

Former Kasamatsu Residence

This late nineteenth-century *kominka* (traditional country residence) belonged to relatives of the village headman Kasamatsu Satayū (1598–1673), whose development projects continue to underpin life in Aridagawa.

When this residence was built, the surrounding village consisted of around 20 farming and papermaking households. The Kasamatsu family's respected position is evident in the large size and advantageous location of the property. The plot receives plenty of sunlight for growing vegetables and is sheltered from the wind by the surrounding mountains. It also has a freshwater stream and easy access to the rice paddies at Aragijima.

The residence's main house, storehouse, and rowhouse are typical structures found in homes from that time. The main house has a steeply slanted thatched roof that is designed to prevent snow accumulation in winter. The most unusual feature of the house is an innovative plumbing

system that diverts the nearby freshwater stream into the kitchen area and out into a fishpond. Fresh water flows through the system continuously, carrying food waste and wash water out to feed the fish.

Today, the Kasamatsu residence is rented out to visitors who wish to experience traditional country life in Aridagawa. While modern conveniences like indoor plumbing have been added to the property, the main house retains its typical *kominka* features, including a packed-earth entryway, carved wooden transoms, and tatami-floored rooms.