

## Information on the Ruins in the Omi Fudoki no Oka (Omi Nature and Culture) Project

### Azuchi Castle Ruins (a Special Historic Site of Japan)



Azuchi Castle was built by Oda Nobunaga in 1576. The Shiga Prefectural Board of Education conducted a twenty-year excavation survey and maintenance project for these ruins, beginning in 1989. Through this project, a major road (Otemichi) of the castle, as well as the stone walls, were restored to their original condition.

### Kannonji Castle Ruins (a Historic Site of Japan)



Kannonji Castle was the residence of the Rokkaku family of the Sasaki clan, which served as guardians of Omi Province (the traditional name of Shiga Prefecture) during the Kamakura Period and the Muromachi Period.

Kannonji Castle was a large-scale castle built on Mount Kinugasa, which has an

altitude of 432 meters. In central areas or enclosures of the castle complex, called the Honmaru and Hirai Maru, there are remains of the original castle, such as stone walls.

### Hyotanyama Kofun (a Historic Site of Japan)



Hyotanyama Kofun is a keyhole-shaped tumulus, or burial mound, made using a small ridge on the western foot of Mt. Kinugasa in the fourth century. It is the largest ancient tumulus in Shiga Prefecture, with a total length of 136 meters. Three pit-type stone chambers were built into the top of the mound, from which

bronze mirrors and iron weapons, etc., have been excavated.

### Dainakanoko Minami Site (a Historic Site of Japan)

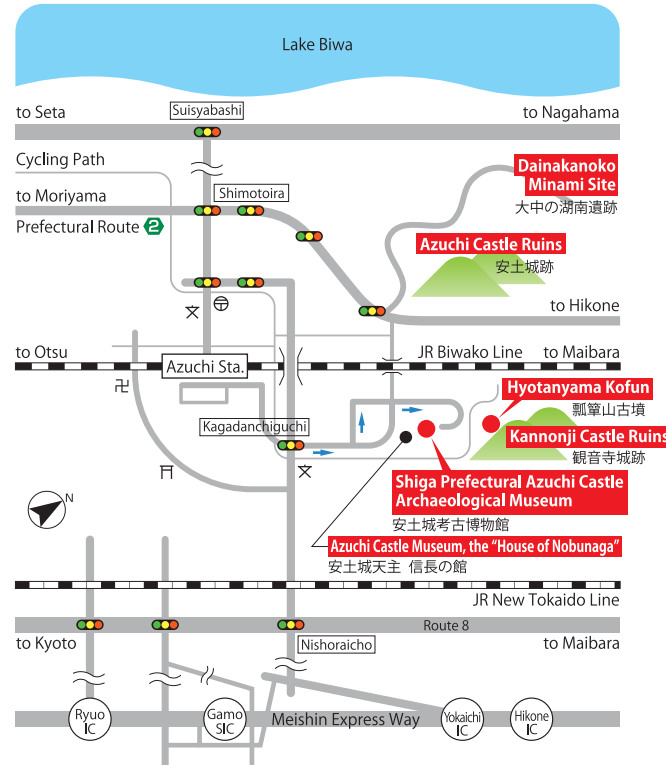


This site consists of the ruins of an agricultural village from the Yayoi Period, which was discovered during reclamation work on Lake Dainakanoko. Traces of the original paddy fields, waterways, and various wooden implements used in rice cultivation have been recovered from the ruins.

## Admission Information

Admission fee varies according to specific exhibition and event. Please confirm admission fee at the time of your visit. A combined ticket including admission for both the museum and an adjacent facility, the "House of Nobunaga", is also available for purchase.

There is no base admission fee for elementary and junior high school students, those with disabilities, or residents of Shiga Prefecture who are 65 years of age or older and hold verifying identification. (However, there is a special exhibitions fee for elementary and junior high school students and those over 65 who live in Shiga Prefecture.)



- 25 minutes on foot from Azuchi Station on the JR Biwako Line.
- 10 minutes by rental bicycle from Azuchi Station on the JR Biwako Line.
- 14 minutes by bus from Azuchi Station South Plaza (weekday service only; four departures per day)
- 25 minutes from the Gamo exit (Gamo SIC) of the Meishin Expressway.
- 30 minutes from either the Ryuo exit (Ryuo IC) or the Yokaichi exit (Yokaichi IC) of the Meishin Expressway.
- On Route 8, proceed through Nishorai Intersection then turn right at Kagadanchiguchi Intersection.

