

Kitamaebune Ship Museum

The Kitamaebune Ship Museum celebrates the history of *kitamaebune*, wooden ships that traded along the Sea of Japan coast from the Edo period (1603–1867) to the turn of the twentieth century. The museum is set in the grand home of a wealthy *kitamaebune* owner, built in 1878.

Parts of the house are constructed with expensive materials gathered along the *kitamaebune* shipping route. The woodwork includes doors made of single panels of Akita cedar and huge pine beams that span the great hall. Many wood surfaces are coated with lacquer.

The museum's exhibits feature navigation tools, scale models, and ship chests. They provide detailed information illustrating life on board the *kitamaebune* ships.

Many *kitamaebune* owners hailed from the surrounding Hashitate district. Some of their stately homes, with their distinctive red-tiled roofs, still stand out in the area.