



Hase, the Buddha of Compassion

Hase is the head temple of a large branch of the *Shingon* sect and has 3,000 branch temples throughout Japan.

The area "*Hase*" has been a sacred place since ancient times and was described in Japanese classical literatures such as the "Tale of *Genji*" and the "Myriad Leaves Collection".

Hase Temple is called the "Sacred Temple of flowers" and is also known as the 8th temple of the *Kannon* Pilgrimage to 33 Sites in *Saigoku* (Western Japan, Kansai).

Pilgrims can enjoy seasonal flowers:

cherry blossoms and peonies in spring, Japanese hydrangeas in summer, maples in autumn and winter peonies in winter.

Address 731-1 Hase Sakurai-shi Nara

Map

Access From Kintetsu Hase-dera station walk 15 min.

Web Site (Japanese) <http://www.hasedera.or.jp/>

Admission Fee

	Adults	Children
	¥500	¥250

Opening Hours

8:30-17:00 (Apr-Sep)

9:00-16:30 (Oct-Mar)

*Extending opening hours during the Peony Festival
(The peony festival is held from late April to early May)

Highlights



Eleven-Faced
Kanzeon Bosatsu



Hon-do Hall
(National Treasure)



Roofed Stairs



Five-storied Pagoda



Nio Gate

Jūichimen Kanzeon Bosatsu, or the Buddha of Compassion

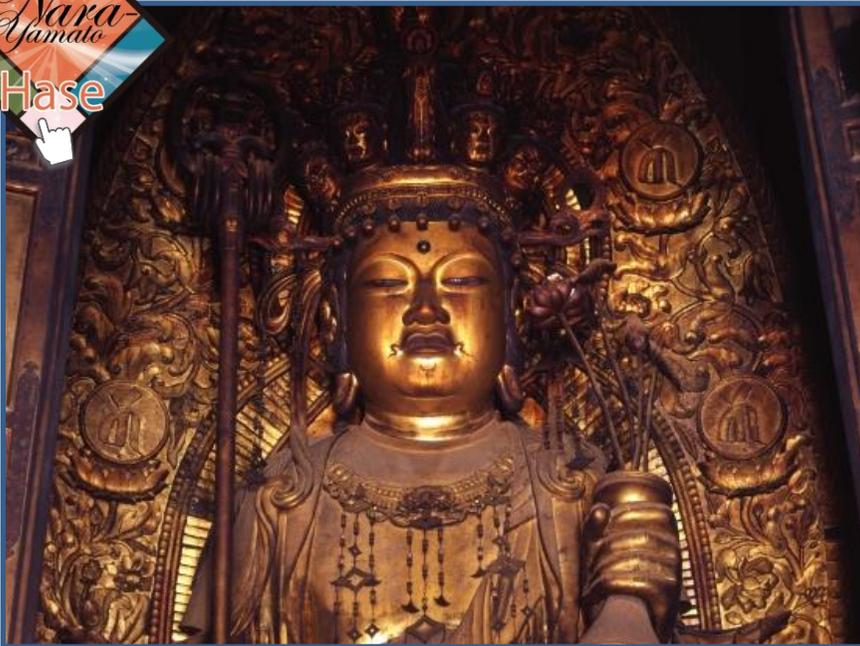
(Sk: Ekadasamukha)

This gold Eleven-Faced *Kannon Bosatsu* has a compassionate face and ten faces on top of the head.

It is the largest wooden *Kannon* statue in Japan with a vase in the left hand and a staff and rosary in the right hand.

People have believed in the Buddha of Compassion who helps those in distress and brings tangible rewards in this life.

The present statue was rebuilt in 1538, height: 10m18cm
Important Cultural Property

