

Maeda Toshiie and Kanazawa Castle

●Maeda Toshiie, lord of the wealthy Maeda family that ruled Kaga in feudal times, was the fourth son of Maeda Toshimasa of the powerful provincial family of Owari Arako (present-day Nagoya). In obedience to Oda Nobunaga, he built the foundations for a daimyo. His childhood name was Inuchiyo, and his adult name was previously Matazaemon. Because of his martial skill, he was known by the nickname "Yari-no-Mataza" (Mataza the spearman). ●Toshiie started building a relationship with Toyotomi Hideyoshi from the time he was a child. In the period of Nobunaga's rule, Toshiie became Lord of the castles of the Omi-Nagahama, Echizen-Fuchu and Noto-Nanao regions. After the battle between Hideyoshi and Shibata Katsuie he formed an alliance with Hideyoshi, and in 1583 he made his triumphal entry into Kanazawa Castle. ●After the fire of 1631, activities in the main enclosure of Kanazawa Castle were gradually transferred to Ni-no-maru, the secondary enclosure. It is thought that the Hishi Yagura Turret, Gojikken Nagaya warehouse and Hashizume-mon Tsuzuki Yagura Turrets were constructed at around this time. Around the end of the 17th century Ni-no-maru was such a magnificent structure that it was referred to as "the palace of one thousand tatami mats." After the fire of 1759 the castle's center of activities moved completely from the Hon-maru to Ni-no-maru. Ni-no-maru was razed by great fires in 1759 and 1808, and rebuilt each time, remaining standing until the Meiji period.

Purpose of Restoration of Hishi Yagura and Other Structures

●The Hishi Yagura, Gojikken Nagaya and Hashizumemon Tsuzuki Yagura fortifications were restored to the form they were in when reconstructed in 1809. They have been faithfully rebuilt according to extant records using the original traditional construction methods. Their structure consists of a framework of pillars and beams jointed with resistant mud walls fortified with braces. This is the largest wooden castle in Japan built since after the Meiji period, and the buildings are expected to last 200-250 years. Modern construction methods have been incorporated in the reinforced concrete foundations laid, the sprinkler system installed, and facilities such as elevators and lifts which permit access for the physically disabled.

Chronology of the Castle

- 1546 Kanazawa Mido temple (Oyama Gobo temple) built on Kodatsuno plateau.
- 1583 Maeda Toshiie receives Ishikawa and Kahoku districts from Toyotomi Hideyoshi, and his triumphal entry into Kanazawa Castle.
- 1592 Battle of Bunroku era. Great restoration of Kanazawa Castle. Digging of Hyakken Moat, Imori Moat and Hakucho Moat.
- 1602 Tenshu Kaku or the donjon and Hon-maru struck by lightning.
- 1620 Hon-maru Palace burnt down in castle fire.
- 1621 Reconstruction of Hon-maru Palace (April)
- 1631 Great Kanazawa fire. Hon-maru Palace and others burnt. Foundation of Hashizume-mon Gate.
- 1632 Construction of Ni-no-maru Palace. Tatsumi water channel completed.
- 1642 Construction of Toshogu shrine in Kita-no-maru of Kanazawa castle.
- 1759 Great Kanazawa fire. Castle almost completely gutted.
- 1762 Completion of Ni-no-maru Palace and Hashizume-mon Gate. Start of construction of Ishikawa-mon gate.
- 1788 Completion of Ishikawa-mon gate.
- 1808 Breakout of fire in Ni-no-maru Palace. Hishi Yagura Turret burnt down.
- 1809 The framework-raising ceremony for Ni-no-maru Palace. Construction of Hashizume-mon gate. Completion of Gojikken Nagaya warehouse. Construction of Hishi Yagura Turret and Gakuyada-mon gate.
- 1810 Completion of Ni-no-maru Palace.
- 1822 Tablet of Kenrokuen garden written by Matsudaira Sadanobu. Takezawa Palace completed.
- 1837 Pond of Takezawa Palace completed. Kasumi-ga-ike pond dug.
- 1858 Great Kanazawa Earthquake. The framework-raising ceremony for Sanjikken Nagaya, warehouse in Hon-maru.
- 1881 Ni-no-maru Palace, Hashizume-mon gate and Gojikken Nagaya burnt down.
- 2001 Hishi Yagura Turret, Gojikken Nagaya warehouse and Hashizume-mon Tsuzuki Yagura Turret restored.
- 2015 Completion of restoration works of the Hashizume-mon Gate.
- 2020 Completion of restoration works of Nezumita-mon Gate and Nezumita-mon Bridge.

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For further information, please contact:



- Transportation
- Open : 9:00 am - 4:30 pm (Last admission 4:00pm)
- Closed : Nothing
- Admission : Individual / Adults 320yen Children 100yen
Groups / Adults 250yen Children 80yen
※Groups (30 or more persons aged 6 and up)
- Exemption for admission / Senior citizens over 65 years old with the presentation of the passport.
- By bus : 5 min. walk from Kenrokuen bus stop (to Ishikawa-mon Entrance)
- 7 min. walk from Koribo bus stop (to Gyokusen'imaru Entrance)
- 15 min. walk from Owaricho bus stop (to Oe-mon Entrance)
- By taxi : Approx. 10 min. from Kanazawa Station (to Oe-mon Entrance)
- By car : Approx. 30 min. from Hokuriku Expressway Kanazawa West I.C.
Approx. 20 min. from Hokuriku Expressway Kanazawa-Morimoto I.C.



