

## **Isobe Residence**

The Isobe Residence is a traditional merchant's family home (*machiya*) with an architectural style typical of the Edo period (1603–1868) in which it was built. The Isobe family began selling kimono fabric on a large scale during the Edo period, though after the Pacific War (1941–1945) they focused on selling tea.

The building stands out from others along this castle town street because of the bulging lines of its roof (*mukuri yane*). The family chose a distinctive roof to reflect the luxury wares they sold.

The property is deceptively larger than the narrow, 6.8-meter-wide front suggests. Inside gives way to a 58-meter-long complex that includes storehouses, a detached back parlor, and a courtyard. The long, narrow property had two benefits for the Isobe family. First, business transactions could take place in the rooms closest to the street, leaving the back portion of the house for living quarters. And second, it was economical, as property taxes were based on the width of street frontage.

The Isobe Residence has been the property of the city of Inuyama since 2004. All of its buildings are registered as Tangible Cultural Properties.