

### **Kisaichi Maruyama Tomb**

The Kisaichi Maruyama Tomb is a large three-tiered, round burial mound from the mid-fifth century. It measures 70 meters in diameter with a 10-meter protrusion where burial ceremonies would have been held, making it one of the largest round burial mounds in Japan. The site is now a public park.

Excavations revealed two graves belonging to rulers of an ancient agricultural civilization that once thrived in the Yura River basin. The bodies and wooden coffins had decomposed, but armor, swords, mirrors, beads, agricultural instruments, and other burial goods were retrieved from the tomb. Most notably, gold was found in the buckles on arrow cases, which would have been extremely valuable at the time. Although mysteries remain regarding the relation between these two rulers—perhaps parent and child, or siblings—due to the grave contents and the scale and position of this mound, researchers believe the entombed were powerful rulers engaged in trade with other regions.

Forgotten over the years, the Kisaichi Maruyama Tomb was rediscovered in 1987 during preparations to build the Maizuru-Wakasa Expressway. The site was then excavated, and the mound was restored as close as possible to its original state. Approximately 60,000 stones (called *fukiishi*) cover the sides of the mound, and 1,000 replica cylindrical *haniwa*, terracotta funerary objects, line the three tiers and the entrance. Artifacts from the tomb can be viewed at the Ayabe City Museum.