

Hiroshima Sites Overview

Hiroshima's origins can be traced to the end of the 6th century and beginning of the 7th century when the area began to prosper. At the time, Hiroshima was divided into two regions, Aki and Bingo. Towns prospered along transportation routes through the mountains and on the inland sea.

In 1589 Mori Terumoto, a regional warlord during the warring states period, gave Hiroshima its name and built a castle in what is now Hiroshima City. During the Edo period (1603-1867), modern-day Hiroshima Prefecture was divided into two domains, the Fukuyama Fiefdom to the east and Hiroshima Fiefdom to the west. Under the abolition of Fiefs, the two regions were united into a single Hiroshima Prefecture and the current borders were established by 1876.

In August 1945, Hiroshima City was destroyed in an instant with the dropping of the atomic bomb. Neighboring cities also suffered damage as a result of the war. Through the efforts of Hiroshima's citizens, the region made an impressive recovery and continues to develop as a center of government, economics, and culture in the Chugoku-Shikoku Region.¹

Miyajima has been an object of nature worshipped by locals since ancient times. Because of its landscape, and mountains, Mt. Misen being the tallest one, surrounded by the primeval forest which is dark even in the daytime, this place makes people feel a spiritual flow.

According to the history of the shrine, the Itsukushima shrine was founded by Saeki Kuramoto who was an influential person in Saekibe during the first year of the Suiko period (593).

In the year 12 of the Taisho period (1923), the whole of Miyajima was designated as a location of historical importance or extraordinary scenic beauty by the government, in the year 25 of the Showa period (1950), it was designated as a Setonai-kai National Park, and in December of the year 8 of the Heisei period, Itsukushima shrine as well as the Atomic Bomb Dome were registered on the World Heritage List of UNESCO (UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization).

Itsukushima shrine has been repeatedly rebuilt and restored since it was founded, because of natural disasters, such as typhoons and lightning strikes, the Itsukushima Gassen (Battle of Miyajima), and the Shinbutsu bunri policy.

Itsukushima shrine has been worshiped by fishermen, sailors, and merchants, and protected by powerful people in each period. Today, constructions listed as national treasures and important cultural properties are receiving government subsidies, as well as donations for restoration.²

¹ From [About Hiroshima](#)

² From [History of Miyajima](#)

Mt. Misen Area Map





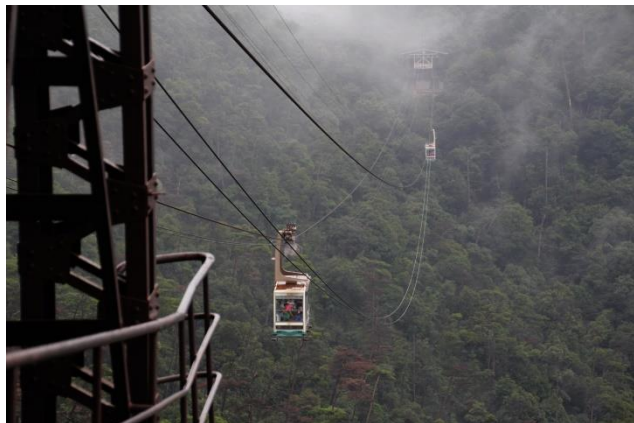
1) Miyajima Ferry

Tourist spot on the sea-JR Miyajima Ferry

An ideal photography spot that provides you with close-up, front views of the Great Torii and Itsukushima Shrine from the sea!

Great Torii ferry services, which take you closest to the Great Torii, operate from Miyajima-guchi from 9:10 a.m. to 4:10 p.m.

JR Miyajima Ferry lets you enjoy a front view of Itsukushima Shrine through the Great Torii, and take photos of these two notable features together from the sea. The Great Torii is well worth a view from the sea.



2) Miyajima Ropeway

Let's go to a miraculous spot, Mt. Misen. You can enjoy two kinds of gondolas!

