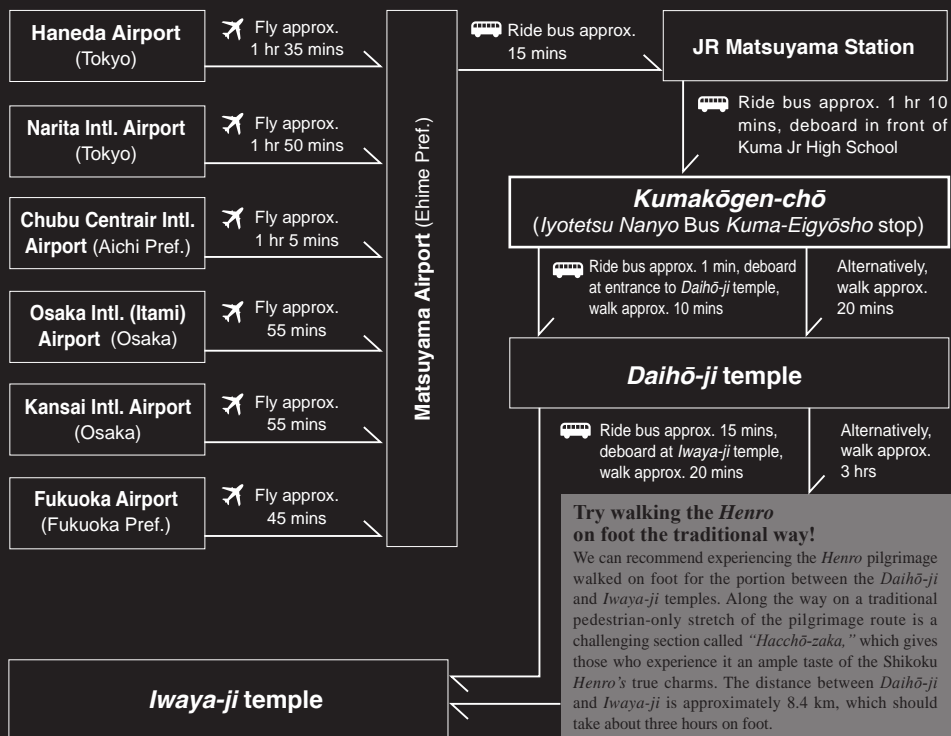


## Access



## Lodging in Kumakōgen-chō convenient for Shikoku Henro pilgrims

**Petit Hotel GardenTime** 0892-21-0005  
 1470-1 Kuma, Kumakōgen-chō, Kamiukena-gun, Ehime

**DENKO Coffee & Rest** 0892-21-0092  
 1363-1 Irino, Kumakōgen-chō, Kamiukena-gun, Ehime

**Minshuku Ichiriki** 0892-21-0505  
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**Omogo Ryokan** 0892-21-0024  
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**Minshuku Wasaji** 0892-41-0651  
 1528-1 Shimohatanokawa-kō, Kumakōgen-chō, Kamiukena-gun, Ehime

**Vacational rental Minpaku Takano-Tenbōdai**  
 090-4472-0143  
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 0892-41-0550  
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**Kumakōgen Furusato Ryokō-mura Nature Resort Group**  
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 488 Shimohatanokawa-otsu, Kumakōgen-chō, Kamiukena-gun, Ehime

