

Oda Nobunaga (1534–1582) built his palace at the base of the mountain in a small valley covering the little river that flowed through it. To create more space for buildings and gardens the sloping area was cut into terraces, the highest and lowest of which were separated by as much as 30 meters.

Portuguese missionary Luis Frois (1532–1597) stayed at Gifu for a short time and in his book *A History of Japan*, he described the impressive size and grandeur of the castle: the first floor of the castle alone, he wrote, had between 15 and 20 rooms. The second floor was reserved for Nobunaga's wife. The third floor was a space for tea ceremonies, and the fourth floor was used to watch over the city and surrounding area. Shards of the roofing tiles from this structure have been found which indicated that the roof was coated in gold leaf. Archeological excavations have also confirmed that the residence was once surrounded by as many as five or six different ornamental gardens.