Miyajima Ropeway operates two types of aerial ropeway systems, circulating and funicular in series, which is unique in Japan. As if walking in the sky, you can enjoy spectacular views of the Seto Inland Sea and primeval forest.

Circulating type ropeway

Momijidani Line (Momijidani – Kayatani)

This system operates several gondolas for small groups of passengers at fixed intervals. The system is suitable for long-distance transport. The Momijidani Line runs 8-seater gondola carriers (max. 22 units) at about 1-minute intervals.

Funicular type ropeway

Shishiiwa Line (Kayatani – Shishiiwa)

The system operates two large carriers alternately between the mountainside and summit. It is suitable for high-speed transport. The Shishiiwa Line runs 30-seater gondola carriers at 15-minute intervals (shorter intervals during busy hours).

Shishiiwa Station Activities:

Fire of Oath

Facing and watching each other across this "Fire of Oath."

The girl pushes "red button" and the boy pushes "black button" together, then "Fire of Oath" light up!

Momiji Manju Cakes

Heart-in Momiji "Chokotto" Hand-baked Experience Workshop. Let's bake a Miyajima souvenir "maple bun" by yourself!

Place: Miyajima Ropeway-Shishiiwa Station (Mountain Top Station)

Content: Shishiiwa Station Limited Maple Manju Hand-baked Experience

Hours: 10:00-12:00 / 13:30-15:30

Reception: Every 30 minutes *Experience time is about 15 to 20 minutes

Fee: 300 yen for 1 person, 500 yen for 1 pair

1 group 2 to 4 people, simultaneous experience 4 groups

♥ Please apply on the 2nd floor of Shishiiwa Station

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3)Mount Misen

Mt. Misen is situated in the center of Miyajima Island. The mountain was opened as an ascetic holy mountain site by Kukai, posthumously called Kobo daishi, in the autumn of 806 when he underwent ascetic practice. On the mountain are various spiritual sites which remind us of the holy deeds performed by Kobo Daishi. The panoramic view from the top

of the mountain is magnificent.

The Seven Wonders of Misen

- The Eternal Fire which has been burning for over 1,160 years.
- The Plum tree of Tin Stick, which is said to have taken root where Kobo-Daishi had left it. (Never blooms when evil signs are seen in the Temple)
- The Great Mandara Rock with Buddhist Scriptures written by Kobo-Daishi.
- Ryu-to-no-sugi (Dragon Fire Cedar). The Cedar from where many lights or fireballs can be seen best, in early February evenings.
- Kanman-iwa (ebb and flow rock).
- The Dewy Cherry Tree which was damp even on clear days.
- Hyoshigi-no oto, which is said to be the sound of wood blocks clapped at night by the Tengu, a long-nosed goblin.



Misen Daishoin Temple Hondou (Main Hall), Gumonji-dojo (Hall)

Main Buddha, Kokuzo-Bosatsu (Akasagarbha) with Fudo, Aizen-myo-o and Kobo Daishi are dedicated here. Famous feudal lords such as Tairo-no Kiyomori, Ashikaga Yoshinao, Ouch

Yoshitaka and Fukushima Masanori were greatly devoted. It is an institute for the secret training of Buddhism. This is one of the three famous Dojos: Dairyudake of Awa and Muroto-saki in Tosa. The present building was rebuilt in 1955.



Kiezu-no Reikado (Eternal Fire Hall)

The sacred fire has been burning for over 1,160 years. The big tea cull on this fire is believed to be effective to cure all illness. The fire was used to light the Flame of Peace in the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Park

Dainichido

Dainichi-Nyorai (Mahavairo Canasatathagata; Sun God) and Fudo-Myo-o (Acala: God of Fire) are dedicated. The latter is known as one of Kobo-Daishi's works.



Sankido (Sanki Daigongen Temple)

Sanki Daigongen are three fierce guardian gods of Mt. Misen. The main god is called Tsuichokijin. Tengus, long-nosed goblins, are their servants. Many people visit here to pray for the happiness of their family and the success of their business. The first Prime Minister of Japan, Hirobumi Ito is said to have been an earnest devotee. He contributed a large amount to construct the climbing path.



