

Kaikokan Historic House

A large, traditional house with a mossy thatched roof stands in a clearing at the base of Mt. Jo, on the approach to the site of Nanao Castle. The house was built in 1820 for the Iida family, which served as village officials and stewards of the Kaga domain (present-day Ishikawa Prefecture).

The house is open to the public as a folk museum. It is a well-preserved example of a wealthy farming family home from the nineteenth century. Original structural features include the thatched *irimoya-zukuri* hip-and-gable roof and an *irori* sunken hearth, and artworks and household goods belonging to the Iida family are on display. A large, landscaped garden surrounds the house, with a well and moss-covered garden stones.

Visitors to the house can enter the main living area from the earthen-floored entrance. The room centers on a sunken hearth, where the family would gather to eat and relax. A hook is suspended above the hearth for hanging a cooking pot. The walls are lined with decorative folding screens. The transoms of the adjoining room, which has the household Buddhist altar (*butsudan*), have panels carved to depict famous landscapes.

The rooms toward the back of the house overlook the garden and were used for formal entertaining. A large painting depicts the powerful daimyo Uesugi Kenshin (1530–1578), who captured Nanao Castle in 1577. He sits surrounded by his generals, composing a poem after the main keep of the castle has fallen to his forces.

The Kaikokan Historic House is open daily from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. (Closed on Mondays and during winter from mid-December to mid-March.)