

Koransha Museum and Showroom

The headquarters of Koransha Co., Ltd. are located in the Uchiyama neighborhood within Arita's Important Preservation District for Groups of Historic Buildings. In 1877, construction began in preparation for the 1879 visit by former U.S. President Ulysses S. Grant (1822–1885), as part of his post-term tour around the world. His wife, Julia Grant (1826–1902), was known to be a collector of fine porcelain. The three-story structure's design, built for the Grants to stay in during their time in Arita, emulated contemporary Western tastes, since there were no suitable accommodations nearby. Unfortunately, due to a cholera outbreak the Grants were ultimately unable to travel to Arita and never visited the building. Later, the rooms were converted into receiving rooms for VIPs and diplomatic negotiations. The chandelier in the main hall was purchased during the 1876 Philadelphia Exposition, and a special Arita ware plate was installed to protect the ceiling from candle flames. The rooms are not open to the public at this time.

Koransha's original showroom was built in 1905 and was inspired by the architecture of nearby Sasebo, Nagasaki. A new wing was added in 1936 to accommodate the rapidly growing company. Located on the second floor of the main building, the Koransha Museum of Old Ceramics displays antique porcelain, including items from the company's heyday in the late 1800s and early 1900s and copies of pieces created for the exclusive use of the Japanese Imperial Household. The exhibit labels describing the collection items are also made of Arita ware.