

Hotaka Jinja Shrine

Hotaka Jinja Shrine is a quiet oasis, a secluded place of worship set in a grove of towering Japanese cedar and pine trees not far from Hotaka Station. Once a year, the shrine hosts an exuberant festival that celebrates the community's deities and its ancient seafaring roots.

While the exact date of its original construction is unknown, the shrine was already well known throughout Japan by the tenth century. It enshrines the nautical deity Wadatsumi no Mikoto and his son, Hotakami no Mikoto. The latter is the tutelary deity of the Azumi clan, originally a seafaring people that lived in Kyushu.

Sometime in the distant past, the clan migrated northward and eventually settled in the Azumino area. They built this shrine in the heart of the valley to honor the gods of their origins and thank them for their protection.