

Alternative Health, Reiki, & Spiritual  
Meditation, Spiritual Healing, Faith, New Age

MOUNT KURAMA, ALSO KNOWN AS KURAMA YAMA, IS THE SACRED MOUNTAIN IN JAPAN, WHERE MIKAO USUI, THE FOUNDER OF USUI REIKI, FIRST ENCOUNTERED REIKI. REIKI IS A SPIRITUAL ENERGY THAT HAS EVOLVED INTO A HEALING ART AND IS PRACTICED BY MILLIONS WORLDWIDE. REIKI IS RAPIDLY GAINING ACCEPTANCE IN THE TRADITIONAL MEDICAL COMMUNITY, AS WELL AS AMONG PRACTITIONERS OF COMPLEMENTARY HEALING MODALITIES.

"When I journeyed to Japan in 1977 to research the history of Reiki I would have loved to have had a guidebook like this. Not only is this a great guide for those planning a visit to the mountain, it is an excellent educational resource for anyone interested in Reiki, and a lovely way to sense the essence of Kurama Mountain."

—Laurelle Shanti Gaia,  
*Healer, Light Healing Studio, Coon, Idaho, AZ*

It reads like a travel guide and yet when you have dressed, as I have, of retracing the steps of Usui and touching the birthplace of Reiki, you are transported to Kurama Mountain through words and beautiful photos. The bonus is that you are also given such wonderful tidbits of wisdom along the way. Ancient spiritual traditions, Usui's experiences and modern understanding are blended together and our hearts and souls are richer for reading it. Well Done!

—Mark Hall,  
*Founder and President of International Association of Reiki*

I am a native of Kyoto, the ancient capital city of Japan, founder of Kenkyo Reiki and a Buddhist monk. I have guided many tours of Kurama-yama for Reiki people from around the world. Now, at long last, we Reiki people are fortunate to have an in-depth book on Kurama-yama, the birthplace of Reiki, thanks to the time-consuming work of Jessica. I trust this book will take you to the very original place of Reiki and make you feel you are back home with the founder, Usui Sensei. This book is an informative gem to the Japanese people. I do hope there will be a Japanese version of the book in the future.

—Hyoakami Tsunomu, Kenkyo Reiki Ken



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REIKI'S BIRTHPLACE

A GUIDE TO KURAMA MOUNTAIN

JESSICA A. MILLER

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FOREWORDS BY  
WILLIAM LEE RAND, LAURELLE SHANTI-GAIA & WALTER LUBECK

### Riki's Note

RIKI IS KNOWN AS KURAMA-NO-URA. His practitioners are troubled to discover if the 100-year-old shrine is actually visited in Kurama. There are no Kōshō-ji, shōka, nor suwayama. Riki may have begun with Shōkō-ji meditation here in the early 1900's. But—except for the steady stream of foreign visitors who ask about it, it has left no trace.

EVERYONE I MET HERE PRAISED the village & remarked because it has kept its appearance as it was for when Dōji was here. In the Tezuka's version of the Bell story, after his Bell experience, Mikio (Dōji) stopped at an inn, ordered a big breakfast, and headed the innkeeper's grandson to the current village of Kizone village on the other side of the mountain, the most likely spot where this might have occurred.

## ENTRANCE TO KURAMA MOUNTAIN TEMPLE



Close-up of the temple's roof and shrine left by pilgrims.

FROM THE BUS, CLIMB THE STEEPWAY up to the entrance of the Kurama temple. To the left of the stairway is an access road that was built during the 1930's. Construction on this road required that the temple's original entry gate be dismantled and moved over a few feet. There is an orange mailbox on a post to the left of the access road. Here visitors can mail postcards and receive a Kurama postmark. (Visitors must have their own stamps, however, as there is no place to purchase them.) The large building to the left of the entrance is actually a series of classrooms used by the temple. Kurama's entry is a 40-foot-tall wooden structure. The doors are always open, revealing the way up the mountain. Visitors enter the temple grounds (the whole mountain) by walking through this entryway.

The main entrance to Kurama Temple.



Looking down to Kizone village from the temple entrance. The main entrance to Kurama Temple.





## INTRODUCTION

**K**URAMA MOUNTAIN (pronounced Ku-Ra-Ma) is a sacred mountain due north of the Imperial Palace of Japan's former capital of Kyoto. In its twelve centuries of existence, as both a Buddhist and Shinto sacred place, the mountain has developed a rich tapestry of history and legend. Kurama is the name of the temple, the village and the mountain. This book focuses on the different sites on the Kurama Temple area (Kurama-dera in Japanese) from the perspective of a foreign visitor. Exploring Kurama Mountain is intended as a general guide for anyone interested in Kurama Temple. As a teacher of the energy-healing art called Reiki, which originated on this mountain, I have chosen to include information that is relevant for Reiki practitioners and others with an interest in spiritual energy.

Bright Blessings!  
Jessica Miller  
Kerry Jones



Kurama Mountain's main temple is two-thirds of the way up the mountain.

The zigzag roof of the Tenjōin-ōshōji  
which houses the Amida Buddha statue.



A children's picnic outside Kurama's museum.



From my first serious trip to Japan in January 2001 to the fall of 2006, I have visited Kurama Mountain eighty times. In January 2001, I spent a week in Japan visiting the Usui memorial in Tokyo, the Meiji Mura Architectural museum in Nagoya, and just over a day in Kyoto before going back to Kurama Mountain. At the end of the day on Kurama, I felt called to come back. A single day on Kurama Mountain was just not enough. I came back in late September, and spent five weeks in Japan, most of it in Kyoto. During that time I took Reiki training with several Japanese Reiki schools, assisted as a guide to William Rand's group in Japan, and even taught a few Reiki classes. The most meaningful thing I did, however, was go up to Kurama Mountain twenty-one times during these five weeks as a personal pilgrimage and prayer for peace.

