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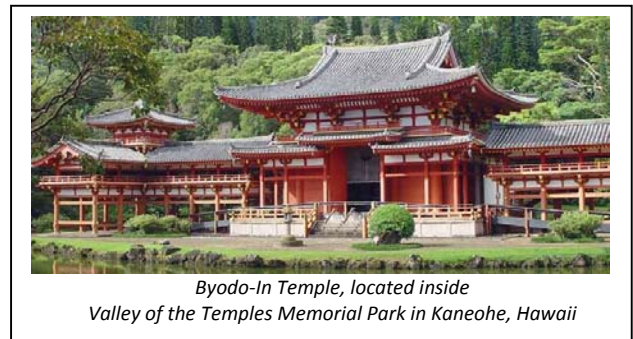


Oahu's World-Famous Byodo-In Temple Undergoes a Facelift Ahead of its 50th Anniversary in 2018

Valley of the Temples Memorial Park is renovating the prominent tourist attraction by repainting and restoring its concrete; Niches available in private room inside The Temple

KANEOHE, Hawaii (April 7, 2017) – [Valley of the Temples Memorial Park](#) (VoT) in Kaneohe is restoring its iconic [Byodo-In Temple](#) in preparation for the temple's 50th anniversary next year. Built to commemorate the 100-year anniversary of the first Japanese immigrants to Hawaii, the Temple is one of Hawaii's most popular tourist destinations, recognized for its history and architectural beauty. VoT, which owns and manages the building, is overseeing the facility's complete restoration – from a top-to-bottom repainting to the shoring up of its concrete. Attracting an estimated 300,000 visitors each year, Byodo-In Temple remains fully operational during the renovation, which is expected to be complete in June 2017.

Renovations have also taken place in part of the Temple rarely seen by the public – a private room housing cremation niches. “Many people don't realize the temple is also a columbarium,” said Mark Gilmore, vice president for Valley of the Temples. “People who love the tranquility and history of the Temple can actually have their cremated remains placed here when they die.”



The current renovations are the most recent in a series of improvements made at the park since it came under new management in 2011, including the opening of a new development called Ocean View Terrace in 2015.

“We're excited to continue serving as stewards of this special place by making improvements that keep it looking its best,” said Gilmore. “We feel it's our duty so future generations can also enjoy it.”

About VoT's Renovation of the Byodo-In Temple

In 2016, as preparations for the restoration were underway, Gilmore visited the original Byodo-In Temple in Uji, Japan to ensure consistency between the two structures. As part of the renovation process, the two bronze phoenix statues that sit atop in the Temple will be brought down to ground level for public viewing and replaced with new ones.

“Though there are many unique facets to the Temple, the phoenix statues are particularly impressive,” said Dennis Boser, area operations director. “We want guests to be able to see the statues up close to appreciate the intricate craftsmanship and detailing.”

Inside the 11,000 square-foot temple is a nine-foot statue of the Lotus Buddha and a wooden image depicting Amitabha, which is covered in gold. Outside is a meditation pavilion and a three-ton, brass peace bell called Bon-sho (sacred bell). When rung, it creates an atmosphere of tranquility for meditation that travels for some distance. Surrounding the temple are large koi ponds and lush Japanese gardens.

VoT is planning a free birthday/rededication ceremony in 2018 in celebration of the Temple's 50th anniversary.

History

In 1968, Valley of the Temples constructed a replica of the 11th-century Phoenix Hall of the [Byodo-In](#) Buddhist temple complex in Uji, Japan. The non-practicing Buddhist temple welcomes people of all faiths to worship, meditate or simply appreciate its beauty. Governor John A. Burns, a favorite of the Japanese community because of his support for Japanese rights during the state's territorial years, presided over the temple's dedication ceremony nearly 50 years ago.

The TV series, *Hawaii Five-O* and *Magnum, P.I.* featured several episodes where the Byodo-In is incorporated into the plot. The temple and its gardens also appeared as the home of Sun's father in a season-one episode of the ABC series *Lost*, entitled "House of the Rising Sun."

To visit:

What:

Byodo-In Temple inside Valley of the Temples Memorial Park on Oahu, Hawaii

Where:

Valley of the Temples Memorial Park
47-200 Kahekili Hwy
Kaneohe, HI 96744

Hours:

- Temple grounds open daily, 9 a.m. – 5 p.m.
- Gift Shop open 9 a.m. – 5 p.m. Monday to Saturday and 10 a.m. – 4 p.m. Sunday

Admission:

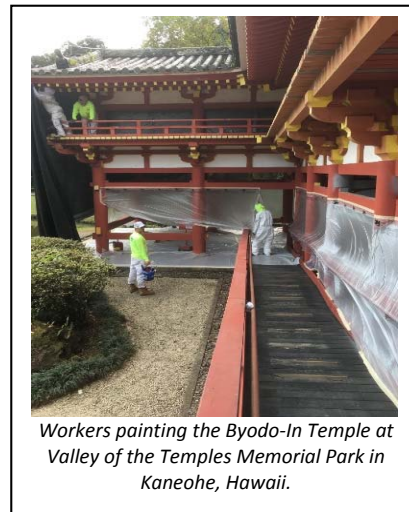
- \$3.00 per adult, \$2.00 for senior citizens, \$1.00 for children.
- Cash only

For more information:

- Visit <http://www.byodo-in.com/> or call Valley of The Temples at (808) 239-8811.

ABOUT VALLEY OF THE TEMPLES MEMORIAL PARK

As the premier cemetery on Oahu, Valley of the Temples Memorial Park provides end-of-life services to families from diverse religious, ethnic and cultural backgrounds. Established in 1963, Valley of the Temples Memorial Park is located on the Windward side of Oahu and is surrounded by mountains and lush, rolling green hills which overlook the Pacific Ocean. Valley of the Temples features the Hawaii Byodo-In Temple, the famous 1968 replica of the 11th century Phoenix Hall of the Byodo-In Buddhist temple complex in Uji, Japan. The Hawaii temple has appeared in numerous popular television shows including *Lost* and *Hawaii Five-O*. Valley of the Temples Memorial Park is part of a family of cemeteries, funeral homes and crematories with locations throughout the U.S. For more information, visit www.valley-of-the-temples.com or call (801) 239-8811.



Workers painting the Byodo-In Temple at Valley of the Temples Memorial Park in Kaneohe, Hawaii.