**Haccho-zaka Japanese Inn** 0892-41-0678  
 1609-7 Shimohatanokawa-kō, Kumakōgen-chō, Kamiukena-gun, Ehime

**Kokumin-shukusha FURUIWAYASŌ** 0892-41-0431  
 1636 Naose-otsu, Kumakōgen-chō, Kamiukena-gun, Ehime

**Kadotaya** 0892-57-0801  
 1500 Nanatori, Kumakōgen-chō, Kamiukena-gun, Ehime

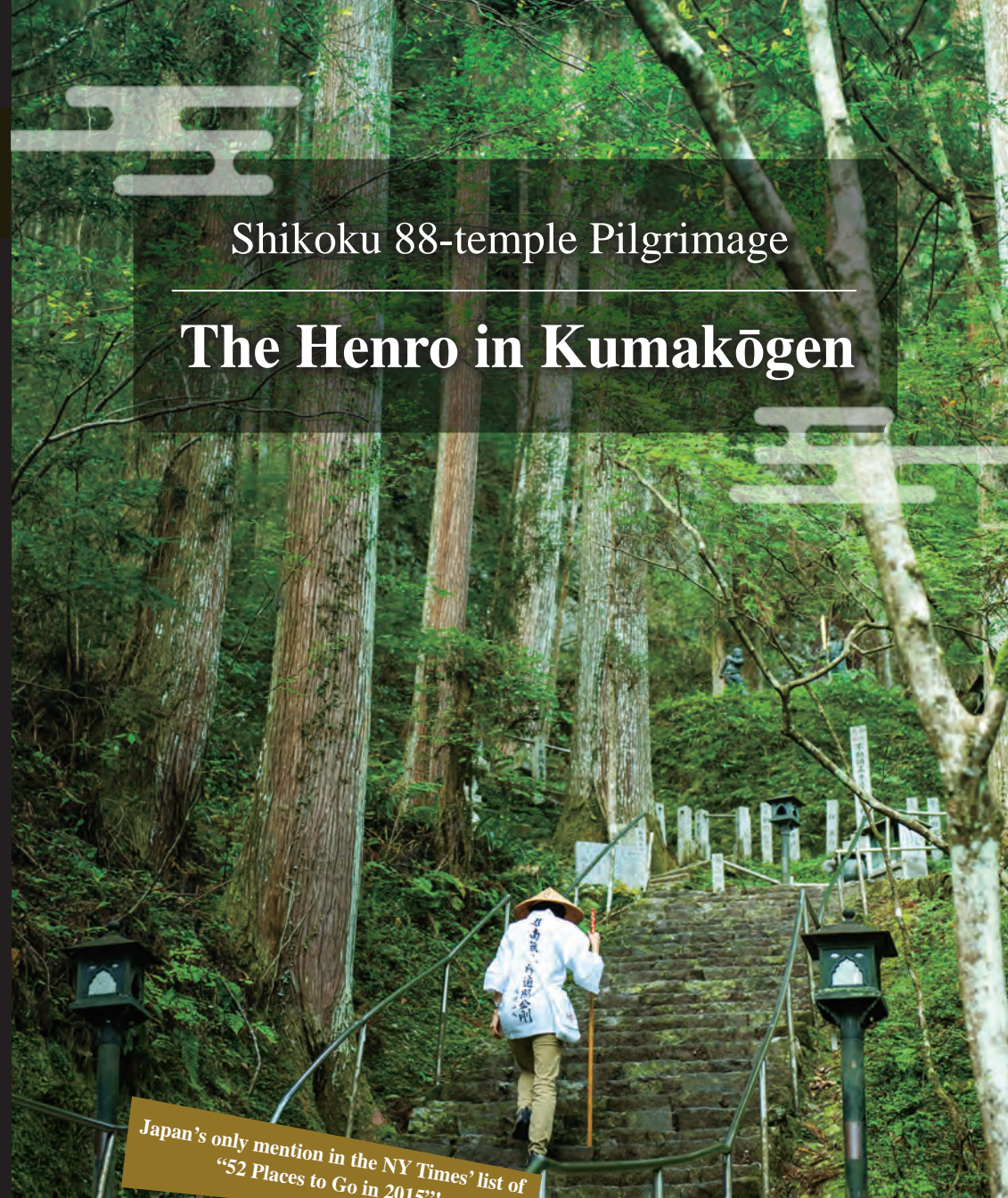
For inquiries regarding sightseeing in Kumakōgen-chō  
**Kumakōgen-chō Tourism Association**  
 0892-21-1192 <https://kuma-kanko.com/>



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**Kumakōgen-chō Town**  
 0892-21-1111 <https://www.kumakogen.jp/>



# Shikoku 88-temple Pilgrimage The Henro in Kumakōgen



Japan's only mention in the NY Times' list of  
 "52 Places to Go in 2015"!

Shikoku's pilgrimage of 88 sacred sites was featured in the NY Times as being among the power spots of the world offering access on foot with relative peace of mind, and the accompanying photo was of the *Sandō* approach path to *Iwaya-ji* temple. Leading the way up a steep hillside, the approach beckons pilgrims on to enter the path of spiritual practice.

## Shikoku's Henro Pilgrimage —

The Henro is a pilgrimage route of approx. 1400 km in total length that retraces the footsteps *Kōbō-Daishi (Kūkai)* took in the course of spiritual training about 1200 years ago. Eighty-eight temples referred to as *Fudasho* are located along the route, and traveling to each one of them provides a path all the way around the island of Shikoku. Shikoku's *Henro* is a rare instance of pilgrimage culture in which all comers are welcomed warmly regardless of faith or ethnicity, and for this it is attracting attention from around the world.

Nestled among the mountains of Ehime Prefecture, the town of *Kumakōgen-chō* is home to two *Fudasho* with differing characters: *Daihō-ji* temple, as the 44th stop the midway point of the pilgrimage, and *Iwaya-ji* temple, the 45th. In between these two *Fudasho* is located "*Hacchō-zaka*," a hilly portion of the route known as a challenging section, and pilgrims' lodgings as well. Here are found the charms of Shikoku's *Henro*—with the soothing effects of nature and of people's hospitality—in concentrated form.



