

### **Inuyama Castle Structure**

Inuyama Castle was constructed of stone and wood with layers of mud and white plaster added to guard against fire. Inside the keep, steep staircases climb past original stone walls and exposed hand-hewn timber beams from the basement to the fourth floor.

Inuyama Castle was a symbol of power and influence in addition to being a solid fortress. The striking architecture and careful attention to detail in the decorative window frames, undulating gables, and sweeping roofs crafted by skilled masons and carpenters testify to that aspiration.

The castle stands high on a hill above the south bank of the Kiso River and is a classic example of a hilltop castle (*hirayamajiro*). It is surrounded by a thick forest of Japanese cedar, hinoki cypress, and pine. The lookout at the top commands a breathtaking view of the river and surrounding mountains and reveals how these natural obstacles provided protection for this early modern fortress.

Inuyama Castle is one of only 12 castles in Japan whose main keep (*tenshu*) dates back to at least the Edo period (1603–1868). The keep, along with the innermost enclosure (*honmaru*) and moats (*hori*), are the only surviving structures of what was once a larger compound.