

【Ikedaya Honjin】

Ikedaya was established in Mitsumata in 1828 as one of three *wakihonjin*, or inns that served daimyo and other high-status dignitaries when the primary inn (*honjin*) was occupied. When not catering to such guests, Ikedaya also served as lodgings for merchants and other travelers. The present-day owners are descendants of the powerful daimyo Ikeda Terumasa (1565–1613), who was known as the “Shogun of the West.” The original Ikeda family crest of a swallowtail butterfly appears in the rooms that were reserved for high-ranking guests.

During the Edo period (1603–1868), the Ikeda family served as a wholesale dealer and forwarding agency for rice, textiles, and other goods. Accordingly, the road here was widened to accommodate the flow of traffic by carts and horses. Members of the Ikeda family also historically served as one of four town headmen, who were responsible for policing the area and collecting taxes. After the post-town system was abolished in 1872, Ikedaya became a *ryokan*, or traditional-style inn.

The current building dates back to 1829 and survived the fire of 1848, the Boshin War (1868), and the 1919 avalanche. It is the only surviving building on the Mikuni Road that once catered to daimyo, who entered through the special entrance on the left. The original roof was made with cedar shingles secured by large rocks.