Virgin Mary disguised as a Kannon) which was entrusted to Chosokabe by a Spanish sea captain. There is a large boulder near the temple entrance with a hole in it. It is said that if you can walk from the Main Hall with your eyes closed and place your staff in the hole your wish will be granted.

Temple 64 – Maegamiji (The Front God Temple)

The temple is located at the foot of Mt. Ishizuchi and was founded by En no Gyoja while he was engaged in ascetic practices on Mt. Ishizuchi, the highest mountain in western Japan. During these practices, both Sakyamuni and Amida appeared to him in the form of Zao Gongen. Because it has long been associated with the worship of the god Zao Gongen in the Shinto tradition, the temple's buildings and shrines are all built in the form of a Shinto shrine. The temple houses a statue of Shaka Nyorai that is attributed to En no Gyoja as well. According to legend, Kobo Daishi once spent 21 days on the top of Ishizuchi Mountain performing a fire ritual.

Temple 65 – Sankakuji (Triangle Temple)

The temple was founded by Gyoki in the late 8th century. In 815 Kobo Daishi performed a 21 day Goma of Victory ritual here and carved the main statue. On the temple grounds is the triangular goma altar used by Kobo Daishi in that ceremony. The temple's name comes from that triangular altar. The ritual performed by Kobo Daishi was done to rid the mountain of a ghost who caused many problems. This temple is also dedicated to easy childbirth but there is a twist. The expectant mother is supposed to pretend to break into the temple and steal a ladle, which she then places under her bed. After the delivery, she brings the ladle back to the temple for someone else to take and hide.

Day 9 Temple 66 to 71 by van; Overnight in Takamatsu

Visit temples 66 to 71 by van. Breakfast at the hotel and dinner at a local restaurant included.

Travel Time – 3 Hours 45 Minutes
Overnight – Takamatsu

Temple 66 – Unpenji (Hovering Clouds Temple)

Kobo Daishi enshrined a Buddhist relic here in 790 and then returned at a later date, founded the temple, and carved the main statue. The temple was dedicated by Emperor Kameyama when he came here and planted a ginko tree which bears a Sanskrit inscription. This temple is the highest of all the temples on the pilgrimage at 3060 ft (911 m). The statues of Kannon and Fudo are National Treasures.

Temple 67 – Daikoji (The Temple of the Great Growth)

This temple was founded by Kobo Daishi on the orders of Emperor Saga in 822. The temple has been associated with the three Kumano Shrines since its founding in 822. At one time it contained twenty-four Shingon Halls and twelve Tendai Shrines. At that time it was under the joint management of both the Shingon and Tendai Sects. Most of these buildings were burnt down in the 16th century by Chosokabe's warriors. The large camphor tree in the compound was planted by Kobo Daishi. Like many other temples on the pilgrimage, this temple was burned by the warriors of Chosokabe Motochika in the 16th century.

Temple 68 – Jinnenin (The Temple of God's Grace)

In 703, the monk Nissho had a vision here. Seven colorful clouds arose on the western horizon and hovered over the mountain of this temple (Mt. Kotohiki). Suddenly a ship floated on the sea and the god Hachiman appeared to Nissho playing a Koto. Nissho dedicated the ship and its Koto to the temple and placed them at the top of the mountain. Later, Kobo Daishi painted the Kotobiki (harp playing) Hachiman in the form of Amida Butsu and dedicated that to the temple as well. The picture of Amida is now a National Treasure. Kobo Daishi is also attributed with having carved the main statue. Temple 68 and 69 are located next to each other.

Temple 69 – Kannonji (The Temple of Kannon)

Nissho founded this temple as well, and Kobo Daishi carved the main statue which is considered to be the incarnation of Empress Jingu. This temple is thought to be a special place to pray for victory in battle. This is because at the time of the Mongol invasions, Emperor Kameyama came here and prayed for the safety of the nation. One priest manages both Temple 68 and Temple 69. Temple 69 has several National Treasures, including an icon of Buddha entering Nirvana, Fudo Myoo, and painted scrolls of the temple's legend of Kotobiki Hachiman. Interestingly, this temple doesn't have a Daishi Hall.

