

The Castle of Success

Hamamatsu Castle is known as the “Castle of Success” due to the influential figures that have been associated with it over the centuries. The most famous of these is the shogun Tokugawa Ieyasu (1542–1616), who was lord of the castle for 17 years. Ieyasu used the castle as his main base of operations during the many battles of the warring states period that began around the mid-fifteenth century. After defeating his rivals, he rose to the rank of shogun and ruled over a united Japan from 1603.

Several of the lords who were subsequently assigned to Hamamatsu Castle were promoted to more senior positions after their brief tenure as castellan. These included five who became elder (*roju*) administrators, one of the highest-ranking positions under the shogunate. The vast majority of these posts were granted to lords from families who had supported Ieyasu before his ascendancy to shogun.

The success associated with the castle continues into the modern era, as a plethora of internationally renowned companies have started in Hamamatsu. These include motorcycle and vehicle giants Suzuki and Honda, as well as musical instrument manufacturers Kawai and Yamaha. Many of these companies still have their headquarters in Hamamatsu.