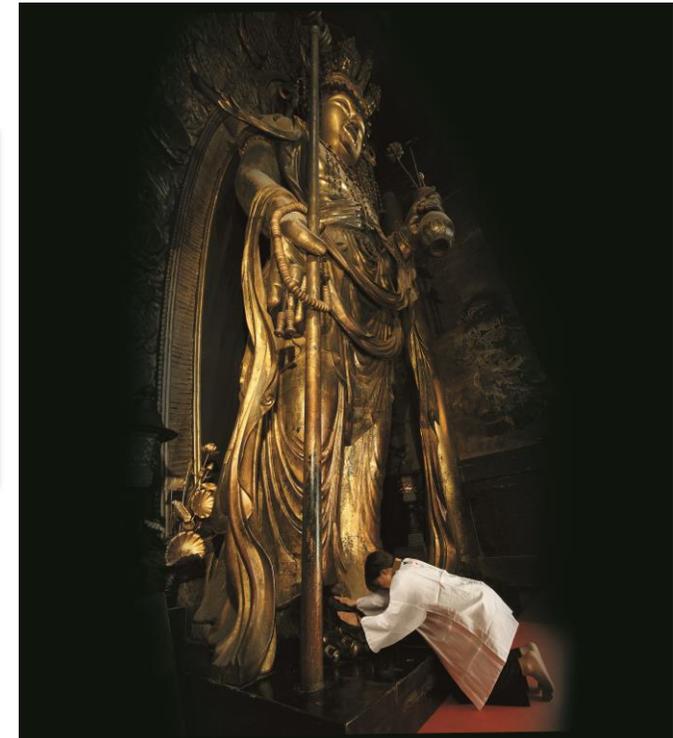


Sacred Feet

The giant statue enshrined in the main hall usually shows his upper half of his body.

A special opening event is held twice a year, during which worshippers are able to go inside and gather close to the sacred feet of the Buddha.

People have prayed for hundreds of years touching the sacred feet, which has caused the gold to vanish and turn into a shiny black.





Hon-do, or Main Hall

The Main Hall housing the Buddha of Compassion was reconstructed by the 3rd shogun *Tokugawa Iemitsu*.

This magnificent building was designated as a National Treasure in 2004 and has a platform projecting out from the cliff and provides spectacular views.



Young Monks

Hase temple is a monastery where young trainees learn religious studies practices, and train their spirits every day.



Noborirou or the Roofed stairs

Noborirou or roofed stairs is situated on the steep slope from the *Nio* gate to the Main Hall.

The elegant stairs have 399 stone steps and hanging oval-shaped lanterns on the ceiling.

From late April to early May the stairs are surrounded with beautiful peonies.



Seasonal Flowers



April: Cherry blossoms



May: Peonies



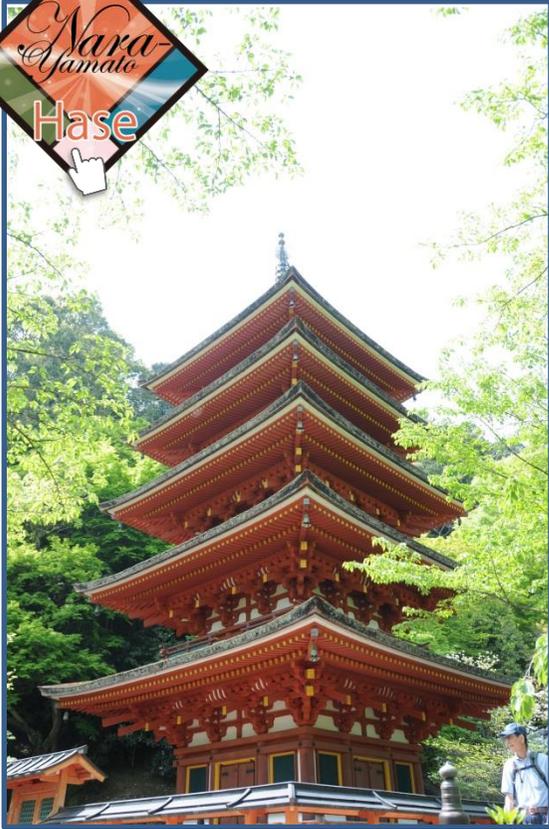
June: Japanese hydrangeas



November: Maples



January: Winter peonies



Five-storied Pagoda

The five-storied pagoda, built in 1954, was the first pagoda constructed after World War II.

This pagoda is praised for its beauty and called the “excellent pagoda of the *Showa* Period”.



Traditional Events

“*Dadaoshi*” or fire festival is a part of “*Shunie*” ceremony which is held from the 8th to the 14th of February every year.

On the last day of the ceremony three giant Oni or Ogres with huge fire touches run in and out of the Main Hall.

Visitors shout out loud in excitement when the 4m tall fire touches hit one another and the sparks shoot up into the air. The fire festival grants prayers for prosperity and health.



Niō-mon, or *Niō* Gate

The main features are two “*Niō* guardian” statues on both sides of the gate. *Niō* guardians with fierce expressions and holding a tool of the Esoteric Buddhism in their hands protect the world of Buddhism.

The present *Niō* Gate was rebuilt in 1894.

Important Cultural Property



The Faith of *Kannon* (bodhisattva)

Japanese pilgrimage originated in *Hase* temple.

The founder of *Hase* temple, a priest *Tokudō Shōnin* (656-735), met *Enmaō*, or the Lord of Death in his dream while the priest was nearly dying due to a severe illness. In his dream the Lord of Death did not allow him to die and ordered him to set up the *Kannon* Pilgrimage to 33 Sites that became the first pilgrimage in Japan. Since then many pilgrims have visited this temple and offered prayers to *Kannon*.