Temple 70 – Motoyamaji (Headquarters Temple)

The temple was founded by Kobo Daishi in 807 at the request of Emperor Shomu, and it is said that he built the main hall in a single night. Unlike most other temples on the pilgrimage, this temple has not been burned down and is now classified as a national treasure. Legend states that it was spared the ravages of Chosokabe's armies when they were driven away by a huge swarm of bees that lived at the temple. The main statue and his supporting deities Amida Nyorai and Yakushi Nyorai were all carved by Kobo Daishi and are National Treasures.

Temple 71 – Iyadaniji (Eight Valley Temple)

This temple was constructed and founded by Gyoki. The temple was originally called Yakunidera (Eight Counties Temple) because it sat on a hill overlooking eight provinces. Emperor Shomu donated a treasure tower and a rice field to the temple. When Kobo Daishi was studying here a five-handed sword fell from the sky hence it was also called the 5 sword temple. There are more than 1500 carvings of Amida Buddha and his attendants in the rock wall behind the temple. Kobo Daishi is said to have come here frequently from the time he was seven until he was thirteen, at which time he started to wander farther from home.

Day 10 Free Day in Takamatsu

Today is a free day in Takamatsu. Breakfast at the hotel included.

Day 11 Visit Temples 72 to 76

Today we will walk from temple 72 to temple 76. Breakfast at the hotel is included.

Travel Time – 2 Hours 15 Minutes
Overnight – Takamatsu

Temple 72 – Mandaraji (Mandala Temple)

Originally called Sesaka-dera, the temple was built in 596 and was the ancestral temple of the Saeki clan into which Kobo Daishi was born. When he returned from China, he dedicated the mandalas signifying the worlds of the cosmic Buddha and enshrined the Dainichi Nyorai as the main statue. Kobo Daishi modeled the temple after Ch'ing-lung-si Temple in China (Shoyuji) and it took three years to build. Once built, it was renamed to its present name. Of interest is the Ageless Pine Tree in the temple courtyard. It is a huge (but not tall) dome-shaped tree and maintained in

the form of a circle. It is said that Kobo Daishi himself planted the tree here.

Temple 73 – Shusshakaji (The Temple of Shaka Nyorai's Appearance)

When Kobo Daishi was seven years old, he climbed to the cliffs above the temple here and, after vowing to save all sentient beings, threw himself over the edge saying "If my desire to save all beings will be achieved the Buddha will save me. If not, let me die." As we know, his future works were assured when a company of angels appeared and saved him by catching him in their robes. Because of this legend, this site is popularly called Shashingatake (the Jumping Cliff).

Temple 74 – Koyamaji (Armor Mountain Temple)

The temple received its name because the mountain is shaped like a helmet, or the armor of Bishamonten. The temple was founded by Kobo Daishi. He also carved the main statue in appreciation for the successful completion of the reconstruction of Mannoike (Manno Irrigation Pond), which he supervised and directed. According to another legend, Kobo Daishi met an aged man here while searching for a good site on which to build this temple. A sage came out of a cave and said, "I am a sage who gives meritorious power and propagates good teaching. If you build your temple here, I will protect it throughout the ages." Kobo Daishi immediately cut out a piece of the rock and carved the image of Bishamonten.

Temple 75 – Zentsuji (Right Path Temple)

Famous as the birthplace of Kobo Daishi, this was the first Shingon temple in Japan. Along with Koya-san and Toji in Kyoto, this temple is one of the three most important sites related to Kobo Daishi. Its name derives from his father's name Yoshimichi (Zenstu), which literally means 'Right Path.' Legend states that the temple was built on sand from the eight sacred places of India, which had been given to Kobo Daishi by his teacher Hui Kuo. It took six years to complete construction and was dedicated in 816 (or 813). Kobo Daishi also is credited with carving the main status. The chief priest was traditionally appointed by the emperor himself. Be sure to visit the tunnel corridor (Kaidan Meguri) in the basement. You must walk the one hundred yards through the tunnel and past 88 Buddhas without a lamp. Evil people are supposed to get stuck in the tunnel. Also in the tunnel is a small square, said to mark the exact spot of Kobo Daishi's birth.

