



Introduction to Tōfuku-ji temple

Tōfuku-ji is one of the Five Great Zen temples in the Kyoto Mountain system. It is a big temple complex in southern Kyoto with 24 sub-temples.

Another remarkable feature of this temple is the big mountain gate (山門 - *sanmon*). It is the oldest *sanmon* in Japan. Enni Ben'en built this temple in 1236. He was a Japanese priest that went to China to study Zen Buddhism. Enni is also believed to have imported the Udon wheat noodles — until today one of the most popular dishes in Japan.

① A founding priest is the first head priest of a temple. Usually, a rich and influential person donated money for the construction and often also named the founding priest. In Tōfuku-ji's case, the rich man behind the temple is Kujō Michiie (1193 - 1252).

① Kinzan Meishō lived during the Muromachi Period when the court was separated into the Southern and Northern Court. He studied in China and founded several temples in Japan.