



出羽三山

Dewa Sanzan: The Three Mountains

Mt. Gassan, Mt. Haguro, and Mt. Yudono are the three mountains that make up *Dewa Sanzan*. 1,400 years ago, Prince Hachiko, the son of the 32nd Emperor Shushun, came to Mt. Haguro on the guidance of a three-legged crow. After obtaining enlightenment, he established a place here to practice Buddhism and worship the deities of these three mountains.

These mountains represent the past, present and future. It is said that one should visit the three in succession: first Mt. Haguro, second Mt. Gassan, and lastly Mt. Yudono. The deities of all three are enshrined at Haguro, which is accessible all

year round. The shrines on Mt. Gassan and Mt. Yudono are inaccessible during the winter season due to heavy snow.

Mt. Haguro is also home to many *Yamabushi* (mountain monks). They use conch horns to protect the mountains and their people from evil spirits. They practice a sustainable living, best represented by *Dewa Sanzan Shojin-Ryori*, a combination of Buddhist vegetarianism and local farming.



Prince Hachiko