4) Daishoin Hiking Trail

A pleasant and relaxing way to enjoy Miyajima is to take a stroll along one of the island's many charming walking paths. Surrounding the seaside town area, the paths cut through the island's forest and afford nice views onto the town below.

For those seeking a more substantial hike, there are three paths that lead to the summit of Mount Misen: the Momijidani Course, the Daisho-in Course, and the Omoto Course.

Of the three trails, the Daisho-in Course offers the nicest views and is not as steep as the other two. It takes 1.5 to 2 hours to reach the town from the summit.



5) Daishoin Temple

Hours: 8:00 to 17:00

Closed: No closing days

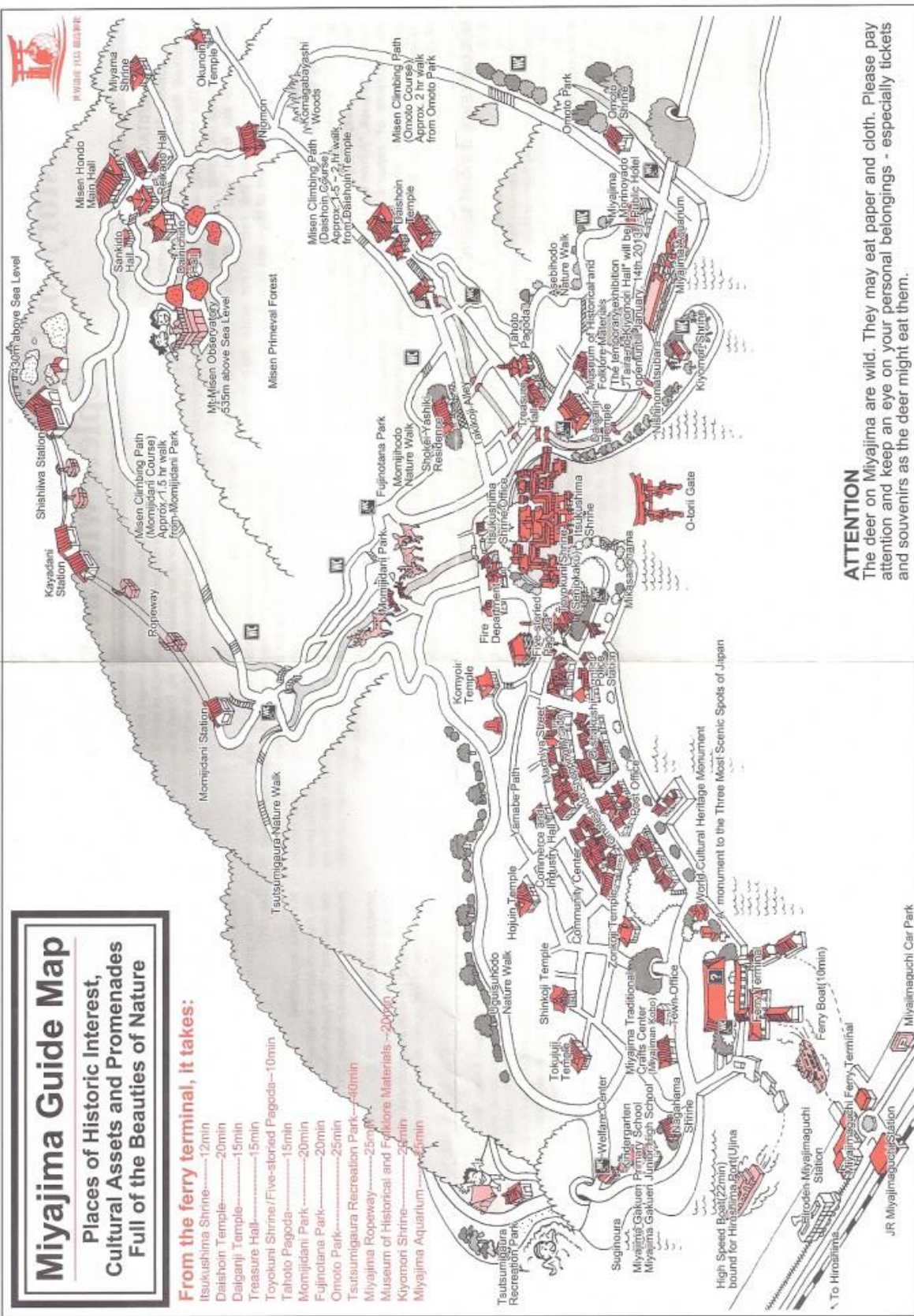
Admission: Free

Daisho-in (大聖院, Daishōin) is one of the most important temples of Shingon Buddhism. It is located at the base of Mount Misen, on which the sect's founder, Kobo Daishi, first began the practice of Buddhism on the island of Miyajima.

Daisho-in features a variety of buildings, statues, and other religious objects for visitors to admire. These include the Kannon-do Hall, the Maniden Hall, a sand mandala made by visiting monks from Tibet, a tearoom and a cave filled with 88 icons representing the temples of the Shikoku Pilgrimage.



An interesting Buddhist ritual can be performed when walking up the temple's steps. Along the stairs is a row of spinning metal wheels that are inscribed with sutra (Buddhist scriptures). Turning the inscriptions as one walks up is believed to have the same effect as reading them. So, without any knowledge of Japanese, you can benefit from the blessings that the reading of sutra is believed to entail.



Miyajima Guide Map

Places of Historic Interest,
Cultural Assets and Promenades
Full of the Beauties of Nature

From the ferry terminal, it takes:

- Itsukushima Shrine.....12min
- Daishoin Temple.....20min
- Dalgonji Temple.....15min
- Treasure Hall.....15min
- Toyokuni Shrine/Five-storied Pagoda.....10min
- Tahoto Pagoda.....15min