Statue of *Kōbō-Daishi* at *Iwaya-ji* temple

Kumakōgen-chō

## Temple-Visiting Etiquette

Though one's frame of mind is the most important aspect in giving prayers at temples, familiarity with the proper protocol will offer more meaningful encounter with Japanese culture to visitors.

### 1 *Sanmon* (Temple gate)



Join hands in prayer and make a bow before passing through the gate onto the temple precincts.

### 2 *Chōzuba* (Hand-washing basin)



Scoop water with a ladle to rinse left hand, then right.



Pour water from a ladle into cupped palm and use it to rinse mouth.



Tip the ladle upwards to rinse and purify its handle with the remaining water.

### 3 *Shōrō* (Bell tower)



Strike the bell once before giving prayers. Striking afterwards is considered inauspicious.

### 4 *Hondō* (Main temple hall)



Offer a candle. Lighting from already lit candles is strictly prohibited.



Offer three incense sticks in the incense burner.



Quietly insert a monetary offering into the receptacle.

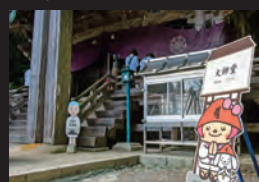


Insert an *osamefuda* (votive card) into the receptacle.



Take the rope in hands to sound the *waniguchi* (slit-mouthed gong) once.

### 5 *Daishi-dō* (Hall with enshrined *Kōbō-Daishi*)



Give prayers with the same protocol as at the main temple. The girl signboard marks the way.



Join hands in prayer.



For advanced learners of Japanese

Chant the Heart Sutra.

### 6 *Nōkyō-sho* (Sutra-submission office)



Request *nōkyō* (sutra-submission) to receive characters written in black sumi ink and vermilion seals. *Nōkyō* is provided with the "*O-mie*," or incarnation of the temple's main object of worship, the *Go-honzon-sama*. The fee for *nōkyō* on washi paper is ¥310.

### 7 *Sanmon* (Temple gate)

Leave through the *Sanmon* (temple gate), and join hands in prayer and make a bow in the same manner as Step 1.



*Daihō-ji*, a temple that has experienced fires 3 times in the past. Its stately *Hondō* (main hall) with copper-sheeted roofing was rebuilt in the *Taishō* Period (1912-1926).

A mountain temple standing in a forest cloaked in silence

## No. 44: *Sugōsan Daikaku-in* *Daihō-ji* temple

The temple is said to trace its origins to the enshrinement of an 11-faced *Kannon* (*Avalokiteśvara*, the Goddess of Mercy) bodhisattva statue discovered by a hunter during the reign of Emperor *Yōmei* (585-587). Situated in a deep, dense forest with towering trees including *sugi* Cryptomeria cedar and *hinoki* cypress, some over 800 years in age, it is a well-known location for viewing autumn foliage as well. Furnished with worshipper-oriented *Shukubō* (temple lodgings), with the facilities accepting reservations for groups of 10 or more. Individual lodgings may be available even on days when group reservations have been made. The flavors of vegetarian *shōjin-ryōri* can be experienced at mealtimes.

2-1173 *Sugō*, *Kumakōgen-chō*, *Kamiukena-gun*, Ehime  
0892-21-0044



An 11-faced *Kannon* bodhisattva statue located between the main *Hondō* and *Daishidō* (hall with enshrined *Kōbō-Daishi*). The 11-faced *Kannon* that is the temple's *Go-honzon* (main object of worship) is carefully safeguarded as an "absolute *hibutsu*," a Buddhist image never unveiled.

## — Highlights —

## *Daihō-ji* temple



At the left and right sides of the entrance are *Kongō Rikishi* (Deva king) statues.



Straw sandals much greater than a person's height

### ● *Sanmon* (Temple gate)

At the large *Sanmon* that stands tall at the end of the *Sandō* approach path are enshrined *Kongō Rikishi* statues said to have been created in the *Muromachi* Period (1333-1573). The oversized straw sandals hung at the entrance are replaced once every 100 years.



A bell tower donated with prayerful hope. Shown here is the "Bell of Equality."

### ● *Shōrō* (Bell towers)

*Daihō-ji* features 2 bell towers, a feature rare among holy sites. To the left as one faces the *Hondō* main hall is the "Bell of Peace," and on the right, the "Bell of Equality." Be sure to give a listen to the tones of each.



The huge ginkgo tree next to the *Nōkyō-sho* (sutra-submission office)

### ● Huge ginkgo tree & *Bashōzuka*

The huge ginkgo tree here is marked with a past lightning strike. Still bearing ginkgo nuts without withering, its robustness impresses worshippers. Next to the tree stands the *Bashōzuka*, a stone monument engraved with a verse by *Edo*-Period (1603-1868) haiku poet *Matsuo Bashō*.



