

Oda Nobunaga (1534–1582) captured the fortress in 1567 and reformed it into one of Japan's most splendid castles—a palace as well as a military base; it was here that Nobunaga developed his plans for national unification, Nobunaga invited various guests: warlords, vassals, nobles, and even foreign missionaries to visit him. He would guide them around the complex, where the opulence and grandeur of Gifu Castle underscored his power and authority.

From the top of the mountain, one could see the wide, sweeping Nobi Plain— Nobunaga's domain. Specially invited guests spoke glowingly of the impressive view and of Nobunaga's fine hospitality which, according to Portuguese missionary Luis Frois (1532–1597) and aristocrat Yamashina Tokitsugu (1507–1579), extended to personally serving dinner to his guests.