

Kids & Schools Tools

Kiyomizu Temple, Kyoto, Japan

Kiyomizu Temple is one of the 21 finalist candidates in the campaign to choose the New 7 Wonders of the World. The winners of this unique vote will be announced on July 7, 2007 – 07.07.07 and will become part of history. They will be recognized as monuments that have truly global meaning—they are part of our common cultural heritage. We can all be proud of the 21 finalists, since each of them is a unique monument that belongs to its particular culture and country in a very special way.

The palaces and temples of Kyoto have been important to Japan for more than 1,000 years. The Japanese Emperor is enthroned at the Imperial Palace of Gosho, and other important sites here are the Higashi Nonganji and Nishi Hoganji temple complexes, Kinkakuji Temple with its Golden Pavilion, and Kiyomizu Temple. The Kyoto sites have been destroyed and rebuilt many times throughout history and are today among Asia's greatest cultural heritage sites.

Kiyomizu-dera ("The Clear Water Temple, in Japanese: 清水寺) refers to the Buddhist temple in Eastern Kyoto, one of the best-known sights of Japan's imperial city. but the present buildings were constructed in 1633. The temple is said to have been built in honor of the Kannon Bosatsu (Bodhisattva, or enlightened person, of Mercy and Compassion) around 794 by Enchin, a Buddhist priest who had a vision that he would find clear water near the source of the Yodo river. The temple takes its name from the waterfall within the complex, which runs off the nearby hills. It is the main temple of the Hosso sect of Buddhism and has been destroyed and rebuilt many times in its twelve centuries of history. In 794, the emperor Kammu moved his capital to Kyoto and gave Sakanoue Tamuramaro, a top general, the throne hall as a reward for military service. Since Tamuramaro was a devout worshipper of Kannon, he donated the building to Enchin as a new main temple hall. The building stood until 1629, when it was destroyed by fire. Today's Main Hall has a roof made of cypress wood, not the traditional tile, in remembrance of originally having been part of the emperor's palace. Most of the buildings today were rebuilt by Iemitsu Tokugawa, the 3rd shogun (a military title, like general) of the Tokugawa Shogunate, in 1633.

Kiyomizu Temple's main hall is famous for its great veranda, supported by hundreds of pillars, which sticks out over the hillside, looking over Kyoto. Beneath it is the waterfall *Otowa-no-taki*, where three streams of water fall into a pond. Visitors collect the water, which is thought to have healing properties, from the waterfall in metal cups—drinking it is said to give health, a long life and success with studies.

The temple complex contains several other shrines, notably *Jishu-jinja*, dedicated to *Okuninushino-Mikoto*, a god of love. There is a pair of "love stones" placed 18 meters (59 ft) apart here, which lonely visitors try to walk between with their eyes closed. If they reach the other stone, they will find love.

Kiyomizu Temple is a symbol of Clarity & Serenity!



(c) Shizuko Mishima

If you want to find out more about the exciting campaign to name the New 7 Wonders of the World, please go to the New7Wonders website at www.new7wonders.com.

07.07.07

Official Declaration of the New 7 Wonders of the World

... be part of the making of history!

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