

Weathering the hardships
of over 400 years

A National Treasure Matsumoto Castle



Successors of the lords of Matsumoto Clan (23 generations of 6 families)



Sasa-rindo

Ishikawa Family:
(1590-1613)

1. Kazumasa 2. Yasunaga,
80,000 Goku



Sangai-bishi

Ogasawara Family:
(1613-1617)

3. Hidemasa 4. Tadazane,
80,000 Goku



Hanare-mutu-boshi

Toda Senior Family:
(1617-1633)

5. Yasunaga 6. Yasunao,
70,000 Goku



Maru-ni-mitsuba-aoi

Matsudaira Family:
(1633-1638)

7. Naomasa,
70,000 Goku



Kuromochi-ni-tatemokko

Hotta Family:
(1638-1642)

8. Masamori, 100,000 Goku,
including 70,000 Goku of
Matsumoto Clan



Maru-ni-hana-omodaka

Mizuno Family:
(1642-1725)

9. Tadakiyo 10. Tadamoto
11. Tadanao 12. Tadachika
13. Tadamoto 14. Tadatsune,
70,000 Goku



Hanare-mutu-boshi

Toda Junior Family:
(1726-1869)

15. Mitsuchika 16. Mituo
17. Mitsuyasu 18. Mitsumasa
19. Mitsuyoshi 20. Mitsuyuki
21. Mitsutsura 22. Mitsutsune
23. Mitsuhsa,
60,000 Goku

Tourists Information

Admission fees: Adults: 600 yen
Elementary & junior high school students: 300 yen
(There are also double tickets with the Matsumoto Municipal Museum,
and discount tickets for groups.)

Hours: 8:30 AM to 5:00 PM (entry before 4:30 PM)

Closed: December 29 to January 3

Administration Office of the Matsumoto Castle

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Origin

The origin of Matsumoto Castle goes back to Fukashi Castle, which was built at the beginning of the Eisho Era, in the civil war period. During those troubled times, Lord Ogasawara in Shinano, moved his manor house from Igawa to the Hayashi district at the eastern foot of the mountain. At that time, the center of Matsumoto plain was called Shinano Fuchu. Lord Ogasawara's retainers protected themselves by building their houses around Hayashi Castle, the new manor house of their lord. Fukashi Castle was built in front of Hayashi Castle at around the same time to protect the front of the manor house. After that, Shingen Takeda of Kai chased away Lord Ogasawara to create a stronghold for the conquest of Shinano. Then, in year 10 of the Tensho Era (1582), Sadayoshi Ogasawara recaptured Fukashi Castle by taking advantage of the protectors letting down their guard during the Honnoji incident. He then changed the name to Matsumoto Castle.

Construction of Tenshu

After Hideyoshi Toyotomi dominated the whole region by defeating Ujinao Hojo at Odawara Castle in year 18 of the Tensho Era (1590), he allocated the Kanto area to Ieyasu Tokugawa. Hidemasa Ogasawara, the lord of Matsumoto Castle at that time, also moved to Shimoosa in Kanto by following Ieyasu. Hideyoshi appointed Kazumasa Ishikawa as the new lord of Matsumoto Castle. Kazumasa and Yasunaga, the father and the son, maintained the castle and the town. Yasunaga built, not only the three towers, including the *tenshu* (donjon tower), *inu-kotenshu* (small tower in the northwest), and *watari-yagura* (connecting scaffold), but he also built the *goien* (residence), *taikomon* (drum gate), *kuromon* (black gate), *yagura* (scaffold), and *hori* (trench). He secured *honmaru* (the main wing) and *ninomaru* (the second wing), gathered warriors in *sannomaru* (the third wing), built up the infrastructure in the town, and created the sub-floors in Matsumoto Castle, much as they are today. It is estimated that the towers were built during years 2 and 3 of the Bunroku Era in Yasunaga's time in power (1593-4).

Impressive environs and landscape, appropriate for the oldest five-story *tenshu* (donjon tower) in Japan. Its historical, cultural and artistic value cannot be overlooked.



