

Takasago History Tour 3

Takasago was an important fishing center and distribution point for goods, such as salt and rice, and many local merchants built their wealth from this trade. Business depended on transportation via the Kakogawa River. The prosperity of the town over the centuries still can be seen in its buildings today.

Shingido

This educational institution was established in the early nineteenth century. It was created on the recommendation of Kawai Sunno, a chief retainer of the Himeji domain, with the aim of providing education for commoners. *Shingi* is translated as “righteousness,” one of the Confucian ideals the school sought to cultivate; *do* means “hall.” Townspeople who had acquired a high level of Confucian education while running a business were selected as teachers. A number of scholars and literary figures visited Takasago, raising local interest in and motivation for higher learning and culture.

It is not known how old students were when they enrolled in Shingido, but they were likely in their early or mid-teens. Most were children of Takasago residents. Students were required to have completed their studies at a *terakoya* (temple school) before enrolling. A desire to learn was necessary, as well as the financial means and time to join the classes. Instruction was held daily from early morning until noon, except on holidays and special occasions.

The school was closed in 1871 when the Tokugawa period system of domains was abolished and prefectures set up in their place; education of children was taken over by Takasago Primary School. The Shingido was rebuilt in 2012 according to its original design. Funding for the restoration was provided by local benefactors.

The building is a single-story wooden structure, consisting of a large tatami-floored room, three inner rooms, and a veranda at the front. It is a cultural property of the city, and is open to the public on weekends and public holidays from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Sanrengura Warehouse

This site consists of three wooden storehouses built early in the Meiji era (1868–1912) to

store items such as tableware and dishes used for celebrations. The storehouses are lined up close to each other and feature a masonry base and exterior walls clad with charred cedar planks. (Charring the wall surfaces slightly made them waterproof and more durable.) The buildings also feature high-quality white plastering, copper window shutters, and traditional tile roofing. Sanrengura Warehouse remains privately owned and has been designated as Important Landscape Architecture of Hyogo Prefecture.

Hanai Family Residence

The Hanai family used their easy access to boat transportation on the Kakogawa River to operate a fertilizer business from the Edo period (1603–1867) to the early Showa era (1926–1989). Their property comprises a main residence, a two-story building constructed late in the Meiji era, and a storehouse.

Since 2011, the residence has been used as a base for the Takasago District Community Development Council. It consists of a community hall and shop, both of which are decorated with historical artifacts from the early 1900s such as movie posters, old record covers, and photos of local festivals. The residence is opened on the weekends as a café and on Wednesdays for a dyeing workshop (reservations required for the workshop). The residence is designated a National Registered Tangible Cultural Property.

Osaki Family Residence

This property was built between 1898 and 1912 as a retirement residence for the Osaki family, who used the Kakogawa River transportation system to run their wholesale lumber business, Osaki Shoten. The two-story structure is typical of period townhouses in Takasago. It features a lattice window on the front facade and a gabled roof supported by exposed rafters, with ornamental brackets (*udatsu*) on both sides. It is a National Tangible Cultural Property.