

Features & Interviews

KOICHI TANAKA's Travel Journal – Undertaking the journey of the the SHIKOKU HENRO

2014.05.07

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One of the charms of the SHIKOKU HENRO is receiving OSETTAI. In SHIKOKU, it is customary to treat the OHENRO-SAN as one would treat KOBO-DAISHI KUKAI himself. While you are walking, you are welcomed with OSETTAI—gifts of food and money. At these times, you should accept the gifts graciously and give thanks. Offer up the money as an OSAISEN to the next FUDASHO. OSETTAI are offered in the age-old SHIKOKU spirit of hospitality. I'll give some examples of OSETTAI that I received in the course of my own HENRO.



1. At FUDASHO #6, ANRAKUJI Temple, I received tea, candy, and a tangerine, bread, and a bag with OSAISEN inside.
2. At a rest area on the HENRO, cold beverages were set out with instructions to have as much as you like.
3. While waiting at a stoplight, a person on a bicycle gave me 1,000 yen.
4. When I was lost, I asked someone nearby for directions, and they gave me a tangerine.
5. A person at the inn where I was staying laundered my sweat-soaked clothes for me and brought them to me clean and folded the next morning.
6. A road construction worker went out of his way to buy some juice from a vending machine and bring it to me.
7. I've received OSETTAI of fruit many times.
8. At a home before FUDASHO #77, DORYUJI Temple, I received a cute OJIZOUSAN idol from a young disabled man.

There are also many places prepared for the sake of those who are walking the SHIKOKU HENRO—pilgrimage huts where you can rest and sleep outdoors, as well as the equivalent TSUYADO at the temples themselves. There's also an initiative to create these HENRO huts, the 88 HENRO Huts Project



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