

Musashizuka Park

Of the three possible burial sites of swordsman Miyamoto Musashi (1584–1645) in Kumamoto, Musashizuka Park in the eastern part of the city of Kumamoto is considered to be the most plausible. Musashi spent the last five years of his life in Kumamoto under the patronage of the local lord Hosokawa Tadatoshi (1586–1641) and Tadatoshi's successor Hosokawa Mitsunao (1619–1650). According to legend, he was so loyal to the Hosokawa clan that he arranged to be buried standing upright in full armor and helmet in order to watch over them even in death. Since Musashizuka Park stands along the old road leading to Edo (current Tokyo), which the Hosokawa family would have traveled often, it makes better sense as a guard post than the other two possible locations for his grave. The park has a bronze statue of Musashi at the entrance armed with his two trademark swords. There is a Japanese garden and a teahouse in the park.