

Special Scenic Spot

# Okayama Korakuen Garden

# Okayama Castle

岡山。

美しい日本が、

ここに。



特別名勝  
岡山

# 後樂園

# 岡山城

# In-park Scenic Spot Guide

Special Scenic Spot  
Okayama Korakuen Garden



## Bright and Spacious Daimyo Garden

The view in front of the Enyo-tei House where the daimyo's sitting room is located is spectacular. The spacious lawn, large pond and the mountains that rise in the distance beyond the grounds appear as part of the garden's visual presentation. This scenic view, characterized by shakkei or "borrowed scenery," has been largely preserved for 300 years.

### 1 Enyo-tei House

This house, featuring the sitting room where the daimyo relaxed, has a bright and spacious east-facing tatami room with a panoramic view. After suffering damages during the war, the garden was restored based on illustrations and diagrams from the Edo period. (Normally closed to the public)



### 2 Odateishi

The Odateishi is a colossal stone which was broken into pieces and reassembled to its original form. Stones in their natural form are part of the scenic beauty in Japanese gardens.



### 3 Renchi-ken Teahouse

The V-shaped stone bridge has retained its original design from when the garden was first built.



### 4 Yuishinzan Hill

Tsugumasa, third generation of the Ikeda family, constructed an artificial hill called Yuishinzan. The ever-changing scenery could now be viewed not only from the sitting room but from atop the hill during a leisurely stroll.



### 5 Ryuten Pavilion

Used as a resting place by strollers, castle lords also rested here during their strolls. In the Japanese garden, gazing at the water provides the mind with a cool reprieve.



### Japanese Crane

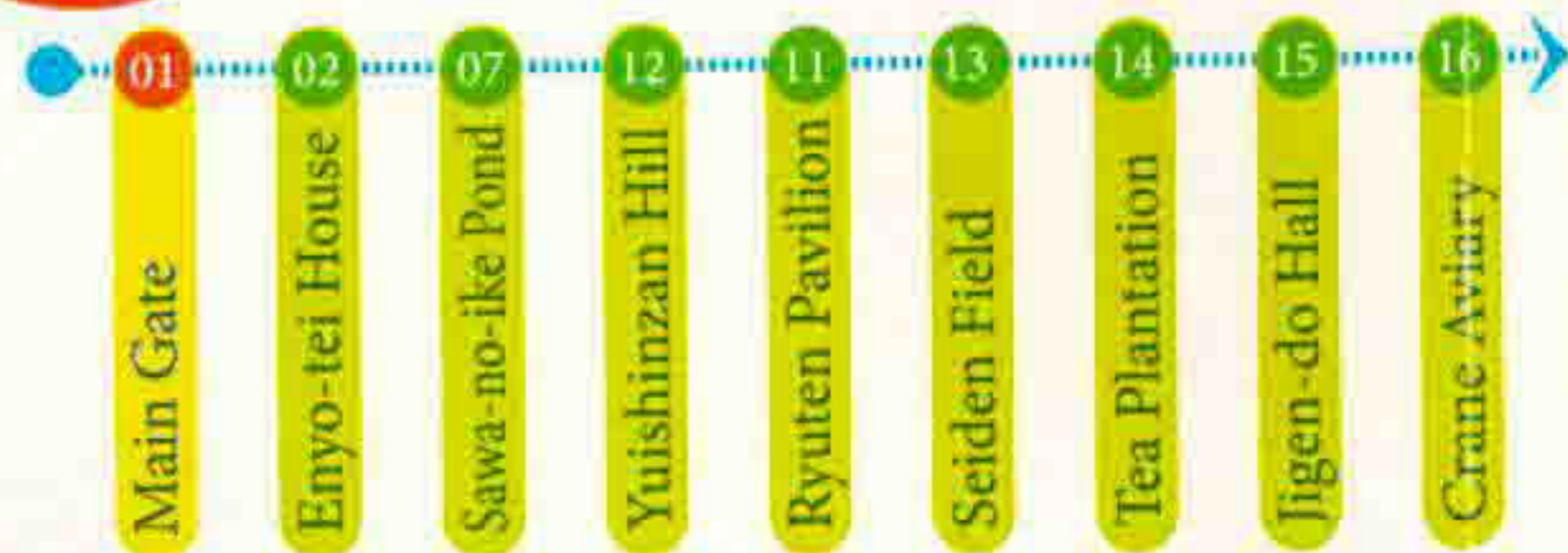
Since ancient times, the Japanese have viewed the crane as a symbol of good fortune. The high-pitched calls of the cranes reverberate throughout the garden. On New Year's Day, the cranes stroll leisurely inside the garden.