Kuro-mon (black gate)

The main gates for the *honmaru* (main wing) are the *kuro-mon* (black gate) and *masugata* (square-shape gate), both essential for castle security. The first gate *yagura-mon* (scaffold gate) was rebuilt in year 35 of the Showa Era (1960). The second gate, *masugata* (square-shape gate) and the *sodebori* (side wall) were rebuilt in year 2 of the Heisei Era (1990).



Taiko-mon (drum gate).

The *taiko-mon-masugata* (square-shaped drum gate) was built around at the year 4 of the Bunroku Era (1595), and is on top of the north stonewall. The *taiko-ro* (drum tower) was used to signal the time, like a clock. As well, it was used to have call people to assemble at the castle and during emergencies. It was reconstructed in year 11 of the Heisei Era.



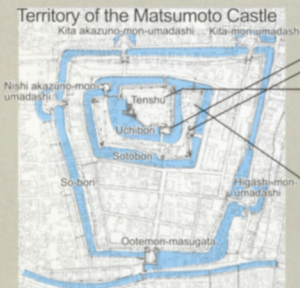
Ruin of *honmaru-goten* (residences in the main wing)

The *goten* (residence) was built after the completion of the *tenshu* (donjon tower), and was used as the lord's manor house, as well as the administrative center. Therefore it was the hub of political life. It was burnt down in year 12 of the Kyoho Era (1727) and has never rebuilt.



Ruin of *ninomaru-goten* (residences in the second wing)

After the *honmaru-goten* (residences in the main wing) burned down, the administrative headquarters was moved to the *ninomaru-goten* (residences in the second wing), and was the center of politics until the end of the Edo Era. It was excavated for six years from year 54 of the Showa Era, and is now an historical park.



Notable benefactors who preserved the *tenshu-kaku* (donjon tower)

The *tenshu* (donjon tower) of Matsumoto Castle faced demolition following the belief in the Meiji Era that relics of the past should be destroyed. The efforts of Ryozo Ichikawa and others who were concerned about losing the *tenshu* (donjon tower), bought it and preserved it, while overcoming many difficulties. However, they could not stop the ruin of the castle. Unari Kobayashi, the principal of Matsumoto Junior High School, and others who also worried about this situation, established an organization to preserve the *tenshu* (donjon tower) in year 34 of the Meiji Era (1901). They completed the major work after 12 years, and saved the *tenshu* (donjon tower) from becoming a ruin.

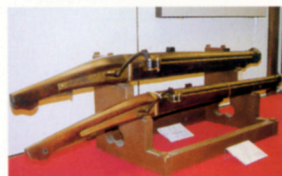
Black, strong *tenshu* (donjon tower) for warfare, graceful *tatsumituke-yagura* (scaffold in the southeast) and *tsukimi-yagura* (moon observatory scaffold) built during a time of peace. Many indispensable castle-building techniques are carried down to the present.



Dark room without windows, the 3rd floor of the *tenshu* (donjon tower). Although the *tenshu* (donjon tower) seems like it has five stories from the outside, it is actually six stories high inside. This floor is the safest area, as it cannot be seen from the outside; it was a secret to the castle's enemies. Therefore, warriors stayed here during wartime. This floor is dark with very little sunlight coming in through the south *kizure-goshi* (wooden grill).



Distinctive windows on the 2nd floor of the *tenshu* (donjon tower). This floor is much brighter than the others because of the three *tategoshi* (vertical grill) *musha* (warrior) windows at in the east, west, and south walls. The floor has four rooms, which were believed to have been used as *musha-damari* (warriors' rooms), the place for warriors to assemble.



The armory of Matsumoto Castle on the 2nd floor of the *tenshu* (donjon tower) contains a arquebus collection and valuable related material donated by the late Michishige and Koyoko Akabane from Matsumoto City.



