

Points to See in Sugō Jinja

6 Great Camphor (Power Tree)

Without thinking, people turn their steps to this tree and hold their hands over the trunk. People talk about it as a tree that holds spiritual power.

7 Heart Stone

This heart-shaped stone was dug up west of the main sanctuary a few years ago, during refurbishment work. Is this a blessing from Susano'o, a kami of relationships? A heart-shaped stone feels like good fortune, right?

8 Koma Inu

These statues have lovable chubby faces. The words carved on the bases of the statues are a bit unusual, and the four characters make up a Chinese phrase meaning that the blessings of the ruler are spread over the entire country.

9 Nobori Banner

The writing on the eastern banner means, "For those who do not venerate the kami, there are no kami".

10 Nobori Banner

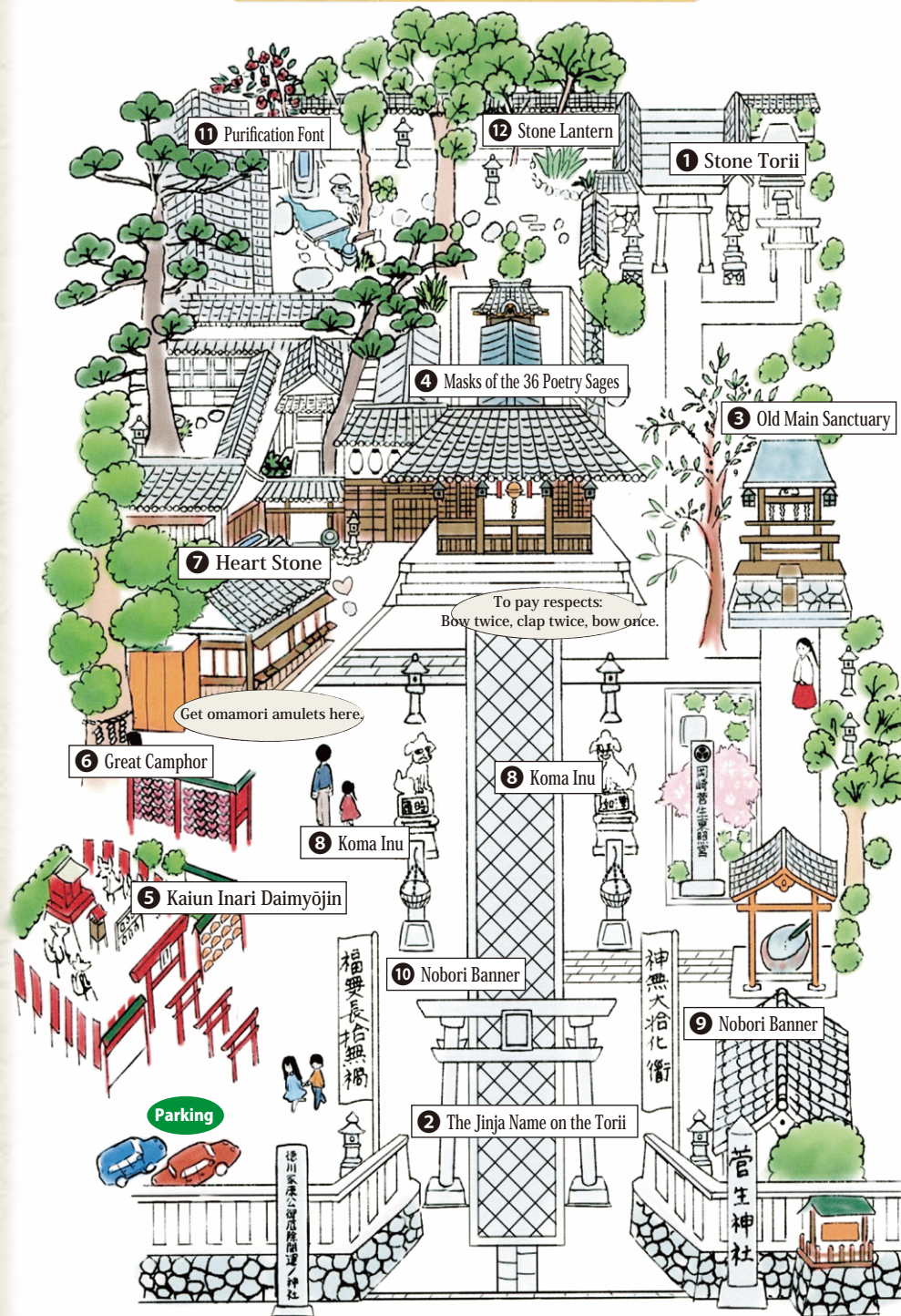
The writing on the western banner means, "Uneventful days are blessed".

