

Welcome to the historic Chichibu 34 Kannon pilgrimage! Please enjoy walking the route whether to discover the history, seek help from Kannon bodhisattva, or enjoy the scenery and hiking.

For pilgrims in the Edo period, this was the first temple they arrived at. The main Kannon hall with its crimson walls is adorned with intricate carvings of paradise to the left and hell to the right above the door. In front of the main hall are eight guardian deities which each protect people born in different years of the Zodiac. You can find the deity for your birth year and pray for good fortune and health. You can purchase pilgrimage goods at the little shop in the office.

The first thing that grabs your attention is the pair of enormous straw sandals hanging over the gate. After entering through the gate you will find the temple compound filled with nearly 1300 stone Buddha statues. There is even an image of a deity swearing off alcohol while sitting on a sake barrel! However the most popular statue is that of the loving mother, Jibo Kannon, in front of the main hall. The expression of the young mother nursing her baby invokes the Virgin Mary, and many people visit to pray for children and families.

As you enter the temple compound, you will be met by a magnificent maple tree. The beautiful carpet of moss, the moss-covered statue of Kannon and the six Jizo statues create a peaceful temple atmosphere. It is even more gorgeous when the maple leaves turn red. In front of the main hall you will find a copper statue of Binzuru (also known as Pindola Bharadvaja). It is said that if you stroke part of the statue, you can heal that part of yourself.

This temple is also known locally as Ameyakushi. One of the buildings in the temple compound is dedicated to Yakushi, the Buddhist god of medicine, who is believed to have the power to cure eye ailments, and many people visit to pray for the health of their eyes. You can also drink green tea that is good for the eyes. It is said that when a pilgrim rotates the hexagonal shelf that houses 1630 precious sutras, they will be blessed as if they have read all the sutras.

The main hall is the widest of all the 34 temples, and the contrast between the black roof tiles and white walls is beautiful. The garden is also lovely but the most fascinating part of this temple is the innermost sanctuary called the Iwaidō. After walking a while, passing through the factory grounds, climb the 300 steep stone steps and you will find the hall built in harmony with nature. Standing on a platform jutting out from the cliff, the hall is reminiscent of Kiyomizu Temple in Kyoto.

You will be greeted by two frightening statues of Niō guardians on either side of the gate, the largest such stone statues of Niō guardians in Japan. After climbing 296 stone steps, you reach the Kannon hall situated at the base of a cliff in the most spiritual and peaceful atmosphere. To the left of the waterfall you can see thousands of small images of Buddha carved in the sandstone. It is said that Kobo Daishi carved these in a single night using his fingernails.

You will be struck by the imposing statue of a Nio guardian in the temple gate and the expression on the demonic Hannya mask. Pass through the gap in the rocks just before the Kannon hall and up the rough mountain path and steep rock face, you will reach the Oku-no-in, or inner sanctuary, at the top of a giant rock. On the edge of the rock stands a statue of Boat Kannon and further on Daishichi Nyorai. Buddha is waiting in the shadow of the rock. The rock can be slippery and dangerous. Great care must be taken.

and it is necessary to check the timetables

Hashidate-do is set at the foot of an imposing 65m cliff. The image of the horse-headed Kannon who devours evil is extremely rare as there are only two such images among the temples of the Japan 100 Kannon pilgrimage. This deity also protects against traffic accidents and many people visit to pray for safe journeys in traffic. The limestone cave in the temple grounds is a cool spot even in summer. However, the cave is closed from December to February.