

Climbing Kiln Plaza

The plaza adjacent to the brick Noborigama (Toei Kiln) is approximately halfway along Course A on the Pottery Footpath, making it an ideal place to take a break. The plaza's main attractions are found in a two-story building, with a well-preserved example of a nineteenth-century kiln on the first floor and an exhibition space and studio above.

Visitors can enter the kiln and walk around inside. It has two entrances that allowed pottery to be loaded efficiently. The kiln was used to produce a variety of Tokoname's specialty products over the years, including soy sauce bottles, ceramic pipes, *kyusu* teapots, and bonsai pots.

The exhibition space features work by up-and-coming local ceramic artists, offering a wide range of items suitable as souvenirs or gifts. In the studio, visitors can try painting a piece of pottery or a *maneki neko* (lucky cat) ceramic figurine. The activities are suitable for all ages, and reservations are not required. However, the items created will be shipped to participants several weeks later, after they have been glazed and fired.

The plaza has two large examples of modern outdoor ceramic art. "Time and Space" is a dynamic blue sculpture by Shibata Masaaki (b. 1948). It sits at the center of the plaza and is flanked by "Radiance," a shimmering mosaic wall created by Sugie Junpei (1936–2005).