

【Structures Within the *Ninomaru*】

Ninomaru* and *Tamon Yagura

The *ninomaru* is a section of the castle between the inner and middle moats that contains the stable. It also contains a *tamon yagura*, a long, fortified storehouse that faces the middle moat and protected the main gates. The two sides of this two-story storehouse create a *masugata*, a rectangular space between the inner and outer gates where troops could gather out of sight of enemy forces. The *masugata* was also an important defensive feature: just inside the main gates, another set of gates was placed perpendicularly. By setting the gates at right angles, defenders forced attacking soldiers to turn and expose their sides while moving through the *masugata*. While passing through, attackers would have been vulnerable to attack from the rectangular arrow slits and triangular loopholes for rifles that line the inner walls.

The left side of the *tamon yagura*, originally constructed in 1622, was destroyed by fire in 1767 and rebuilt between 1769 and 1771. The right side was rebuilt with concrete in 1960.

Stable

This stable outside the Omotemon Gate housed as many as 21 horses belonging to the lord of Hikone. The horses were kept ready for the daimyo and his guests, though another, smaller stable was located near the daimyo's residence (*omote goten*). Even into the Edo period (1603–1867), when Japan was no longer embroiled in widespread military conflict, horsemanship was considered an essential skill for daimyo and samurai. Notably, this is the only extant stable in Japan that is situated within a castle's walls.