

## **Miyuki Slope**

Throughout the Edo period (1603–1867), people entering the castle from the Yamasaki district of Kumamoto had to cross a narrow wooden bridge before proceeding up the slope on the south side of the castle to reach the main gate here. With the advent of the Meiji era (1868–1912), however, persons of consequence started traveling in horse-drawn carriages rather than in palanquins or on horseback. The road was straightened and the old wooden bridge replaced with a new, wider one in time for a 1902 visit by the reigning Emperor Meiji. Improvements were also made to the southern slope approach, with cherry trees planted on both sides of the road. The new bridge was called Miyuki (Imperial Visit) Bridge, and the approach itself was named Miyuki Slope.