

9 Inuyama Castle

< 犬山城 >



A : Wow, that is a very wide river. What is it called?

B : It's the Kiso River. It runs through Gifu Prefecture and pours into Ise Bay.

A : Look at that tiny building on top of the mountain. What is it?

B : It's Inuyama Castle. It's one of Japan's national treasures. It is said to be the oldest castle in Japan. But it's much larger than you might think. In fact it's a huge four-storied building standing on a foundation made up of giant rocks.

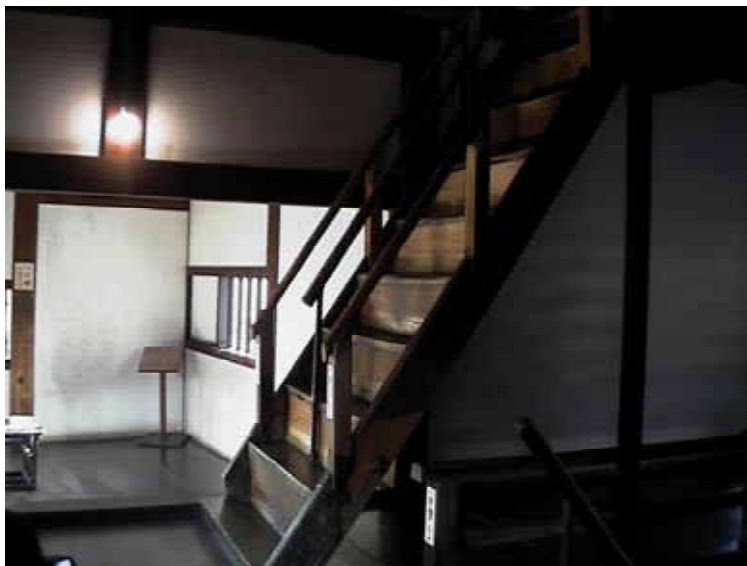
A : Wonderful! Are people allowed to go inside the castle?

B : Of course. The highest level of the castle commands a splendid view.

A : Sounds terrific! Now I feel even more inclined to learn its history.

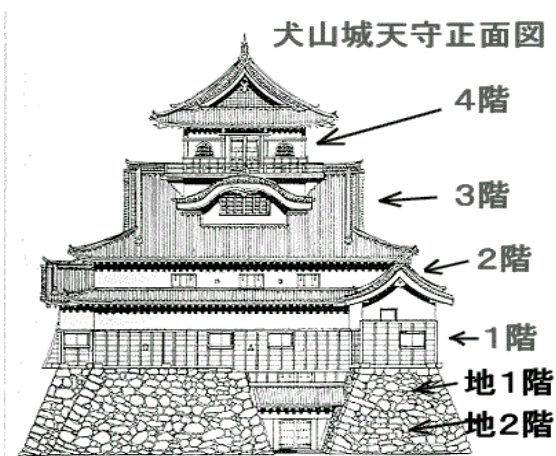


Inuyama Castle Guide



On a small mountain, just beside the Kiso River, there is a beautiful building standing brilliantly above the trees. This is Inuyama Castle, one of Japan's national treasures. It is made of wood and is preserved as it was in the Middle Ages. It is also famous because it had been owned not by the public, but by the NARUSE family for a long time.

The castle is a four-storied building. Each floor has only one room and even now each room has a wood floor. Visitors should take off their shoes at the entrance. When you step into the building, darkness surrounds you. You can only look out through small windows. There are steep, narrow stairs to climb up to the top, and you feel as if you are in a labyrinth. The first floor is the closet (納戸の間). The second is the storage of arms (武具の間). Above it is the gable (破風の間) and the top is called the panorama room (高欄の間), which commands a fine view. Down below, you can see the eternal flow of the Kiso River, and in the south, you can see as far as the city of Nagoya. Standing there on the top of the tower, you will find that this castle must have played an important role as a fort.



図提供 http://www.inuyama.gr.jp/special/inuyamajyou/index_inuyamajyou.html

<WORDS & PHRASES>

national treasure 国宝 four-storied 4階建ての

History



The panorama room of Inuyama Castle commands a fine view.

Inuyama Castle was completed on its present site in 1537. The castle's lord was ODA Yojiro Nobuyasu, the uncle of ODA Nobunaga. Nobuyasu was killed in battle when he attacked SAITO Dosan, the lord of Inabayama Castle in Gifu in 1547, and his son, ODA Jurozaemon Nobukiyo, succeeded to the castle. Control of the castle changed several times after that.

In March of 1584, during the Battles of Komaki and Nagakute, TOYOTOMI Hideyoshi entered Inuyama Castle with a huge army from Osaka. He went on to fight TOKUGAWA Ieyasu, who had spread his forces over Komaki Mountain. In 1595, ISHIKAWA Mitsuyoshi became the lord. In 1618, NARUSE Masanari became the castle's lord. From that time until the Meiji Era, the descendants controlled the property. By 1871, the castle had been controlled by nine generations of the NARUSE clan, and was the property of NARUSE Masamitsu. In that year, clans were abolished, prefectures were established and the government seized control of all property. As a consequence, most of Inuyama Castle's surrounding buildings were torn down. Only the castle and its immediate grounds, as you see them today, were left intact.

The Nobi Earthquake in 1891 damaged the southwest and northwest turrets of the tower, as well as the *ishiotoshi-no-ma* (rooms from which rocks were dropped on intruders attacking the castle), and completely destroyed the second floor. In 1895, ownership went back to the former Inuyama clan lord, NARUSE Masamitsu, with the condition that the building be repaired. Since then, it has been the private property of the Naruse family.

Inuyama Castle is the only designated national treasure in Japan that is privately owned. Emperor Hirohito (the Showa Emperor) visited the castle on November 20, 1927. There are only four castles in Japan which are designated national treasure: Inuyama, Himeji, Matsumoto, and Hikone. Inuyama Castle is the oldest of the four. Because the castle had been damaged over the years by disasters like the Ise Bay Typhoon, work began in April 1961 to reassemble the foundations and repair the tower. By March 20, 1965, the castle had been restored to its former appearance.

(from the notice at the entrance of the castle)

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clan 藩 turret 櫓 (やぐら) lord 領主・藩主

EXERCISES

1 COMPREHENSION CHECK

文の内容に即して，以下の設問に英語で答えなさい。

- (1) Who owns Inuyama Castle?
- (2) When did NARUSE's ownership of the castle begin?
- (3) On what condition did NARUSE Masamitsu get back ownership of the castle?
- (4) How many castles are Japan's National Treasure, and which is the oldest of them?

2 USEFUL EXPRESSIONS

文中の表現を参考にして，次の日本語を英語にしなさい。

- (1) この城からその町全体が見渡せる。(command を用いて)
- (2) 彼は午前ではなく，午後に帰ってくる。
- (3) その建物は1800年代に建てられたに違いない。
- (4) その古い野球場は昨日取り壊された。
- (5) 彼女は一人取り残された。

ACCESS

[TRAIN] about ten minutes' walk from Inuyamayuen Station (Meitetsu Inuyama Line)



地図提供： <http://www.city.inuyama.aichi.jp/inuyama/map/map.html>