

## **Tateba-Jaya**

### **A Teahouse for Travelers**

This 200-year-old teahouse is typical of those built between post towns as rest stops for travelers as they made their way along the Nakasendo. Ichikoku Tochi, where this teahouse stands, was once a hamlet of seven buildings, including a guardhouse used for monitoring shipments of wood. The teahouse once had a stable at one end of the building, but that has long since rotted away. Until recently, rice was grown on the flat land to the left of the teahouse.

The teahouse has a packed-earth floor, a raised wooden floor around an *irori* hearth, and two tatami rooms. The tatami room at the back of the house has a tokonoma raised alcove where a decorative scroll could be hung or a writing desk placed, suggesting that it may have been used by higher-ranking travelers.

The teahouse is now managed by the Friends of Tsumago, the local conservation group. Help keep the traditions of the Nakasendo alive by dropping in for a cup of tea. Take a moment to enjoy the sight of the twisted pine tree by the house and the cherry tree on the far side of the path.