## Okayama Korakuen Garden Strolling Routes

### Hayabusa Course

Time required: about 30 min. /  
Course distance: about 800 m



# Koraku Sightseeing Course

Time required: about 60 min. /  
Course distance: about 1500 m

● Free tour guide available

Contact Information

◎ Okayama Volunteer Tour Guide Network  
Phone: 086-224-1166

◎ Okayama Korakuen Garden  
Phone: 086-272-1148



Rokuju-ichi-gangi-shita-mon Remains

Okayama Korakuen Garden

Okayama Castle

Entrance



Ofuna-iri-ato Dock Remains and Tothing Gear  
A boat dock and some stairs remain in the spot where a gate, used solely by the daimyo, formerly stood. These remains are in the same location as depicted in old drawings.



From Tsukimibashi Bridge



Ishiyama Park

Hayashibara Museum  
The Nagaya-mon at the...  
from a samurai residence

Nishinomaru Nishite-yagura

Okayama Prefectural Museum of Art

Okayama Orient Museum

Okayama Symphony Hall

Shiroshita stop

Ujo Park Parking Lot

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# Visitors Guide

Okayama Castle



## Tenshukaku (the castle tower) of Okayama castle

Tenshukaku built by Ukita Hideie was burned down in an air raid in 1945 but was rebuilt in 1966. Today, the building serves as a place to learn and play.



**Prefectural Library**  
Adjacent to stone wall of Sotogeba-mon and the pond that marks the location of the moat.

**Ninomaru Turret**  
Turret remains inside the residence of a chief retainer

**Front Entrance**

Okayama Prefectural Office

**Honmaru-no-ote (Main Gate)**

**Museum of Art**  
The entrance was relocated since.

### A Inside Tenshukaku



**Dress up in Costume**  
Transform into a castle lord or princess.



**Bizen Ware**  
Bizen Ware is traditional pottery of Okayama. Make your very own piece of pottery.



**Palanquin**  
Take a souvenir photo like a daimyo.



**Exhibition Room**  
Display of documents connected to the successive lords of the castle.

### B Upper Level



**Foundation Stones**  
The foundation stones of the castle tower were transferred during reconstruction.

### D Lower Level



**Uchigeba-mon Remains**  
Main entrance of the inner citadel. Even a person of high ranking dismounted their horses at this location.

### C Mid Level



**Tsukimi-yagura**  
This building was not burned down in the air raid. It was constructed in preparation for war and times of peace.



**Jugan-seki Loophole Stone**  
Constructed in the early 17th century, this structure, considered leading edge at the time, was also installed at Tokugawa's Osaka Castle.



**Omoteshojin (floor plan display)**  
The Omoteshojin was used by the feudal domain to conduct the affairs of state. It has 65 rooms and a garden.



**Stone Wall Exhibit**  
This stone wall was built by Ukita Hideie and is the original portion of the wall prior to the extension of the mid level by Kobayakawa and Ikeda.



**Kagami-ishi Stone**  
The Kagami-ishi Stone was used as the wall for the Uchigeba-mon. Standing at 4.1m in height, this is the largest stone inside the castle.