Temple 76 – Konzoji (Golden Storehouse Temple)

Konzoji was founded in 714 by Wake-no-Michi-maro, the grandfather of Enchin (814-891), also known as Chiso Daishi. Chiso, a nephew of Kobo Daishi and the sixth patriarch of Tendai Buddhism who was born here. At one time the temple owned 132 residential halls for monks but extensive fires in the 16th century destroyed most of it and was rebuilt on a smaller scale by the lord of Takamatsu castle. Of interest are the self-portrait of Chiso Daishi, a statue of him in the compound, a residential home for General Nogi, and the Tsuma-gaeshi-no-matsu (a pine tree under which the general's wife used to wait for him during military duties). This pine tree is also called the Waiting Pine because 'matsu' means both 'to wait' and 'pine tree.'

Day 12 Temple 77 to 83 by van

Today we will visit temples 77 to 83 by van. Breakfast at the hotel included.

Travel Time – 2 hours 45 minutes
Overnight – Takamatsu

Temple 77 – Doryuji (The Temple of Arising Way)

Wake no Michitaka founded the temple in 749 to repent for accidentally shooting his nurse with an arrow. At the same time, he carved a small statue of Yakushi from a mulberry tree and enshrined it as the temple's honzon. Kobo Daishi later carved a larger statue of Yakushi and placed this smaller one inside. Chisho Daishi established the custom of giving annual Lotus Sutra lectures here and carved statues of the Five Guardian Deities. For several centuries, both Tendai and

Shingon monks were sent here by imperial order to study and it was designated an official place of imperial worship.

Temple 78 – Goshoji (The Temple of Illuminating Local Site)

The temple was founded by Gyoki and originally called Dojoji. It was later rebuilt by Kob Daishi and yet again by St. Ippen in the 13th century. When St. Ippen rebuilt it, he also converted it to the Jishu sect of Pure Land Buddhism and changed the name to its present name. At the time, there was an ongoing battle on Mt. Koya between Shingon priests and wandering lay priests who also lived on the mountain part of the year and believed in the efficacy of chanting the Nembutsu. Eventually the battle got too bloody for anyone to stand and the matter was taken to the Shogun to settle. He ordered non-Shingon priests off the mountain and they ended up going to Shikoku and settling at this temple.

Temple 79 – Tennoji (Emperor's Temple)

This temple is popularly called Shotoku Tennoji (Emperor Shotoku's Temple) because his coffin was preserved and worshipped here for a short time after his assassination at Tsutsumigaoka in 1156. In the temple compound is the Yasoba fountain where the body of Emperor Shotoku was cleaned daily for twenty-one days after his death before being moved to Temple 81 for burial. The fountain looks like a pond in the dim shade of big trees. Legend states that Kobo Daishi carved a statue of Yakushi in stone, dedicated it in this fountain, and performed an esoteric rite. As an indication of how remote the pilgrimage is for foreigners, a woman at the Nokyosho said that while the temple receives about 100,000 visitors each year, on average only one of them is non-Japanese.

Temple 80 – Kokubunji (The Official Site Temple)

The temple was founded by Gyoki in 741 at the request of Emperor Shomu for the protection of the nation. The sixteen-foot Kannon is considered to be the finest and largest statue on Shikoku and has eleven faces and forty-two arms. The main hall is from the Kamakura period and is the oldest physical structure remaining of all the Kokubunji. Its bell is also one of the oldest in Japan. Both the bell and the main hall are considered a National Treasure. The walkways of this temple are lined with stone sculptures, each representing one of the eighty-eight temples on the pilgrimage.

