

【English】

Former Horibe Residence

The Former Horibe Residence offers visitors a glimpse of what samurai family houses in the castle town of Inuyama looked like. For generations, the Horibe family served the lords of Inuyama Castle. Although the main residence was built in 1883, after the warrior class had been abolished following the Meiji Restoration of 1868, the house bears many characteristics of a traditional samurai dwelling. These include a front garden, as well as a hierarchical floor plan in which the innermost tatami-mat room is considered the most formal.

The residence extends across just over 1,330 square meters and encompasses the main house, a corridor that connects to an annex building used for entertaining guests, an earthen-walled storehouse, breezeway, and workshop. Six buildings on the premises, including the main house, the annex, and the storehouse, are registered Tangible Cultural Properties. The residence has been administered by the city of Inuyama since 2009 and is being renovated to restore its original appearance.

Horibe Katsushiro and Sojiro

Horibe Katsushiro (1832–1907) was the son of a mid-ranking samurai who served the Naruse family, the lords of Inuyama Castle, as a *doshin*, an official roughly equivalent to a modern-day police inspector. Katsushiro took up silk farming after the warrior class was abolished in the wake of the Meiji Restoration of 1868, following which a new government embarked on modernizing Japan. His success in business allowed him to build the grand Horibe Residence in 1883.

Katsushiro retired in 1892 at the age of 60 and passed the reins of the family business to his first-born son, Sojiro (1874–1938). Sojiro added an earthen-walled storehouse, breezeway, and workshop to the residence the following year, and expanded the silk farming business. He later engaged in publishing and served on the town council. In his later years, Sojiro had an annex building constructed next to the main house, and he also added a wall in front of the residence. He passed away at age 64 and was succeeded by his son, Teijiro.

Main House

This house was built in 1883 by Horibe Katsushiro (1832–1907), a former samurai who made his fortune in silk production. For generations, the Horibe family had been mid-ranking servants of the lords of Inuyama Castle. Katsushiro, however, had to find a different occupation after the warrior class was abolished in the wake of the Meiji Restoration of 1868, which sparked the modernization of Japan.

Katsushiro purchased a piece of land that had previously hosted row houses for *ashigaru* (foot soldiers), the lowest-ranking samurai class, and took up silk farming. His business grew steadily, and 15 years after losing his samurai privileges, he was able to build a grand house in a style inspired by the residences of the pre-1868 warrior class.

The house has several entrances. The grand main entrance leads into an earthen-floored area with a kitchen in the back, whereas three smaller ones with paper sliding doors face a small front garden. The sliding doors open up into three tatami-mat rooms. Among these, the room farthest from the earthen-floored area is the most formal, featuring a decorative alcove, and was used to receive guests.

The rooms facing the inner garden were the family's living quarters. From there a corridor connects to an annex building used for entertaining the Horibe family's guests. Part of the main house's attic was used for silkworm cultivation.