The towering cliff composed of conglomerate stone dwarfs the *Hondō* main hall. Depressions in the adjacent rock give the cliff a face-like appearance.

Sacred mountain site nestled among cliffs at 700m elevation

## No. 45: Kaigan-zan Iwaya-ji temple

When *Kōbō-Daishi* entered these mountains in search of a sacred place in 815, he encountered *Hokke-Sennin*, a female hermit with supernatural flying abilities. Deeply devoted to *Kōbō-Daishi*, she made an offering of the whole mountain to him and passed away in peace. It is said that *Kōbō-Daishi* then carved an image of the deity *Fudō Myō-ō* (Acala) and made the whole mountain a *Honzon* object of worship. The temple area, where there remain sites of ascetic practices related to *Kōbō-Daishi*, have been designated a National Place of Scenic Beauty, and the temple's *Daishi-dō* hall with its Western-style design is a nationally-designated Important Cultural Property.

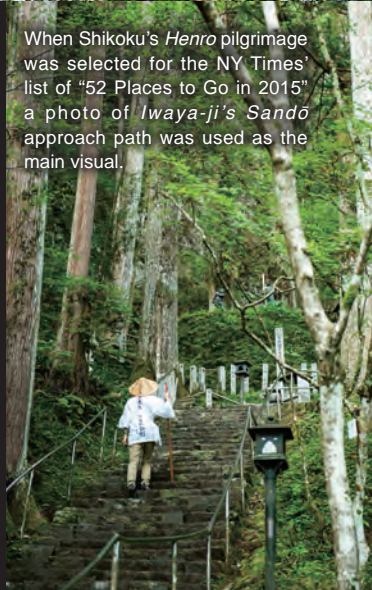
1468 Nanatori, Kumakōgen-chō, Kamiukena-gun, Ehime  
0892-57-0417 Official website <https://shikoku88-iwayaji.com>



Rose motifs decorate pillars in the *Daishi-dō* hall.



When Shikoku's *Henro* pilgrimage was selected for the NY Times' list of "52 Places to Go in 2015" a photo of *Iwaya-ji's Sandō* approach path was used as the main visual.



A statue of the *Michibiraki-Fudōsen* deity appears as if on the verge of vanishing into the moss-covered rock face.



## Iwaya-ji temple

### Experience Japanese culture

Offered by advance reservation only. Groups of 5 to 15 may be accommodated by consultation on other dates than certain designated dates.



Meditating while gazing with half-shut eyes at the Sanskrit letter "A" symbolic of *Dainichi Nyorai* (*Vairocana Buddha*).

#### ● Aji-kan (esoteric meditation)

A practice in which meditating while maintaining consciousness of breath provides calming effects. Afterwards, participants can enjoy conversing with the temple's chief priest over tea and confections.

#### ● Shakyō (Sutra-copying)

Participants copy sutras, instilling prayerful wishes into each individual character. Since the sutras are traced from copybooks that can be seen through the paper, familiarity with *kanji* characters is not essential in order to give it a try. Participation fee: ¥1,500



#### ● Shabutsu (Buddhist image-tracing)

Participants trace images of Buddhist paintings such as the deity *Fudō Myō-ō* (Acala), who is *Iwaya-ji's Go-honzon* (main object of worship). While the images are traced from samples that can be seen through the paper, individual characteristics are still reflected in the finished work. Participation fee: ¥1,500



### Visit sites of spiritual training



The refreshing view from the recession in the cliff offers visitors a sense of accomplishment.

#### ● Site of the Hokke-Sennin-dō hall

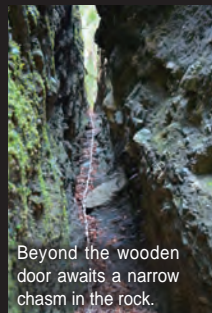
In a recession in the rock cliff next to the *Hondō* main hall is a place where many monks are said to have practiced spiritual training. A ladder provides relatively easy access.



A cavern dug 10-odd meters beneath the *Hondō* main hall.

#### ● Seriwari zenjō

A training site used since antiquity by practitioners of *Shugendō* mountain worship. Climb up the precipice through a chasm between huge boulders, relying on the ladder and chain, aiming for the top. The wooden door providing access to the site requires a key that can be borrowed from the *Nōkyō-sho* (sutra-submission office) for ¥300.



Beyond the wooden door awaits a narrow chasm in the rock.

#### ● Ana zenjō

It is said that an image of the deity *Fudō Myō-ō* carved out of stone by *Kōbō-Daishi* himself is sealed in this cavern. Visitors who probe their way into the darkness will find three enshrined Buddhas and miraculous water bestowed by *Kōbō-Daishi* that springs forth.