

Sandankyo Hotel

The Sandankyo Hotel is a traditional, Showa-style inn in a quiet, secluded location directly overlooking Sandankyo Gorge. Views of the gorge fill the all-wooden building's vintage windows; only the soothing sound of the flowing river breaks the quiet. Wide windows in the dining room and west-facing bedrooms open on vistas of morning fog snaking through fir trees in the gorge and around a bright red bridge.

The Sandankyo Hotel has been renovated with the latest amenities while preserving the homey, retro interior of decades past. Guests are welcomed in an intimate reception area, where they can find information on the history of Sandankyo Gorge and view photographs of the area taken by Kuma Nanpo (1876–1943). The hotel has three floors and includes an *onsen* (hot spring) bath with a view of the river, a dining room, and a library in addition to the upstairs guest rooms. Guests are served breakfast and dinner in the tatami-floored dining room. Meals feature locally grown food and hometown favorites such as *ayu* (sweetfish) and seasonal wild vegetables handpicked by the hotel's owner in the nearby mountains. The food is not extravagant; rather, the dishes have been created to bring out the best in the local ingredients.

The history of the Sandankyo Hotel started with a *ryokan* inn called Kyonan-kan, founded by Takashita Tsuneichi in 1929. In 1932, the wealthy Hada family from Hiroshima acquired Kyonan-kan and converted it into a villa called Hada Besso, where Takashita served as head manager. During World War II, Hada Besso was used as an army sanatorium and was eventually taken over by Allied occupation forces after the war. The Hada family home was destroyed in the atomic bombing of Hiroshima in August 1945, and wood from Hada Besso was used for its reconstruction.

The current Sandankyo Hotel was built on the former site of Hada Besso in 1956. Takashita decided to name the establishment Sandankyo Hotel because the name sounded modern to him; in fact, the hotel was the first building in Hiroshima Prefecture to include the foreign word “hotel.”