Two wings were extended during peacetime *Tatsumi-tuke-yagura* (scaffold in the southeast) This building located in the southeast (*tatsumi*) of the *tenshu* (donjon tower) was built at the same time as the *tsukimi-yagura* (scaffolding in the southeast) during the Kan'ei Era. The windows on the first floor are *musha* (warrior) windows, and the ones on the second floor are *kato* (flower-style) windows. Inside of the *kato* (flower-style) windows, there are shutters to keep out rainwater.



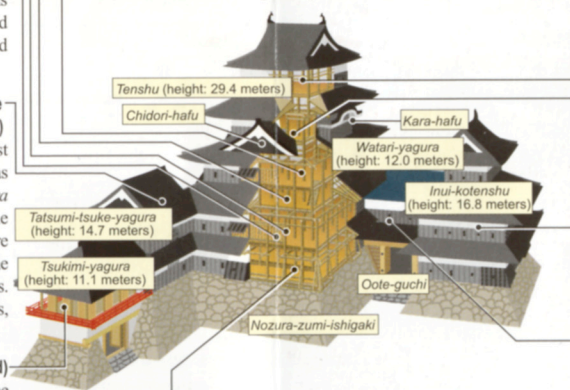
***Tsukimi-yagura* (moon observatory scaffold)** This is the *yagura* (scaffold) used to view the moon. Three sides of the room (north, east and south) are open to the air when *mairado* (sliding doors) are opened. Vermilion-lacquered walls around the room and the ship-hull-shaped ceiling create a wide-open feeling. This area cannot be seen from the *tenshu* (donjon tower), *watari-yagura* (connecting scaffold), and *inui-kotenshu* (small tower in the southeast).



Stairs to the 6th floor, or the 5th floor of the *tenshu* (donjon tower). It is believed that this floor was used for tactical meetings of military officers during wartime. As the ceiling is 4.54 meters high, which is higher than the other floors, there is a staircase landing here that goes up to the 6th floor, and the stairs rise gradually.



***Goza-no-ma* (private residence)** on the 4th floor of the *tenshu* (donjon tower). This room in the *shoin* style could be a temporary *goza-sho* (private area), where the lord stayed during emergencies. The room has a high ceiling with sunlight coming in from all four sides. The pillars are made of cypress wood smoothed out with a plane. There is a small wall above the door jamb, and the whole room was exquisitely built.



Pillars on the 1st floor of the *tenshu* (donjon tower) These pillars are made of hemlock, cypress and pine. It is believed that this room was used for the storage of food, weapons, and ammunition.



The top floor, the 6th floor of the *tenshu* (donjon tower), was used as a *bourou*, a watchtower for enemies during wartime. The ceiling was built using the *igeta-bari* (curved beam) technique. A god named *Nijuroku-ya-shin* (god of 26 nights), who protects Matsumoto Castle, has a dedication in the center of the ceiling.



***Maruta-bashira* (bolt pillars)** at the *inui-kotenshu* (small northeast tower) There are a number of *maruta-bashira* (bolt pillars) used inside the *inui-kotenshu*. Twelve of them on the 3rd and 4th floors are over 400 years old, which is about the time the castle was built.



***Watari-yagura* (connecting scaffold)** at the entrance to the *tenshu* (donjon tower) connects the *tenshu* (donjon tower) and *kotenshu* (small tower). At the ooteguchi (main entrance), the *tenshu* (donjon tower) has a solid door that stops people from entering. The *kawara* (roof tiles) of the *tenshu* (donjon tower) and Japanese iron nails are exhibited on the 2nd floor.



***Ishiotoshi* (stone drop) and *sama* (openings for archers)** Visitors are able to see areas for war with firearms, which was the main weapon, at the *tenshu* (donjon tower). There are 25 *yazama* (openings for archers) and *teppo-zama* (firearm openings) on the thick wall, and there are *ishiotoshi* (stone drops) on the 1st floor of the *tenshu* (donjon tower), the *inui-kotenshu* (small northwestern tower), and *watari-yagura* (connecting scaffold). *Ishiotoshi* (stone drops) prevented enemies from climbing up the *ishigaki* (stone walls), and were used for repelling a firearm attack. They are similar to *sama* (openings for archers).