Temple 81 – Shiromeniji (White Peak Temple)

The temple was founded by Kobo Daishi. Chisho Daishi later added forty-seven buildings to the temple. The main statue is attributed to Chisho-Daishi who carved it from a shining piece of wood he found floating at sea. At the time he found it, a white-haired sage appeared to him and said, 'This is the holy site in which to turn the wheel of Dharma and enter Samdhi.' The temple also contains the mausoleum of Emperor Shotoku, who was assassinated near Temple 79 in 1156 after being banished from Kyoto following an unsuccessful coup attempt against his brother, the current emperor. The mausoleum was built in 1414 and is located behind the temple. This temple has some of the oldest buildings on the pilgrimage and the main hall dates back to the turn of the seventeenth century. The three main buildings are in the permanent shadows of overhanging trees. The trees are so thick that a tiny grotto and spring that have formed are in near darkness.

Temple 82 – Negoroji (Fragrant Root Temple)

This temple was founded by Kobo Daishi before his trip to China in 804. Chisho Daishi, a nephew of Kobo Daishi, carved the Senju Kannon from cherry wood and enshrined it here at the request of a local Shinto kami, Ichinosemyojin. At a later date, the temple was lavishly patronized by Emperor Go-Shirakawa, owned 99 branch temples, and possessed a thousand koku of rice. But, like many of the temples on Shikoku, most of this was destroyed by fire in the 16th century. This temple is located on the same plateau as temple 81. Legend states that in the 16th century, a devil animal with an ox head and a body like a fox appeared frequently on this plateau and scared the local people. A brave samurai named Kurando Yamada, an archery expert, shot the devil, cut off its head, and brought it to the temple in memory of the dead devil. The people called the animal Ushi-

oni and believed that it had the power to purge an evil force. Later, they built a statue of the Ushi-oni near the fountain in the temple compound.

Temple 83 – Ichinomiyaji (First Shrine Temple)

The temple was founded by Gien in 704. It acquired its present name when the Ichinomiya Shrine was built in the temple compound in 716. Kobo Daishi stayed here from 806 to 810. The temple is commonly called Sanuki Ichinomiya (The Shrine Temple of Sanuki). There are several small torii in the compound. Pilgrims crawl (on hands and knees) through the torii to purify themselves of bad karma and to ward off any evil influences. In 1679 the temple was declared separate from the Tamura Shrine on the orders of the lord of Takamatsu Castle, Yorishige Matsudaira. Of interest are three tombs dating from the 13th century and called the Ichinomiya Goryo.

Day 13 Temple 84 to 88 by van; Drive to Osaka; Overnight Osaka

Today, we will visit temples 83 to 88 by van, and then return to Osaka. Breakfast at the hotel and the final dinner at a local restaurant is included.

Travel Time – 5 Hours
Overnight – Osaka

Temple 84 – Yashimaji (Roof Island Temple)

Kobo Daishi built the main hall and carved the main statue in 815. The Senju Kannon main statue was carved by Kobo Daishi. The temple is near the site of the Battle of Gempei where the Genji and the Heike fought at the end of the 12th century. Of interest are the snow garden at the temple, the old battle site, and a museum containing relics from that battle. The temple's belfry is also from the Kamakura Period.

Temple 85 – Yakuriji (Eight Chestnuts Temple)

This temple is located on Go-ken-zan (Five sword mountain) and was founded by Kobo Daishi in 827 after five swords appeared in the sky. The top of the mountain has five huge rocks on the top, as the name also signifies. On the way to China to study, he planted 8 baked chestnuts here and on his return he found that they had grown into great trees, hence the temple's name. As with most temples, Chosokabe's warriors burned the temple down in the 16th century, but it was rebuilt by the Lord of Takamatsu Castle, Matsudaira. Thousands of people visit here on the 16th of every month to pray for their business success.