- Momijidani Park.....20min
- Fujinodana Park.....20min
- Omoto Park.....25min
- Tsutsumigaura Recreation Park.....40min
- Miyajima Ropeway.....25min
- Museum of Historical and Folklore Materials.....20/20
- Kiyomori Shrine.....25min
- Miyajima Aquarium.....25min

ATTENTION
The deer on Miyajima are wild. They may eat paper and cloth. Please pay attention and keep an eye on your personal belongings - especially tickets and souvenirs as the deer might eat them.



6) Miyajima Omotesando

Not to be confused with the trendy district of Tokyo, Omotesando is one of the busiest streets in Miyajima!

This street, which is about three hundred and fifty meters long, is always busy and holds many surprises: small noodle restaurants smelling of spices, stalls selling food to enjoy as you walk along, souvenir shops full of trinkets to put on a desk or to savor - small floating torii, the cakes of the island, rice spatulas ... as Miyajima is also famous for its shakushi made of wood: you can also marvel at the largest shakushi in the world, which is five meters long!

Stroll by kebabs sellers and the windows where they prepare the famous little cakes filled with anko (sweet red bean paste). Okonomiyaki (pancakes originating from the Hiroshima region, with seafood or meat) will be cooked in front of you on some stands. Night owl gourmets can feast on oysters and eel at the Mame tanuki restaurant.

The street takes you to the stone torii Ishidorii where you can see the large gate, Otorii, of Itsukushima Shrine.



7) Itsukushima Shrine and Floating Torii

Hours: 6:30 to 18:00

Closed: No closing days

Admission: 300 yen (500 yen for combined entry with Treasure Hall)

The centuries-old Itsukushima Shrine (厳島神社, Itsukushima Jinja) on Miyajima is the source of both the island's fame and its name. Formally named Itsukushima, the island is more popularly known as "Miyajima", literally "shrine island" in Japanese, thanks to its star attraction. The shrine is known worldwide for its iconic "floating" torii gate.

