

Hirakawamon Gate

The Hirakawamon Gate was used by ladies' maid servants and castle officials. It is composed of a small gate with a further, larger gate at right angles, creating an enclosed space. This is a common castle gate defensive feature that forces intruders to turn at right angles once inside, slowing them down, and allows the castle defenders to shoot down on the invaders from all sides. To the side of the Hirakawamon Gate there is an unusual third gate—the Obikuruwamon Gate. It is connected to a long, narrow rampart that cuts across the moat, which is thought to have greatly strengthened the castle defenses.

PHOTO CAPTIONS

Hirakawabori Moat

Site of the Takebashimon Gate

Obikuruwa

Otebori Moat

Hirakawamon Gate

Tenjinbori Moat

Photograph courtesy of Asia Air Survey Co., Ltd.