

Suganuma Village

Suganuma is one of the two traditional *gassho-zukuri* (steep thatched roof style) villages in Gokayama designated a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Suganuma is smaller than Ainokura, with only 12 traditional structures, of which nine are *gassho-zukuri* houses, with their unique architecture and steep thatched roofs. The village is located on a terraced plateau on a bend of the Sho River and surrounded by thickly forested mountains. Trees such as beech and Mongolian oak help to protect the village from avalanches.

Most *gassho-zukuri* houses here were built between the end of the Edo period (1603–1868) and the Taisho era (1912–1926) and continue to serve as residences. The Gokayama Folklore Museum occupies the oldest *gassho-zukuri* structure in Suganuma, where visitors can learn about the traditional way of life and get in-depth information on the region's industries, such as papermaking, sericulture, and saltpeter production. For a more comprehensive look at the production of saltpeter, a key component of gunpowder, visitors can stop by the Saltpeter Museum, which is also located in a *gassho-zukuri* structure.