I arrived in Japan on Sept. 22, 2001, eleven days after the terrorist bombings of the Pentagon and World Trade Centers. As a Reiki practitioner, I set the intention to make twenty-one trips because Reiki's founder meditated on Kurama Mountain for twenty-one days, and at the end received Reiki. While I did not fast nor even spend the full day on the mountain during each trip, going twenty-one times gave me a goal and a spiritual focus, and on the day before I left, I went a twenty-second time, just because I missed going.

Many things happened in this time, some strong, some subtle, some I have yet to understand. By going day after day, I felt like I developed a relationship to this sacred place; a strong intuitive understanding and connection. My relationship to Kurama is similar to the relationship many coastal people have with the ocean. It is not enough to see it once and leave forever, but instead there is a need to continue to revisit it, in different weather and times of the day. Kyoto has many sacred, impressive, beautiful and fascinating places, but Kurama is the place that calls my heart. It is my delight to share it with you.

—Jessica Miller

version: Reiki's Heiligkeit

Since visiting Kurama Mountain in 1997, I am eternally in love with the splendor and magnificence of this profoundly sacred ground. For Jessica's extensive research and the beautiful photos of Kurama Mountain that appear in this book, I am very grateful. As a publisher of *Reiki's Birthplace*, I speak for both Jessica and myself when I say it is our intention that everyone who encounters this book be blessed by the healing power of Reiki and the sacredness of Kurama Mountain. One of the fondest wishes of Usui Sensei was that Reiki be available for everyone. Usui acknowledged Reiki as a universal blessing for all the people of the world. As new paradigms and perspectives are transforming our world, I feel that Reiki is our pathway to the age of peace.

During my pilgrimage to Japan in search of the true history of Reiki, I would have loved a guidebook like this. Not only is this a great guide for those planning a visit to the mountain, it is an excellent educational resource for the dedicated Reiki practitioner and teacher. This book allows the reader to experience the essence of Kurama Mountain's serenity and power from anywhere in the world.

—Laurelle Shanti Gaia

INSIDE LIGHT HEALING STUDIO CENTER, SAIGONA, AZ

Kurama Mountain is one of the most enchanting and magical places in the world. The wonderful tall trees with their mighty roots, the beautiful flowers, the springs and temples, the silent walkways and mystical shrines – this nourishes the soul and supports meditation, healing and the widening of consciousness. Each time I have been there was very special for me. They were moments which deepened my understanding of Reiki, of my own spiritual path, of life itself. Even if Dr. Usui, the founder of the Reiki healing system would not have had his *Satori* (enlightenment) here, it would be a very special place. I am



## THE ALTAR AT THE INFORMATION OFFICE

**T**HE ALTAR TO THE DEITIES OF KURAMA MOUNTAIN dominates the main room of the Information Office. This is the easiest altar on the mountain to examine.

### THE DEITIES OF THE MOUNTAIN

This altar represents the three major deities of Kurama Mountain. From left to right, they are Maō-son: The Power of Earth; Bishamonten: The Light of the Sun; and Kannon (Kwan Yin): The Love of the Moon. The philosophy of Kurama Mountain considers that, when these deities are linked together, they form an overarching universal deity, called Sonten. The central statue is of Bishamonten. The disks on the wall behind the altar are Sanskrit symbols representing the deities. On the altar table are offerings to those deities. Bishamonten is the deity for whom Kurama was founded. In the year 770, the temple's founder had a vision of being attacked by demons and being rescued by Bishamonten. In the Buddhist sacred book, *The Lotus Sutra*, Bishamonten is the deity who guards the north of the Buddha. He is considered a protector of those doing sacred things and one who brings wisdom and wealth. The people of Kurama Temple connect him to the light of the sun. Maō-son is unique to Kurama Mountain. Temple writings say that this deity arrived from the planet Venus in a fiery vehicle five million years ago. The Kurama Tengu, Kurama's most famous legend, is considered to represent Maō-son. Maō-son's goal is to protect and encourage the spiritual evolution of mankind. Kurama temple associates him with the power of the earth. Kannon is more commonly known as Kwan Yin in English. Kannon is

known as the Goddess of Mercy. She is the one who hears the cries of those that call her name and will do her best to help. An early pilgrim to Kurama Temple saw visions of Kannon on Kurama, and built temples to her there. The people of Kurama Temple associate Kannon with the love of the moon, and consider her one of the three aspects of the deity Sonten.



Altar to the deities of Kurama Mountain:  
The golden statue is of Bishamonten.

### REIKI NOTE

**ORIGIN OF SYMBOLS (LEFT):** Symbolizes the joint healing energy. Reiki uses three focusing symbols, united under a single master symbol, while the connection cannot be proven. It is a circumlocutory complex thought that Kurama Mikoto has a similar belief structure of three deities under a single master deity. Coala Ueda have been inspired by the laws of three energies under an overarching energy to conceptualize the energies of Reiki in a similar structure. In his absence of actual documentation from Mikao Ueda, it can only be speculated, especially as there are other examples in Japan of deities with three aspects.

The Sanskrit symbol "re" that here represents Kannon, Kwan Yin, is the daily song of Reiki's master, a common Reiki symbol.



Disks are placed with the Sanskrit symbols representing Kurama's deities. From left to right: Maō-son, Bishamonten and Kannon.