

## **Takehara City Museum of History and Folklore**

The Takehara City Museum of History and Folklore displays materials related to the local salt production industry as well as exhibits on the city's people, history, and culture.

One of the main displays features Taketsuru Masataka (1894–1979), who is considered the father of Japanese whisky. Masataka went to Scotland in 1918 to learn the secrets of distilling Scotch whisky. He took chemistry classes at the University of Glasgow and apprenticed at three whisky distilleries in Scotland.

Upon his return to Japan in 1920, with his wife, Scotswoman Jessie Roberta Cowan (known as Rita), Masataka went on to found the Nikka Whisky Distilling Company. Their story was told in *Massan*, a 2014 television drama on NHK, Japan's national broadcaster. Outside the museum is a bronze statue of Masataka and Rita.

The site of the museum was originally the residence of Shiotani Doseki (1703–1764), a Confucian scholar during the Edo period (1603–1867). After his death, the residence was turned into a school by his disciples, Rai Shunsui and Rai Shunpu. The school opened in 1793 and was named Takehara Shoin by Shunpu, who was one of the teachers. Poetry reading and other cultural events were held at the facility.

The current light-blue Western-style building was built in 1929 as the Takehara Shoin Library. It became the Takehara City Museum of History and Folklore in 1980.