

### **Former Nishikawa Riemon House**

This house was the residence of a prosperous family of merchants who amassed a fortune in the seventeenth century selling mainly mosquito nets and woven rush matting used to cover tatami in Edo (now Tokyo), Kyoto, and Osaka. Each successive head of the family took the name Nishikawa Riemon, and it was the third Nishikawa Riemon who built the house on the west side of Shinmachi Street in 1706. The third Riemon's younger brother Shoroku established his own branch of the family, whose members came to live across the street from the Riemon House and built a fine house of their own in 1785. In 1930, the eleventh Nishikawa Riemon passed away without a successor, and the main family came to an end. The Nishikawa Shoroku family endured, however, and had the Nishikawa Riemon House donated to the city of Omihachiman. In 1983, the building was designated an Important Cultural Property, and between 1985 and 1988, it was completely restored to its original appearance—that of a typical Omi merchant's house of the Edo period (1603–1867). The house is now open to the public as a museum.