**Stone Wall of the Castle Tower Foundation**  
Most of the stone wall enclosing the castle tower foundation and upper level was built by Ukita Hideie.



# Okayama Castle

The jet-black castle reflected  
on the surface of the river  
The stone walls tell the history of 400 years

## Famous Sengoku Period Castle

Okayama Castle was built by Ukita Hideie under the command of the ruler of Japan, Toyotomi Hideyoshi, who fostered Ukita and made him a daimyo. Construction of the castle was completed in 1597.

Because the castle was designed to defend against attack from the west, there was no moat protecting the east side of the castle. Instead, Asahigawa River was diverted to form a natural moat around the eastward-facing rear of the castle. The castle is often called Ujo (or Crow Castle) due to the unique black-lacquered weather-boards which were installed on the castle tower. The castle tower, which is made of multiple layers of differently-shaped floors consisting of a scalene pentagon castle foundation, rectangular-shaped floors and square-shaped floors,

looks different from every angle.

Hideie formed the main-force unit of the Western forces in the Battle of Sekigahara (1600) but was defeated and banished to an island. The life he spent in exile on Hachijojima Island was longer than his career as lord of the castle.

Kobayakawa Hideaki, who replaced Hideie as lord of the castle, extended the castle with a new outer moat but died a premature death only two years later. The Ikeda family who then took control over the castle, maintained the Omote-shoin and Tsukimi-yagura and became the ruling family of the Okayama domain under the shogunate system.



Along with Kenrokuen and Kairakuen,  
Okayama Korakuen Garden is regarded as  
the most famous of Japanese gardens.  
Keeping three hundred years of tradition alive

## Garden of Peace

The castle was transferred to the Ikeda family. After Ikeda Mitsumasa organized the government and economic infrastructure of the Okayama domain, Ikeda Tsunamasa constructed an extensive garden behind the castle as a place for private relaxation. At the time the garden was built, the landscape consisted mainly of fields, and the lawn was only one-fourth the area it covers today. In addition to planting cherry and maple trees which were popular during the Edo period, he also planted pine trees to create a colorful forest of trees, and thoroughly enjoyed the seasonal flowers and colors that changed in tandem with the harvest.

Tsunamasa's son, Tsugumasa, built an artificial hill called Yuishinzan in the middle of the garden and diverted the waterway to transform the garden from one that could be viewed from the sitting room to one that could be enjoyed by

Special Scenic Spot

## Okayama Korakuen Garden

strolling. Later, due to financial difficulty, the fields were converted to lawn to cut down on the cost of labor, and other changes were made in reflection of the times. The garden scenery we enjoy today was largely established by the end of the Edo shogunate. The garden which was a source of scenic beauty and relaxation for generations of daimyos was at times also used to entertain guests and opened to the residents of the Okayama domain.

The garden's name was changed to Korakuen Garden in 1871, and after ownership was transferred from the Ikeda family to Okayama Prefecture in 1884, the garden was opened to the public. The garden suffered flood damage in 1934 and war damage in 1945, but has since been restored and has become a garden well-loved by many.

# Yearly Events Calendar for Okayama Castle and Okayama Korakuen Garden

Okayama Castle

Okayama Korakuen Garden

Spring

Summer

Autumn

Winter



Early May  
**Ujo-Oshiroasobi**  
(Fun and Games at ujo)

August 1 - 31  
Special Night-time Opening of  
**Ujo-Togenkyo (Castle Lighting)**

Alternate days in August to September  
**Mini Ice Welcome Pillar**

Mid-October  
**Ukita Hideie Festival**

Late October to mid-November  
**Okayama Chrysanthemum Exhibition**

During month of November  
Special Night-time Opening of Ujo-Togenkyo in Autumn  
(Castle Lighting)

Early November  
Special Public Exhibition of Tsukimi-yagura

New Year's Day  
**Ujo-Hatsuyume-Matsuri**  
(New Year's Festival) (free admission)



