

The 62nd Regular Removal of the Grand Shrine of Ise Shikinen Sengu (式年遷宮)



www.isejingu.or.jp/

The Grand Shrine of Ise

Known lovingly by Japanese as "O-Ise-san," or officially as "Dai-Jingu-san," the Grand Shrine of Ise is the most revered Shinto shrine in Japan. The compound consists of two primary buildings, the Kotaijingu and the Toyouke-Daijingu. The Kotaijingu is also called "Naiku," where the supreme deity Amaterasu Omikami is worshipped as the predecessor of the Imperial Household and the supreme deity of Shintoism. The Toyouke Daijingu, also known as "Geku," is dedicated to Toyouke Omikami, the provider of sacred foods to Amaterasu Omikami. Toyouke Omikami is also the guardian of well-being and provides clothing, shelter and food, including the all-important staple rice, to the Japanese people.

Shikinen Sengu -Regular removal of the Grand Shrine-

www.sengu.info/

The Naiku and Geku structures within the Grand Shrine are situated on equal sized land lot, side-by-side, one facing East and the other West. Every 20 years, these buildings are disassembled and reassembled. On these special occasions, apparel prepared for the shrine's deities and other treasures and artifacts are also refurbished or replaced. The ceremony of Shikinen Sengu is performed to ask Amaterasu Omikami, the resident deity, to move to the newly built shrine nearby. The 14 adjacent shrines attached to this shrine are also rebuilt, as is the Uji Bridge, which belongs to the Naiku shrine, every 20 years. The Shikinen Sengu is considered the largest and most important ceremony performed in Japan.

The Shikinen Sengu system began about 1300 years ago on the ordainment of Emperor Tenmu. The first rebuilding of the shrines was done in the 4th year of the reign of Empress Jito around 690 A.D. Although some exceptions of temporary suspension or postponement during the period of internal warfare in the 15th and 16th centuries were found in this long history, the ceremony has been repeated in principle, once per twenty years since that time. Next is the 62nd Sengu ceremony to be held in fall of 2013.



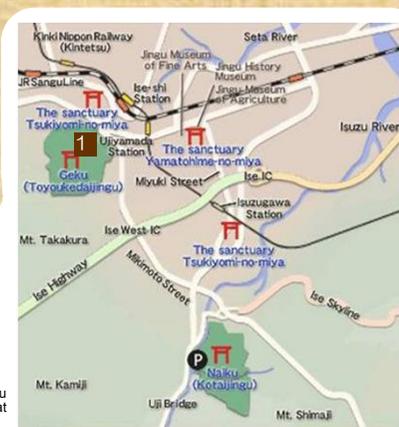
RECYCLING THE NATURAL RESOURCES USED IN THE SHRINE

Many trees are felled in preparation for each Shikinen Sengu. These logs are carefully selected and then transported to the reconstruction site at Ise, where new life is endowed to the logs. Young trees are carefully planted to replace those fallen in order to perpetuate the forest. The timbers removed when the Shrine is rebuilt are distributed to shrines throughout Japan, where they are reused, particularly to disaster or earthquake-stricken regions. Some of the sacrificial offerings and other contents of the shrine are also distributed among other shrines. Following the 61st Shikinen Sengu, lumber and contents of the Shrine were distributed among 169 shrines throughout Japan.

ACCESS By public transportation

- ① From Tokyo (Nagoya)
Tokaido Shinkansen : Tokyo → Nagoya 2 hours
Kintetsu Super Express : Nagoya → Ujiyamada 1 hour 30 min
JR Express : Nagoya → Ise-shi 1 hour 40 min
- ② From Osaka
Kintetsu Super Express : Osaka Uehonmachi → Ujiyamada 1 hour 50 min
- ③ From Kyoto
Kintetsu Super Express : Kyoto → Ujiyamada 2 hours 10 min

For all ①, ②, ③, the best way to Naiku is to get off at Ujiyamada or Ise-shi station and take the bus to Naiku getting off at Naiku-mae stop. The transfer takes about 15 minutes. The best way to Geku is to get off at Ujiyamada station and walk for 10 minutes, or to get off at Ise-shi station and then walk for 5 minutes.



CEREMONIES AND FESTIVALS OF THE SHIKINEN SENGU

We have based the monthly schedule for 2012 on the previous Shikinen sengu's timescale. Those dates marked will be ceremonies conducted in the presence of the Emperor.