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# Shiga Prefectural Azuchi Castle Archaeological Museum

Azuchi Castle Archaeological Museum opened in 1992 as a core facility in the Omi Fudoki no Oka (Omi Nature and Culture) project.

This project carries out various activities and exhibitions of cultural properties, with the aim of increasing general familiarity with the history and culture of Shiga Prefecture. The project also promotes knowledge of the four nationally designated historic sites in the prefecture: Azuchi Castle Ruins, Kannonji Castle Ruins, Hyotanyama Kofun (Tumulus), and the Dainakanoko Minami archeological site.



**Shiga Museums Support Committee**

## Permanent Exhibition Room 1

Permanent Exhibition Room 1 contains primarily exhibits of the Dainakanoko Minami site and the Hyotanyama Kofun (Tumulus).

Shiga Prefecture, formerly referred to as Omi Province, is blessed with a rich natural environment. The geography of the prefecture centers on Lake Biwa, the largest lake in Japan. The prefecture has played an important role in Japanese history.

The exhibitions in this room begin with items excavated from shell mounds which date to the Jomon Period about 5000 years ago. The exhibit continues with artifacts from the Yayoi Period (c. 800 B.C. to 250 A.D.), such as wooden farming tools which were unearthed at the Dainakanoko Minami site and bronze bells (*dōtaku*) which were excavated at the Oiwayama site in Yasu City, Shiga.



Bronze bells from the Oiwayama site



Iron arms from the Shingai Kofun



A life-size model of the pit-style stone chamber or tomb of the Hyotanyama Kofun

For the Kofun Period (c. 250 A.D. to 600 A.D.), the room features a life-size model of the pit-style stone chamber or tomb of the Hyotanyama Kofun (burial mound), as well as articles excavated from the Shingai Kofun tumulus, a burial mound which has been the source of a significant amount of armor and harnesses.

## Permanent Exhibition Room 2

Permanent Exhibition Room 2 contains exhibits on the history of the castle in Japan, centering mainly on the Kannonji Castle Ruins and Azuchi Castle Ruins, as well as on the central historical figure Oda Nobunaga (1534-1582), who built Azuchi Castle.

Japanese castles, conceived as fortresses for fighting, underwent great development during the Warring States Period of the 15th and 16th centuries. Large castles, such as Kannonji Castle and Odani Castle, were constructed in Shiga Prefecture. Azuchi Castle, when it was completed, marked the emergence of the early modern style of castle, characterized by the incorporation of stone walls (*ishigaki*), stone building foundations, roof tile, and a high-rise castle tower.

Exhibits in this room introduce the history of the Kannonji Castle Ruins, the medieval castle style, and the owner of Kannonji Castle, the Rokkaku family of the Sasaki clan. Other exhibits introduce excavation findings from the Azuchi Castle Ruins, events in the life of the historical figure Oda Nobunaga, scale models of Japanese castles, actual excavated articles, historical documents, and more.

In addition, visitors can learn about the excavation survey and view reconstructed images of Azuchi Castle tower and castle town in the video theater located in the exhibition room.



A gilded tile from Azuchi Castle (collection of the Shiga Board of Education)



Portrait of Oda Nobunaga (collection of Sokenji Temple)



Document with red seal by Oda Nobunaga (private collection)

## Rotating Exhibition Room

In the Rotating Exhibition Room, special exhibitions are held twice a year, in spring and autumn. Additional exhibitions are held periodically. A spring special exhibition explores Oda Nobunaga and Azuchi Castle, the development of the Japanese castle, and the Warring States Period. An autumn special exhibition focuses mainly on the Yayoi Period and the Kofun Period.



A spring special exhibition



An additional exhibition

## Outdoor Exhibits

A representative family dwelling, the Old Miyaji Family Home (which has been designated an Important Cultural Asset of Japan), and other culturally significant historical structures, such as the Former Ryugen School (a cultural property of Shiga Prefecture), and the Former Azuchi Police Station have been transported to the museum site and installed as interactive exhibits on the museum grounds. In addition, stone products such as stone lanterns and signposts made in the Edo period (1600-1867) are displayed outdoors.



The Old Miyaji Family Home



The Former Azuchi Police Station

## Observation Gallery

From the corridor of the museum, it is possible to observe ongoing examination of relics excavated through surveys at archaeological sites in Shiga Prefecture being carried out in the examination room.



Observation Gallery



Working with excavated relics