Temple 86 – Shikoji (The Temple of Fulfilling One's Wish)

One of the daughters of Fujiwara Kamatari went to China to become a concubine of the T'ang emperor Tai-tsung. Once there, she sent back three tiny but precious jewels for her brother's use in work on Nara's Kofukuji. Unfortunately the boat sank near Shido Bay and the three jewels were stolen by the Dragon King. Her brother, Fubito, disguised himself and married a female diver in the area in order to recover the jewels. Eventually the wife gave birth to a son and at that time promised to recover the jewels on the condition that the husband promise to make the son his heir. Through a heroic dive, the woman recovered the jewels, but at the cost of her life because the Dragon King saw her and she only got away by slitting herself and hiding the jewels inside her body. She was dead when she reached the surface. The son, Fusasaki, became the heir and the ancestor of the northern branch of the Fujiwara aristocracy. The jewels sit between the eyes of the Shakuson statue at Kofukuji in Nara. This temple was built by the son and by Gyoki in the 694 as a memorial to her and remains dedicated to the spirits of the dead (hence a strong association with Emma, the King of Hell).

Temple 87 – Nagaoji (Long Tail Temple)

The temple was founded by Gyoki in 738. Kobo Daishi came here later and, in keeping a vow he made before leaving for China, performed a fire ritual for the first seven nights in January and

distributed amulets to the assembled people. This is the origin of the Daikaiyofuka-ubai (The Rite of Chasing a Good Fortune). During this festival, there is a race where people carry a large mochi. This race is famous through out Japan. Of interest is the tomb of Shizuka Gozen, the lover of Minamoto Yoshitsune. After his death, she was ordained and entered the religious life here. The East Gate of the temple was moved from the temple to Ritsurin Garden during the Edo Period.

Temple 88 – Okuboji (Large Hollow Temple)

This is the last temple of the circuit and has been appropriately named Kechigan-sho, the place of fulfilling your vow. The temple was founded by Gyoki in 717. It was later rebuilt by Kobo Daishi when he carved the main statue and enshrined it here with his staff. In commemoration of his trip to China, he enshrined his staff at this temple. Likewise, it is now customary for all pilgrims to leave their walking stick here after they complete their pilgrimage. Of interest here are the numerous crutches left by people who been miraculously cured during their pilgrimage.

Day 14 Sayonara

It is time to day Sayonara. We will provide a sending service to Osaka's Kansai Airport or Osaka's Itami Airport. If you would prefer to leave from a Tokyo airport, contact us for the details.

Walking level descriptions:
Light – 0 to 2 miles on level ground
Medium – 2 to 4 miles on level ground or 0 to 2 miles on hilly ground
Heavy – 4 to 6 miles on level ground or 2 to 4 miles on hilly ground

Dates & Pricing

Dates	Price (land only) / Single Supplement (All prices are per Person)	Status
May 10, 2027 - May 23, 2027	$8,111.25/ $946.57	Available
Oct 25, 2027 - Nov 7, 2027	$8,111.25/ $946.57	Available

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- Lodging for 21 nights in western style hotels or Japanese style ryokans

- Meals
  - Japanese-style or Western-style breakfast every morning (Please Note: Some ryokans offer Japanese breakfasts only.)
  - No lunches
  - Eight Japanese-style or Western-style dinners at the hotels/ryokans or local restaurants

- The appropriate amount of free time to allow you to explore and discover your own personal Japan.
- All transportation costs when traveling with the group. (Transportation costs during scheduled free times are the tour member's responsibility.)
- Electronic version of itinerary
- Sayonara dinner at the end of the tour

- Baggage transfer from the hotel in Osaka to the hotel in Tokushima (one bag only)
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- Baggage transfer from the ryokan/hotel in Kochi to the ryokan/hotel in Matsuyama (one bag only)
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- Baggage transfer from the hotel in Takamatsu to the hotel in Osaka (one bag only)

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Exclusions

- Airfare is NOT included.
- A printed itinerary is not included
- Alcoholic beverages, soft drinks and desserts are NOT included

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