- 2005 ● YAMAGUCHI-SAI
- 2006 ○ OKIHIKI-ZOME-SHIKI
THE FIRST OKIHIKI-GYOJI
- 2007 ○ THE SECOND OKIHIKI-GYOJI
- 2008 ● CHINCHI-SAI
- 2009 ○ UJIBASHI-WATARI-HAJIME-SHIKI
- 2012 ○ RITCHU-SAI
- GOGYO-SAI
- JOTO-SAI
- NOKITSUKE-SAI
- IRAKA-SAI
- 2013 ○ OSHIRAISHI-MOCHI-GYOJI
- MITO-SAI
- MIFUNASHIRO-HONO-SHIKI
- ARAI-KIYOME
- SHIN-NO-MIHASHIRA-HOKEN
- KOTSUKI-SAI
- GOCHIN-SAI
- ONSHOZOKU-SHINPO-TOKUGO
- KAWARA-OHARAI
- OKAZARI
- SENGYO
- OMIKE
- HOHEI
- KOMOTSU-WATASHI
- MIKAGURA-MIKE
- MIKAGURA

- This ceremony is to offer prayers to the kami who resides at the foot of the mountains in order to obtain its permission to enter the mountain, and to cut the sacred wood that is to be used as the core pillar of the new sanctuary.
- This ceremony marks the start of pulling the timber into the sanctuary. Shinryomin, people who live on the land once owned by the Jingu, transport the wood into both Naiku and Geku.
- In this ceremony, the wood to be used for the Shikinen Sengu is brought to the sanctuaries. For the Naiku, it is pulled via the Isuzu River, and for the Geku it is pulled over land on carriages called okihikiguruma.
- See the first Okihiki-gyoji of the ceremony in 2006.
- This ceremony is to offer prayers of consolation to the kami who dwells at the site where the new sanctuary is to be built.
- This ceremony is to celebrate the completion of the rebuilt Uji Bridge. The bridge is reconstructed every twenty years like the main sanctuary.
- This ceremony is to erect the first pillar for the main sanctuary building.
- This ceremony is to put the gogyo, metal plates to ward off evil spirits, under the gable at either end of the main sanctuary's roof. The ceremony is held at the day of the Ritchu-sai.
- This ceremony is to lift up the ridge pole of the main sanctuary building.
- This ceremony is for the thatching of the roof with miscanthus grass.
- This ceremony is to fix the metal ornaments on such parts of the main sanctuary as the Chigi(cross-beams).
- This ceremony is to place the oshiraishi, the white pebbles, on the sacred ground around the new sanctuary, by the people of Ise city or by worshipers coming from all over the country.
- This ceremony is to make the hole in the key for the sacred door of the new building.
- This ceremony is to place the mifunashiro, the sacred wooden box for holding the symbol of the kami, in the main sanctuary.
- In this ceremony, the newly constructed building is purified with sacred water.
- This solemn ceremony is to place the shin-no-mihashira, the sacred core pillar, at the center of the main sanctuary.
- This ceremony is to consolidate the base of the pillars of the new main sanctuary.
- This ceremony is to celebrate the completion of the sanctuary building and to offer prayers to the kami who dwells at the foundation of the newly reconstructed sanctuary to make the ground stable.
- The ceremony is to confirm that the newly made clothing and treasures offered to the kami by the Emperor are in accordance with tradition.
- The ceremony is to purify the new clothing and treasures that are to be dedicated to the kami, along with the Saishu, the most sacred priestess, Daiguji, the supreme priest and other priests.
- The ceremony is to decorate the inside of the new building with a part of new apparel and sacred treasures, in order to prepare it for Sengyo, the main transfer ceremony of the symbol of the kami.
- This is the ceremony to transfer the symbol of the kami from the old to the newly constructed building. It is the culmination of all Shikinen Sengu ceremonies.
- The Omike ceremony is to serve the first sacred food to the kami in the new building after the Sengyo ceremony.
- This ceremony is conducted by the Imperial envoy to offer sacred silk and other sacred materials to the kami the day after the Sengyo ceremony.
- This ceremony is to transfer some sacred treasures that were left in the former sanctuary to the Saihoden, the western treasure house, on the new compound.
- This ceremony is to offer sacred food to the kami before the mikagura ceremony.
- This ceremony is conducted by court musicians of the Imperial Household who offer ceremonial court music and dance, together with most treasured special ceremonial music. Mikagura takes place the night after the Sengyo.

Map 1

2012 Marking the ceremonial rebuilding with the opening of Sengu Hall

<http://www.isejingu.or.jp/sengukan/>

To mark the 62nd ceremonial rebuilding of Ise Jingu (Shikinen Sengu), a new information centre will open at the Outer Shrine of Ise Jingu - Sengu Hall. Since ancient times, pilgrims have taken a route leading from the outer to the inner shrine, thus for many of the visitors Sengu Hall will become the new entrance to the shrine. We hope that Sengu Hall will become a source of greater understanding of Ise Jingu's shikinen sengu ceremony and will also offer visitors a place for relaxation and refreshment.

