

Nishi-Chaya District

Nishi-Chaya is one of Kanazawa's three historic "teahouse" entertainment districts. It was established in 1820 along with Higashi-Chaya as areas for *geiko* (the local name for *geisha*) to entertain wealthy patrons with music, dance, and games.

The neighborhood's main street, lined with traditional wooden teahouses, retains the atmosphere of earlier times. Many of the buildings now house sweet shops and cafes, but some still operate as exclusive *geiko* parlors.

The Dolls Museum occupies a former teahouse at the end of the street and displays a large collection of dolls from around Japan. Another former teahouse at the opposite end of the street houses the free Nishi-Chaya Museum, where visitors can view the well-appointed rooms where *geiko* once entertained clients.