

## **Kokaryu Real Ninjakan**

*Kokaryu* refers to the ninja of Koka in Omi Province (present-day Koka, Shiga Prefecture). Historically, the adjacent areas of Koka and Iga (in present-day Mie Prefecture) were the traditional heartland of ninja activity in medieval and early modern times.

Pop culture, media, and art forms like manga and film have introduced ninja to the world as black-clad assassins with near-superhuman abilities, but these portrayals are often inaccurate. In recent years, however, researchers and historians have pieced together an authentic picture of the Koka ninja. The Kokaryu Real Ninjakan communicates this rich heritage while also serving as a gateway for Koka tourism.

The main role of the ninja was to collect information for persons who served as their patrons without drawing attention to themselves.

*Ninjutsu*—the art of the ninja—centered on stealth and survival tactics, requiring physical endurance, mental agility, and strategic thinking.

The Kokaryu Real Ninjakan features interactive displays and exhibits

that provide insights into *ninjutsu* and showcase the knowledge and skills that defined the ninja. Visitors can tap into their “inner ninja” through hands-on activities suitable for all ages.

A comprehensive timeline highlights key developments in the history of the Koka ninja and the important roles they played in supporting some of Japan’s leading historical figures. Other displays explore the ninja’s legacy in the area, including their expertise in building forts and their extensive knowledge of medicinal herbs.

The Kokaryu Real Ninjakan also serves as a center of ninja-related research. The facility displays historical documents that have provided information about the true nature of the ninja. Staff can provide guidance on other ninja-related attractions in the region, and rental bicycles are available for exploring further afield. The souvenir shop offers a wide range of ninja-related merchandise and specialty products from around the Koka area.