11 Purification Font

This was donated by the Matsudaira in the late seventeenth century. It is said to be particularly elegant, even for the products of that period.

12 Stone Lantern

This lantern was made in the late seventeenth century, and was originally in Okazaki Castle. It was later offered to the jinja.



Please feel free to wander around the jinja precincts. There are lots of interesting things to discover!



1 Stone Torii

This torii was donated by the lord of Okazaki Castle, Honda Tadatoshi, in 1638, and is a designated cultural property of Okazaki City.

2 The Jinja Name on the Torii

This was written by the son of the last lord of Okazaki domain, in the late nineteenth century.

3 Old Main Sanctuary (Currently Sōreisha)

This was donated by Honda Tadatoshi, around the same time as the stone torii. It is said to be the oldest building within Okazaki

4 Masks of the 36 Poetry Sages (inside main sanctuary)

Elegant examples of carving, by Tsuruta Tetsuzan.

5 Kaiun Inari Daimyōjin

When Matsudaira Kiyoyasu took control of Okazaki Castle, he secluded himself before the kami in Sugō Jinja, where he had a dream. In response to that dream, he enshrined Kaiun Inari within the castle. The original sanctuary was destroyed during an enlargement of the castle, and the goshintai (sacred item housing the kami) moved to the main sanctuary of Sugō Jinja. Later, it was enshrined in its current location.

History

In 110 CE, Yamato Takeru no Mikoto is said to have set out from western Japan to pacify the eastern regions, and on the journey he came to a village where clear waters flowed in a wide river. He heard that bandits laired on a great rock to the east of the river, and resolved to drive them out. Yamato Takeru no Mikoto ordered his fletchers to create arrows, but the current was too fast, and they could not cross the river. As they hesitated, a butterfly flew in and quickly transformed into a person who gathered bamboo and fashioned ten thousand arrows in one night.

When Yamato Takeru no Mikoto had defeated the bandits, he stood on the rock to pray, and an arrow was carried on the river to that place. When he thrust that arrow into the rock, the rock shattered into fragments, from which a child sprang and flew away into the east. Yamato Takeru no Mikoto was delighted by this, and declared that the arrow should be venerated as the vessel of the kami of Ise. This was the origin of Sugō Jinja.

Sugō Jinja was venerated as a martial kami. The Matsudaira, the ancestors of the Tokugawa, held deep reverence for it, and the lords of Okazaki Castle frequently brought petitions to it.

In 1566, Tokugawa Ieyasu came to the jinja at the age of 25 to pray for the cleansing of evil influences and fortune for the future, and in the last month of the year he changed his name from Matsudaira to Tokugawa. Tokugawa Ieyasu changed his name so that he could realise his ambition, and in 1603 he established the Tokugawa shogunate in Edo (modern Tokyo), and ushered in centuries of peace.

The Sugō Matsuri is a matsuri praying to Susano'o no Mikoto, one of the main kami of the jinja, for protection from epidemics. Fireworks are said to both banish misfortune and calm spirits, and there are records of fireworks being offered from a "hokobune" on the Sugō River from the early nineteenth century.

During the Tokugawa Shogunate, only people in this part of Japan were allowed to use gunpowder, so fireworks developed here. Each neighbourhood had its own oral traditions for how to make fireworks, and they made them by hand, competing with each other to make the finest display. Even today, the matsuri is carried out in the old style, based on surviving documents.

Grand Matsuri: July 20th

Hokobune Ceremony (Fireworks Display): First Saturday in August

Annual Events

January 1st: New Year Matsuri

February 3rd: Setsubun Matsuri

April 29th: Spring Grand Matsuri at Kaiun Inari

June 30th: Nagoshi no Harai (Summer Purification)

The ceremony of passing through a ring has been performed in honour of Susano'o every year since the late seventeenth century. The large ring is made of reeds, and their fresh green colour means that you feel cleansed and purified every time you pass through.

July 19th: Eve of the Grand Matsuri

July 20th: Grand Matsuri

**First Saturday in August:
Sugō Jinja Hokobune
Ceremony**

The jinja and its parishioners have preserved the custom of offering fireworks at this ceremony since the early nineteenth century.



SUGO JINJA

〒444-0052 630-1 Kosei-cho, Okazaki City, Aichi Pref.

Phone. 0564-23-2506 Fax. 0564-21-2468

Reception time 9:00 ~ 16:00



Sugō Jinja website
URL: <http://sugojinja.jp/>



Founded by Yamato Takeru
The oldest shrine in Okazaki
Linked to Tokugawa Ieyasu

Protector of the Castle

Venerated by Generations of Castle Lords

Sugō Jinja 菅生神社

