

History of Toyotamahime Shrine

No records reveal the origins of Toyotamahime Shrine, but the original shrine complex was once located next to the Shiota River before being destroyed by fire during the Sengoku period (1467–1568), an era of civil war and social upheaval.

During the Edo period (1603–1867), the powerful Nabeshima family ruled the domain of what is now Saga Prefecture, and Ureshino came under the jurisdiction of the family's Hasuike branch. After the shrine was rebuilt in 1615, Nabeshima Naozumi (1616–1669), the first lord of the Hasuike domain, allowed the use of the Nabeshima family crest, which greatly improved the prestige of the shrine. Naozumi is still revered today for the benefits his patronage brought to Ureshino.

The shrine moved to its current location in 1882, but some of the structures built during the Edo period, such as the third torii gate from the entrance, survive intact today. Visitors now come to the shrine to pray for healthy and beautiful skin, inspired by the legend of the beautiful deity Toyotamahime. Her messengers are catfish, known for their smooth skin, and the catfish deity nicknamed “Namazu-sama” is also enshrined here.