1st or 2nd Sunday of April  
**Goshinko Festival**

Late April  
**Eisai Tea Ceremony**

May 5  
**The Boy's Festival at Korakuen**

3rd Sunday of May  
**Tea Picking Festival**

2nd Sunday in June  
**Rice Planting Festival**

1st Sunday of July  
**Lotus Flower Viewing**

August 1 - 31  
Special Night-time  
**Gensou-Teien (Garden Lighting)**

August 15 (according to the old lunar calendar)  
**Moon Viewing Ceremony**

1st Saturday of October  
**Noh Theater Performance**

Late October to mid-November  
**Okayama Prefecture Korakuen Chrysanthemum Exhibition**

Late October  
Pine trees are fitted with protective straw coverings

During month of November  
Special Night-time Gensou-Teien in Autumn  
(Garden Lighting)

November 3  
**Koraku Noh Performance**

January 1 - 3  
**New Year's Festival**

Early February  
**Grass Burning Ceremony**

Late February The straw covers which protect the pine trees in winter are removed and burnt

March 2 Memorial day commemorating the opening of the garden

Event dates are subject to change.

## Information

### Okayama Castle

2-3-1 Marunouchi, Kita-ku, Okayama City  
Phone: 086-225-2096

Admission Fee Adults ¥300 Children ¥120  
\* Children 5 and under are free (15 or over) (6-14)

Prices are subject to change during special exhibition periods.

Hours 9:00am-5:30pm (Closed from December 29-31)  
Last entry at 5:00pm

### Okayama Korakuen Garden

1-5 Korakuen, Kita-ku, Okayama City  
Phone: 086-272-1148

Admission Fee Adults ¥400 Children ¥140 Senior Citizens ¥140  
\* Children 5 and under are free (15-64) (6-14) (65 and over)

Hours March 20-September 30/ 7:30am-6:00pm / October 1-March 19/ 8:00am-5:00pm  
Entry up to 15 minutes before closing

Combined Tickets	Okayama Castle and Okayama Korakuen Garden	Okayama Castle, Okayama Korakuen Garden, and Hayashibara Museum of Art	Okayama Castle and Okayama Orient Museum	Okayama Korakuen Garden and Okayama Pref. Museum
	Adults ¥560 (15 and over) Children ¥260 (6-14)	Adults ¥960 (15 and over) Children -	Adults ¥480 (15 and over) Children ¥200 (6-14)	Adults ¥520 (15 and over) Children -

Combined tickets are unavailable when the facilities are closed or while special exhibitions are in session (including installation periods).

Okayama Korakuen Garden Annual Pass Adults ¥2,050 Children ¥820 65 and over ¥820

## Access

**Okayama Castle**  
 Car: About 20 min. from Okayama I.C. Bus: From the JR Okayama Station East Exit bus stop, take the Okaden Bus bound for "Okaden Takaya" and get off at "Kenchō-mae." The castle is 5 minutes on foot from the bus stop.  
 Walk: 25 min on foot from the JR Okayama Station. Streetcar: From JR Okayama Eki-mae stop, take the streetcar bound for "Higashiyama" and get off at "Shiroshita." The castle is 10 minutes on foot from the stop.

**Okayama Korakuen Garden**  
 Car: About 20 min. from Okayama I.C. Bus: From the JR Okayama Station East Exit bus stop, take the Okaden Bus bound for "Fujiwara Danchi" and get off at "Korakuen-mae." The garden is right in front of the bus stop.  
 Walk: 25 min. on foot from JR Okayama Station Streetcar: From JR Okayama Eki-mae stop, take the streetcar bound for "Higashiyama" and get off at "Shiroshita." The garden is 10 minutes on foot from the stop.

Korakuen Garden Parking Fee Ordinary vehicles: ¥100/ hour Bus: ¥610/per time per day

## Access Map

