

Tour of Kanazawa Castle's Stone Walls

Kanazawa Castle is a veritable museum of stone walls. Give an ear to the whispering of the stones.

Stone Wall Cloister Course Map



Tour of Stone Walls Course

- - - Inner Castle Route
① ~ ⑩ About 1.5km
- - - Outer and Inner Castle Junction Route
① About 0.4km
- - - Outer Castle Route
① ~ ③ About 2.1km

Main Masonry Techniques

Natural Stacking Technique



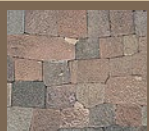
This technique uses natural stones or stones broken into smaller stones. It can be seen in the old stone walls around the Higashinomaru area.

Rough Stone Stacking Technique



This technique involves arranging rough stones so that their shapes fit together. It can be seen around the Ni-no-maru area and outside other enclosures.

Cut Stone Stacking Technique



This technique involves cutting stones which have already been broken into smaller pieces into shape, resulting in no gaps. It is used in important areas such as stone walls around entrances and exits.

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1 Ishikawa-mon Gate's Stone Wall

The right and left sides of this wall were made using different masonry techniques. The right side was made using the Cut Stone technique, whereas the left side uses the Rough Stone technique, making it a rare example of a wall that uses two different stacking technique. It is thought to be the result of renovations that were done in 1631.



8 Sanjikken Nagaya's Stone Wall

This stone wall was built using the Cut Stone Stacking technique, but it exhibits rare variation in which the edges of the stones are smoothed down while the inner part remains rough.



2 Inner Moat Stone Wall

This inner moat was restored along with Hishi Yagura and Gojikken Nagaya from 1999-2000. It is said that it was made to protect Ni-no-maru after the great fire of 1631.



9 Kurogane-mon Gate's Stone Wall

The Cutting Stone technique is used on vital portions of the castle. This is also the case with this stone wall, as Kurogane-mon Gate acts as the entrance to Honmaru. The wall is neatly constructed using stones are cut into polygonal shapes, a very advanced technique.



3 Hishi Yagura, Gojikken Nagaya, Hashizume-mon Tsuzuki Yagura Stone Wall

From here you can see San-no-maru, which was made with the Rough Stone Stacking technique, and behind it you can see Ni-no-maru, which was made using the Cut Stone Stacking technique. The Rough Stone Stacking technique is common in the areas outside enclosures, whereas the Cut Stone technique is more common around vital areas such as entrances and exits.



10 Higashinomaru's Northern Stone Wall

This wall, one of only a precious few, was built using the oldest techniques of all the walls in the castle, allowing us to see what the castle was like when it was first built. It was built using the Natural Stacking technique in which natural rocks and rocks broken into smaller pieces are stacked at a low angle to make a wall.



4 Ninomaru's Northern Stone Wall

The stone walls in this area are made with rough stones which have been arranged by shape and size. It is said to be the most perfect example of the Rough Stone Stacking technique, even being praised by Kaga Clan mason "Hikosaburo Gotoh" as the most eminent stone wall inside the castle.



1 Stone Walls Facing Gyokusen'inmaru Garden

On the slope facing the Gyokusen'inmaru Garden, you can see carefully planned stone walls made with the Cut Stone Stacking technique. These walls were crafted with particular attention to detail, from the height and direction the stones face, to the way they are stacked, resulting in beautiful stone walls. They are an important part of the scenery of the garden.



5 Dobashi-mon Gate's Stone Wall

This stone wall was made using the Cut Stone Stacking technique, and served as the foundation for Dobashi-mon Gate. The hexagonal stone inserted in the wall is said to be modeled after the image of a turtle, an animal associated with water, as a protective charm against fire.



1 Stone Wall Around Gyokusen'inmaru Nezumita-mon Gate

During the feudal era, which lasted until the late 19th century, the Kanayadamaru (once part of Kanazawa Castle, now the grounds of Oyama Jinja Shrine) was connected with the Gyokusen'inmaru by a wooden bridge and a gate, which were reconstructed and opened in 2020. The open part of the stone wall where the gate was located, which was filled with additional stones after the gate was destroyed in an 1884 fire, was also restored as part of the reconstruction project. The stone wall constitutes the upper part of the earthworks, forming a "headband stone wall."



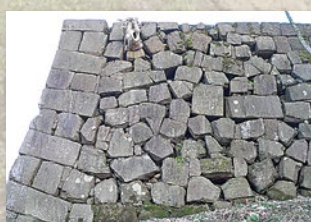
6 Sukiyashiki's Stone Wall

This stone wall was made with the Cut Stone Stacking technique which involves cutting stones into rectangles, and was reconstructed in the Kanbun period (1661-1673). Carved seals, which were said to be carved to indicate the work load when they were cut out. Try looking for the ⊗ and ⊕ carvings.



2 Stone Walls at Ote Moat and Ozaka-mon Gate

The stone wall on the edge of the moat's water, composed of roughly split stones, dates back to the early years of Kanazawa Castle. Around this time, the strategic points along the Ote-suji route from Ozaka to the Hon-maru (main enclosure) via Kahoku-zaka Hill were fortified with stone walls. The stone wall at Ozaka-mon Gate, which served as the main gate (Ote-mon), features large, smooth stones called "mirror stones" (kagami-ishi), creating a dignified atmosphere. It collapsed in a 1799 earthquake, and was rebuilt the following year.



7 Inui Yagura's Stone Wall

This wall was made using the Rough Stone Stacking technique, but small flat stones were inserted into the gaps between stones in order to give the appearance of the Cut Stone Stacking technique. After many years, some of the stones have fallen out, but you can still see the clever work of the craftsmen of that era.



3 Higashinomaru's Eastern Stone Wall

This is the oldest high stone wall in Kanazawa Castle, built in 1592, when construction of stone walls came into full swing. The wall is 21 meters tall, and is one of a very few stone walls of this scale nationwide constructed from the Bunroku Period (1593-1596).