Kanazawa Castle Park

An introduction to the
**Hishi Yagura, Gojikken Nagaya,
Hashizumemon Tsuzuki Yagura and Hashizumemon.**





Hishi Yagura ▶

This three-story watchtower is the highest structure in Ni-no-maru or the secondary enclosure. Commanding a bird's-eye view of the Osaka-mon, Kahoku-mon and Ishikawa-mon gates, and boasting many stone-dropping slots (anti-siege constructions), it is both practical and splendid.



◀ Hashizume-mon Tsuzuki Yagura

A three-level watchtower adjoining Hashizume-mon gate area for opposing the enemy in Ni-no-maru. It was a command post for use when a battle broke out in San-no-maru enclosure.



Gojikken Nagaya ▶

This two-level multi-sided turret links Hishi Yagura and Hashizume-mon Tsuzuki Yagura. Normally used as a storehouse, in times of emergency it became a stronghold for battle. There are stone-dropping slots all along it, and latticed windows that double as gun-holes.



◀ Tsuru-no-maru Dobei

The middle part of Dobei or Earthen wall, on the side of San-no-maru is covered with Namako-kabe square tiles jointed with raised plaster. The gun-holes are hidden, usually concealed by Namako-kabe tiles. The inside of the wall is filled with small stones.

▶ Hashizume-mon

This *masugata* gate (square gate) consists of Ichi-no-mon gate (built in the style of Korai-mon gate), the *masugata* (square structure) surrounded by stone walls and double fences, and the turret-topped Ni-no-mon gate, and is the largest-scale *masugata* in Kanazawa castle. As the front gate at the Ni-no-maru, this was the most high-class of the gates.



Ichi-no-mon Gate at Hashizume-mon Gate



Ni-no-mon Gate at Hashizume-mon Gate

Exhibits

- 1 Cross-section of wall
- 2 Archaeological excavations of the castle site (excavated items)
- 3 Stone-dropping slots
- 4 Re-create model of Kanazawa Castle (1/500)
- 5 Model of cross-section of Namako-kabe wall
- 6 Model of eaves
- 7 Wooden framework model (foundation, pillar joint)
- 8 CG monitor
- 9 Model of Hishi Yagura framework (1/10)
- 10 Cross-section of Hishi Yagura pillar
- 11 Wooden framework model (Hishi Yagura Turret)

Red: 1st floor Blue: 2nd floor



◀ Traditional wooden construction method

This is an ancient Japanese wooden frame construction method. It involves combining pillars and beams to erect a ceiling. The pillars are Japanese cypress, the beams are American white cedar, and pine logs are used for the ceiling beams. Wood from Ishikawa such as Noto cypress and red Japanese cedar are also used. Seventy percent of the wood used is from Ishikawa.



▶ Bay windows

These windows served the purpose of preventing enemies from climbing up the stone walls. The alcove slab of a bay window was removed to drop rocks down. The three-sided window became a gun-hole.

Outline of restoration (buildings)

Category	Hishi Yagura	Gojikken Nagaya	Hashizume-mon Tsuzuki Yagura	Hashizume-mon Gate	Tsuru-no-maru Dobei
Structure	Wooden 3-level, 3-story structure Hip-gable roof construction Karahafu-style stone-dropping Lead Roof Tiles Namako-kabe walls and plaster-coated walls Height of roof (above stone wall) H=17.34m Total floor area A=255.35m ²	Wooden 2-level, 2-story structure Hip-gable roof construction Karahafu-style stone-dropping Lead Roof Tiles Namako-kabe walls and plaster-coated walls Height of roof (above stone wall) H=9.35-10.08m Total floor area A=1384.95m ²	Wooden 3-level, 3-story structure Hip-gable roof construction (Partly hip roof construction) Karahafu-style stone-dropping Lead Roof Tiles Namako-kabe walls and plaster-coated walls Height of roof (above stone wall) H=14.69m Total floor area A=253.93m ²	[Ichi-no-mon] Korai-mon gate (waki-bei wall) Lead Roof Tiles Height of roof (above stone wall) H=7.03m Width of gate W=4.62m [Ni-no-mon] Yagura-mon Gate Hip-gable roof construction Height of roof H=12.78m Width of gate W=14.36m [Masugata (square structure) Double Fences] Gable roof construction Extension 46.96m Inter of Masugata (square structure), including bay windows	Earthen wall (double wall) Wooden-center earthen wall with recessed pillars Karahafu-style stone-dropping Gun loopholes Lead Roof Tiles Height of roof (above stone wall) H=2.91m Length of gate L=62.12m
	Total floor area A=1,894.23m ²			Total floor area A=136.18m ²	



▶ Framework under the floor and the inside of walls

Sheets of glass have been installed under part of the first floor of Hishi Yagura and on part of the wall face of Ni-no-maru, to provide visitors with an inside look at castle construction.