

Miyajima History and Folklore Museum: Folk House

While the Traditional Merchant House provides a look into the life of a wealthy merchant, this restored single-family dwelling conveys how ordinary people lived on Miyajima in the Edo period (1603–1868). The long, thin building is distinguished by its narrow entrance, typical of traditional homes on the island, fitted with a wooden gate to keep deer and other wild animals out. Most houses on Miyajima were built side by side on narrow, rectangular plots between the shore and a steep hillside. This was done to fit as many homes as possible on the limited flat land available.

The Folk House has three rooms. The room by the entrance was used as a workplace or shop, the one in the middle housed the family's Shinto altar and was only used on special occasions, and the innermost room functioned as a shared living room and bedroom. The doors of the inner room could be opened to let sunlight and air in from the inner garden behind the house, which was also where the toilet, bath, and kitchen were located. Visitors may not enter the rooms, but can walk beside them along an earthen-floor passageway that leads from the entrance to the inner garden.