**Gasshozukuri Minkaen Outdoor Museum Area and Deai Bridge**

Most visitors who come to the historic village of Ogimachi by car arrive on the western side of the Sho River, where they are asked to park their vehicles before crossing the river and proceeding toward the center of the village on foot. By the large parking lot stands Deai no Yakata, a tourist information center decorated to look like a traditional gassho-style house with a thatched roof. The nearby gift shops sell souvenirs and edible specialties from throughout the Shirakawa area. Behind these buildings is the open-air Gasshozukuri Minkaen Outdoor Museum, which consists of 25 structures, including several gassho-style farmhouses, storehouses, and sheds moved to the site to be preserved and displayed.

The parking and museum zone is connected to central Ogimachi by the Deai Bridge, a 107-meter pedestrian suspension bridge across the Sho River built in 1993. Serving as one of the entrances to the village, the bridge is relatively narrow and unpainted, as it was designed to blend in with its surroundings. The structure’s understated style and its role in protecting the traditional townscape by keeping the streets free of cars were noted by the Japan Society of Civil Engineers, which awarded the Deai Bridge a design prize in 2003. Walking across the bridge, visitors can look down on the calm and slightly cloudy waters of the river, after which the Shirakawa (“white river”) area was named. The bridge attracts photographers especially in autumn, after the turning of the foliage along the Sho.