

Nishi-Ote Gate and Mototaiko Turret

Three main gates lead from the north, south, and west into the Nishidemaru northwest sector of the inner compound. This gate in the west (*nishi*) was the most prestigious of the three. When Hosokawa Tadatoshi, the first Hosokawa lord of Kumamoto, came to take control over the domain in 1632, he entered the castle through this gate, getting out of his palanquin and bowing low to the ground. The original gate and turret (*yagura*) were dismantled during the occupation of the castle by government forces during the Meiji era (1868–1912). In 2003 a wooden replica was constructed but it was damaged in the 2016 earthquake. It is now in storage pending reconstruction.

The name of Mototaiko Turret, just to the west of Nishi-Ote Gate, suggests that a large drum may have been kept here. The turret has been dismantled and is awaiting reconstruction.