The shrine and its torii gate are unique for being built over water, seemingly floating in the sea during high tide. The shrine complex consists of multiple buildings, including a prayer hall, a main hall and a noh theater stage, which are connected by boardwalks and supported by pillars above the sea.

Miyajima Island has a long history as a holy site of Shinto. The island's highest peak, Mount Misen, was worshiped by local people as early as the 6th century. In 1168, Taira no Kiyomori, the most powerful man in Japan during the end of the Heian Period, selected the island as the site of his clan's family shrine and built Itsukushima Shrine.

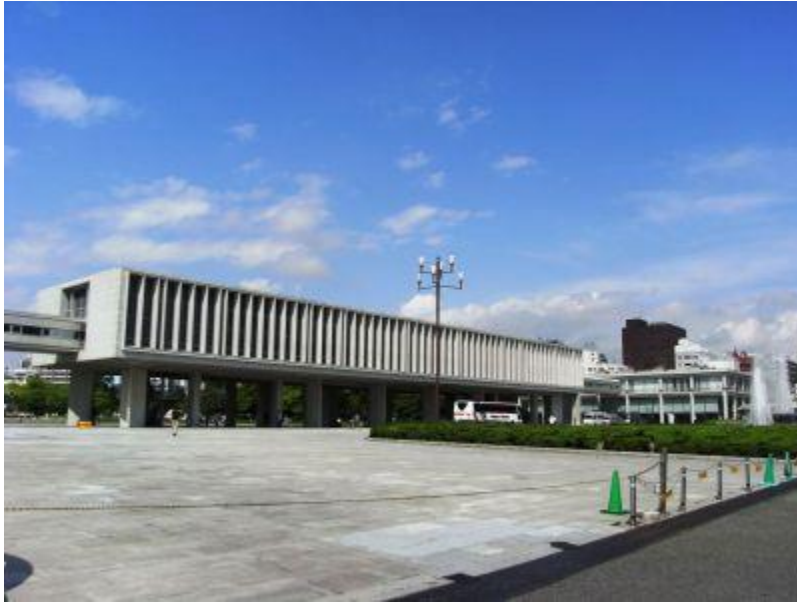
The shrine is in a small inlet, while the torii gate is set out in the Seto Inland Sea. Paths lead around the inlet, and visitors enjoy walking along them while looking out onto the sea. After sunset, the shrine and the torii gate are illuminated daily until 23:00, providing a perfect backdrop for ryokan guests to enjoy an evening walk in yukata and geta sandals. It is not possible to enter the shrine after sunset, though.

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8) Atomic Bomb Dome

Hiroshima Peace Memorial, commonly called the Atomic Bomb Dome, is part of Hiroshima Peace Memorial Park and was designated a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1996. The building serves as a memorial to the people who were killed in the atomic bombing of Hiroshima. Having slightly missed the original target (the distinctive "T"-shaped Aioi Bridge), at 8:15 on August 6, 1945, the first nuclear bomb to be used in war detonated almost directly above the dome (the actual center of the blast was 490 feet (150 m) away and 1,968 feet (600 m) above ground). As Hiroshima was rebuilt around the dome, it became a subject of controversy; some locals wanted it torn down, while others wanted to preserve it as a memorial of the bombing. In 1966 Hiroshima City decided to preserve the A-bomb Dome indefinitely. Funds were sought locally and internationally. To date, the A-bomb Dome has undergone two preservation projects.



9) Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum

Hours: 8:30 to 19:00; admission ends 30 minutes before closing.

Closed: December 30 to 31

Admission: 200 yen

Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum was established in August 1955. The museum exhibit presents the facts of the atomic bombing, with the aims of contributing to the abolition of nuclear weapons throughout the world, and of promoting world peace. It is the most popular of Hiroshima's destinations for school fieldtrips from all over Japan and for international visitors, too. The number of visitors is over one million people per year.

