

Traditional technique : Mizuya (raized houses)

Category : Mizuya (raised house)      Sicle : 19<sup>th</sup> century

River : Yoshinogawa (Yoshino River)

Site : Ishii-cho (Tokushima Pref.)



An overview of mizuya surrounded with a wall. The main building shown in the center of the photograph has a thatched roof, which is designed to float on water in the event of an extreme flood.



The surrounding wall, made of locally "blue stone," looks like a castle wall.



The main building viewed from inside the premises.

Source: A Guide to Places of Historical Interest in the Lower Yoshino Basin (in Japanese), March 1996, Tokushima Work Office, Ministry of Construction

Description:

The photographs show a mizuya house (designated by the Japanese government as an Important Cultural Property) of the Tanaka family built in the midst of the heyday of indigo merchants for protection from flooding of the Yoshinogawa (Yoshino River). The upstream side (i.e., the side oriented toward the direction from which flood water will come) of the stone wall, built mainly with locally produced "blue stone," is higher than downstream side. The thatched roof of the main building is designed to float on water like a boat if flood water reaches the roof level. It seems that wise men in those days, who knew how dangerous floods were, thought they had to make such a thorough preparation for an emergency.