

【English】

Diorama of Inuyama Castle and the Castle Town

This diorama depicts Inuyama Castle and the castle town as it was in 1840. The date is August 28 of the traditional lunar calendar, the day of the Inuyama Festival. Held annually since 1635, the festival is Inuyama's most important event and centers on a parade of 13 elaborately decorated floats. The procession can be seen making its way through the streets from Haritsuna Shrine, whose deity the festival celebrates. Many townspeople are watching the spectacle from their homes and on the streets.

Inuyama Castle towers over the town high on a hill above the south bank of the Kiso River. In 1840, the castle grounds encompassed 13 watchtowers and 18 gates, including the main Otemon Gate, which separated the castle from the town. A bridge over the castle moat led to the gate. The largely flat area between the Otemon and the castle hosted structures such as a school for the samurai class, a martial arts dojo, and the residences of trusted retainers who served the Naruse family, the lords of Inuyama Castle. The site of the Shiro-to-Machi Museum was also inside the Otemon.

In the town, the houses of ordinary townspeople occupied the center, surrounded by samurai residences to the north, west, and southeast. Like the castle, the town was protected by a moat, of which only parts are visible in the diorama. Entry to the town was through gates called *kido*, which were opened at sunrise every morning and closed at sunset.

The present-day town is still configured in the same pattern and the main street looks much the same today as it did in 1840, densely lined with narrow shops and houses. Haritsuna Shrine, however, has been moved to a site near the castle, and the Inuyama Festival now takes place during the first weekend of April, rather than at the end of summer.