

## Bella Vista Spa & Marina Onomichi: Ribbon Chapel

Designed by Tokyo-based architect Nakamura Hiroshi, the Ribbon Chapel is the most distinctive feature of the Bella Vista Spa & Marina. The 15.26-meter tall wedding chapel was completed in 2014 and sits at the edge of the hotel grounds, overlooking the Seto Inland Sea below. The core feature of the Ribbon Chapel is its two intertwined curved staircases, each supporting the other, just like a loving couple. When two people get married at the Ribbon Chapel, they each walk up a different staircase, crossing paths occasionally, and finally meeting at the top. The journey to the top symbolizes each person's individual journey in life towards marriage.

But the two staircases are more than just symbols. They act as the walls and roof of the chapel itself, which is a cone-shaped glass room surrounded by the staircases. Realizing such an intricate, yet open and playful design required advanced structural planning. Nakamura's buildings are known for their use of light, and the ribbon-like curves of the staircases allow light to filter into the chapel at unexpected angles. As the light shifts, the building itself appears to change shape. The Ribbon Chapel also reveals Nakamura's fascination with natural materials. The chapel furniture, including the altar and seats for 80 guests, is made of wood, and the staircases are clad in wooden planks painted white.