

HISTORY

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'Sugawara no Michizane and an ume blossom'
A big votive picture of Ueno Tenmangu Shrine.



Welcome to Ueno Tenmangu Shrine, Nagoya Tenjin.



Sugawara no Michizane and Ueno Tenmangu Shrine

The enshrined deity, Tenjin-sama, lived about 1300 years ago (845-903 A.D.) in the Heian-period under the name Sugawara no Michizane.

Risen high in the government, he fell victim to the plots of a rival and was demoted and exiled to Kyushu. He died distraught in exile and immediately afterwards, the capital was struck by heavy rain, lightning and other disasters.

These omens were seen as caused by Michizane's angry spirit, and, in order to placate him, the emperor restored all his offices, and ordered that he be worshipped under the name Tenjin, which means 'heavenly deity'.



The history of Ueno Tenmangu began about 100 years after Michizane's death, when the family of Abe no Seimei, another

savant and also a specialist in magic and divination of the Heian-period, were forced to leave the capital and used to live at the place which is now the shrine.

Since Michizane was a famous poet and talented scholar in his lifetime, he became the patron of scholarship. Therefore, many students pray for success before important entrance exams, and return afterwards, if appropriate, to give thanks.



The animal associated with Tenjin is the cow. This was because according to legend, during his funeral procession, the cow

pulling the cart bearing his remains refused to go any further than a certain point, which was then built up into his grave. It is believed that one becomes wise if he touches the cow-statue's head and then his own.



For paying respect to the god, wash your hands and mouth at the waterhouse, then stand straight in front of the main hall, bow twice, clap your hands twice and bow once again. This way of showing respect is called 'Sanpai' and can be seen and done at all Shinto-shrines over Japan.



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