

### **Arita Ceramic Museum (Detailed)**

The Arita Ceramic Museum opened in 1954 as the first museum in Saga Prefecture. At the time, it was one of only three museums in the world that specialized exclusively in ceramics. The building itself was constructed in 1874 to be used as a porcelain warehouse, and was also briefly used as a school. The interior was refurbished in 2018, and the display cabinets, cases, but lamps date to the original opening of the museum.

One of the most significant pieces of the museum's collection is a large blue-and-white *sometsuke* plate made sometime between the 1830s and 1850s. The plate depicts the entire process of producing Arita ware during the Edo period (1603–1867), including digging the clay at the Izumiyama quarry, crushing it, shaping, painting, glazing, and firing.

Also on display are porcelain pieces exhibited at World Fairs and exported abroad during the Meiji era (1868–1912). Items made to look similar to Chinese porcelain, featuring elaborate designs and bright colors, and those made with ukiyo-e style images sold well abroad. Patterns designed by Arita's local artisans were generally more subtle and featured smaller designs and motifs that required more technical skill.

On the second floor of the museum are displays of several generations of famous master craftsmen. Unusually, the work of both master and apprentice from the same kiln may also be viewed together here.