

## **Susakiji Temple**

Susakiji Temple in Mure is believed to have been established in the early ninth century by the priest Kukai (774–835), who founded the Shingon school of Buddhism. The temple played a role in the Genpei War (1180–1185), a major conflict between the Taira and Minamoto clans, which culminated in the Battle of Yashima (1185).

Injured Minamoto warriors were sent to Susakiji Temple during the battle. The temple was badly damaged in the fighting, and throughout its history has been rebuilt and destroyed multiple times. Its current structures date to 1699.

Susakiji Temple is not one of the 88 temples on the famous Shikoku Pilgrimage, but it is officially listed as an optional extra stop. Its rock garden, designed by Kyoto-based landscape artist Fujii Minoru and completed in 2013, is arranged as a bird's-eye view of Battle of Yashima landmarks. Two large collections of rocks and moss represent the Yashima plateau and Mt. Goken, respectively. The arrangement of each is carefully chosen to show the area's many secluded bays, including the one where the Taira hid their ships while waiting for the Minamoto attack.