The Peace Memorial Museum collects and displays belongings left by the victims, photos, and other materials that convey the horror of that event, supplemented by exhibits that describe Hiroshima before and after the bombings and others that present the current status of the nuclear age. Each of the items displayed embodies the grief, anger, or pain of real people. Having now recovered from the A-bomb calamity, Hiroshima's deepest wish is the elimination of all nuclear weapons and the realization of a genuinely peaceful international community.

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10) Memorial Cenotaph

Near the center of Hiroshima Peace Memorial Park is a concrete, saddle-shaped monument that displays the names of all the people killed by the bomb. The cenotaph carries the epitaph, "Rest in Peace, for the error shall not be repeated." Through the center of the monument you can see the Peace Flame and the A-Bomb Dome. The arch shape represents a shelter for the souls of the victims. Every year on August 6th, "A-bomb Day," the City of Hiroshima holds the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Ceremony to console the victims of the atomic bombs and to pray for the realization of lasting world peace. The ceremony is held in the morning in front of the Memorial Cenotaph, and many citizens participate, including the families of the deceased. During the ceremony, one minute of silence for the victims is observed at 8:15, the time of the atomic bomb's explosion.

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11) Hiroshima Peace Memorial Park

Hiroshima Peace Memorial Park is dedicated to the legacy of Hiroshima as the first city in the world to suffer a nuclear attack, as well as to the memories of the bomb's direct and indirect victims (of whom there may have been as many as 140,000). The park is in what was once the city's busy downtown commercial and residential district. The park was built on open field that was created by the explosion. Today there are several memorials and monuments, museums, and lecture halls in this area, which draw over a million visitors annually. The annual August 6th Peace Memorial Ceremony, sponsored by the city of Hiroshima, is also held in the park. The purpose of Peace Memorial Park is not only to memorialize the victims, but to establish a reminder of the horror of nuclear war and to advocate world peace.



12) Children's Peace Monument

The Children's Peace Monument commemorates Sadako Sasaki and the thousands of child victims of the atomic bombing of Hiroshima. Designed by Japanese artists Kazuo Kikuchi and Kiyoshi Ikebe, the monument was built using money from a fund-raising campaign by Japanese school children, including Sadako's classmates. The main statue is entitled 'A-bomb Children' and was unveiled on May 5, 1958 (Children's Day in Japan). Sadako is immortalized at the top of the statue, where she holds a crane. Thousands of origami cranes from all over the world are left at the monument on a daily basis, and an ancient Japanese tradition holds that one who folds a thousand cranes can have one wish granted.

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13) Hiroshima Castle Park

Hiroshima Castle (Carp Castle) Park is located right in the heart of the city and is one of Hiroshima's most beautifully landscaped parks. Built in the 1590s, the park and the castle were destroyed during the atomic bombing in 1945. This complex was rebuilt in 1958. It is surrounded by a wide ditch full of water that forms a natural barrier to the castle.

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14) Hiroshima "Carp" Castle

Main Keep

Hours: 9:00 to 18:00; Admission ends 30 minutes before closing time.

Closed: December 29 to 31

Admission: 370 yen

Ninomaru

Hours: 9:00 to 17:30; Admission ends 30 minutes before closing time.

Closed: December 29 to January 2

Admission: Free

Originally constructed in the 1590s, the castle was destroyed in the 1945 atomic bombing of the city. A replica of the original was built in 1958 and now serves as a museum of Hiroshima's history prior to World War II. An excellent example of a hirajiro or flatlands (plains) castle, Hiroshima Castle once had three concentric moats and a natural barrier in the Otagawa River to the west (now called the Hongawa). The two outer moats were filled in during the late 19th and early 20th centuries, and much of what was once within the castle grounds is now a modern urban area with homes, schools, offices, and shops. There were once several secondary castle buildings, including towers and turrets. A Shinto shrine, called Hiroshima Gokoku Jinja, is located within the innermost moat, having been moved there after 1945.

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