

## **Muro'oka Farmhouse**

This two-story structure was built in 1935 as a farmhouse. Today, it houses the Matsudai History Museum, a unique facility that offers exhibits on Matsudai history and the daily life of a farming household in the early 1900s.

The farmhouse belonged to an influential local family named Muro'oka. The original structure was a wood-frame, wood-shingled farmhouse of the sort typical in Tokamachi, built using large beams of zelkova wood connected by joinery rather than metal fixtures or nails. The wattle-and-daub walls provide natural insulation, while the steep roof sloughs off snow. In 2009, the house was relocated and given modern features, such as metal sheet roofing and electrical wiring.

Inside, the structure retains the typical layout of a snow-country farmhouse, centered around a sunken hearth (*irori*) used for heating and cooking. The rooms are filled with authentic tools, furniture, housewares, and art donated by local residents, evoking a clear image of domestic life and demonstrating how communities survived and thrived during Tokamachi's long, snowy winters.

The second floor has extensive exhibits on the history and significance of nearby Matsuo Shrine, an Important Cultural Property, and a video with archival footage of its Nanatsu Mairi festival, in which seven-year-old boys make a journey to the mountain shrine.