

The Baba Horse Racing Course

The horse racing course runs along the approach to the main shrine compound of Kasuga Taisha Shrine. Traditionally held during festivals to honor the deities, each competition consisted of three races with two horses, always running from west to east, towards sacred Mt. Mikasa.

The original racing course measured 500 meters in length and began at the bridge just east of the first torii gate. The traditional races held during festivals ended at the bridge near the entrance to the Man'yo Botanical Garden, where the approach road curves from side to side toward the main shrine compound of Kasuga Taisha Shrine.

Although traditional racing ceased temporarily at the end of the Edo period (1603–1867), horse races are currently run along this path each year on December 17th and are a central part of the Kasuga Wakamiya Onmatsuri Festival.