

Definitions of World Heritage Sites

There are three types of World Heritage. Only tangible heritage can become World Heritage.

Cultural Heritage

Monuments, groups of buildings, archaeological sites, cultural landscapes, and other similar sites of Outstanding Universal Value.



Natural Heritage

Landforms, geological features, ecosystems, habitats of endangered plants/animals, and other similar sites of Outstanding Universal Value.



Mixed Heritage

Sites with value as both cultural and natural heritage.



—Road to World Heritage—

OPEN!

Hikone Castle aims to be inscribed as a World Cultural Heritage Site under criteria **iii** and **iv**. See inside for details!

- Listed on Japan's Tentative List
- Nomination dossier*1 preparation **NOW!!**
- Japan decides on property to be nominated*2 and submits nomination dossier to UNESCO (One per country per year)
- Evaluation by ICOMOS*3 (Takes approx. 1.5 years)
- Review by the World Heritage Committee*4 (Once yearly)
- Inscription Decision

*1 Nomination dossier: The document by which State Party of the UNESCO World Heritage Convention nominates to UNESCO a property(ies) it considers suitable for inscription on the World Heritage List. The dossier details the property's Outstanding Universal Value and the management plan. The nominated property(ies) must be already listed on each State Party's Tentative List.
 *2 Japan deciding on nominated property(ies): The Council for Cultural Affairs of Japan selects a property as a nomination, and the Cabinet makes the government's final decision.
 *3 ICOMOS: ICOMOS (the International Council on Monuments and Sites) is a non-governmental organization with headquarters in Charenton-le-Pont, France. Founded in 1965, its role is to promote the application of theory, methodology and scientific techniques to the conservation of the architectural and archaeological heritage.
 *4 The World Heritage Committee: This committee is organized based on the World Heritage Convention and consists of representatives from 21 countries that are States Parties of the World Heritage Convention. The committee examines nominated properties and decides whether to inscribe them.

Hikone Castle and Area Map

There are plenty of spots related to the Hikone domain to see in the vicinity of the castle.



Invitation to join "1,000 Committee" to exchange opinions and support the effort to have Hikone Castle inscribed on the World Heritage List

The committee brings city and prefecture residents, government agencies, businesses, and experts together to exchange opinions and support the effort to have Hikone Castle inscribed as a World Heritage Site. Committee members receive information about world heritage seminars and events and general meetings of the committee. Anyone interested is strongly encouraged to join the 1,000 Committee. As a member, you can help to get Hikone Castle inscribed and help the region make better use of its cultural heritage. Don't live in Hikone or Shiga? You're still welcome to join!

How to join (email) Send your membership request by email to the address below. On the subject line, write "Application to join 1,000 Committee." In the email, tell us your name, address, phone number, and email address.

Hikone Castle World Heritage Site Inscription Advocacy Office,
 Cultural Properties Division, Hikone City hikone-wh@ma.city.hikone.shiga.jp

Scan the QR code to send us email



Show Your Support!
 Towards Hikone Castle's Inscription on World Heritage List



HIKONE CASTLE

Our aim is to have Hikone Castle inscribed on the World Heritage List. Share in the enthusiasm!

Visit the special website to learn more. www.hikonejo-worldheritage.jp/



About World Heritage Sites

World Heritage sites are irreplaceable treasures passed down from the past to the present. They have been created by the earth's formation and humankind's history. They are the common heritage of humanity that people around the world today must inherit from the past and hand down to future generations.

In 1972, the World Heritage Convention (officially, the Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage) was adopted at UNESCO's General Conference. The Convention aims to establish a system of international assistance and co-operation to protect, conserve and preserve cultural and natural heritage from damage, destruction, and other threats as the world heritage of mankind as a whole. Currently, there are more than 1,000 sites inscribed on the World Heritage List and 194 States Parties. Japan accepted the Convention in 1992.

Criteria (overview)

In order to be inscribed on the World Heritage List, properties must have Outstanding Universal Value*. They are considered such by meeting one or more of the below criteria (set forth in the "Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention"), by fulfilling the conditions of integrity and/or authenticity, and by being subject to an adequate protection and management system under the domestic laws of the State Party.

* Outstanding Universal Value (OUV): Cultural and/or natural significance which is so exceptional as to transcend national boundaries and to be of common importance for present and future generations of all humanity.

i Represent a masterpiece of human creative genius	vi Associated with events, living traditions, etc.
ii Exhibit an important interchange of human values	vii Superlative natural phenomena, natural beauty
iii Testimony to a cultural tradition	viii Major stages of earth's history
iv Example of a type of building, etc., which illustrates (a) significant stage(s) in human history	ix Significant ecological and biological processes
v Example of land-use or human interaction with the environment	x Most important natural habitats for biological diversity

* Properties inscribed under (i) to (vi) are cultural heritage, properties inscribed under (vii) to (x) are natural heritage, and properties inscribed under both cultural and natural heritage criteria are mixed heritage.

What is required of world heritage sites

Authenticity Integrity Protection and Management

Visit the special website to learn more, including criteria for judging World Heritage.



Adapted in part from "Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention" on Cultural Heritage Online by Agency for Cultural Affairs

System for inscribing and certifying heritage with world value and importance (outline)

Name	International organization	Object of inscription	Major requirements for inscription	Year begun (year adopted, etc.)	Number of inscriptions	Number of inscriptions in Japan	Heritage related to Shiga
World Cultural Heritage	UNESCO	Properties of outstanding universal value	Required	1972	1154	25	"Historic Monuments of Ancient Kyoto (Kyoto, Uji and Otsu Cities)" (Heizen Enryakuji temple)
World Natural Heritage	UNESCO	Properties of outstanding universal value	Required	1972	597	0	"Niagara Falls (Niagara Falls State Park)"
Intangible Cultural Heritage	UNESCO	Properties of outstanding universal value	Required	2003	530	22	"Yama, Hoko, Yatai Float Festivals in Japan" (Nagashima-Hikonegawa Festival)
Memory of the World	UNESCO	Records of outstanding universal value	Not required	1995	429	7	"Documents in Japan's Imperial Court Tradition: The History of the Making of the Japanese Constitution" (The Constitution of Japan)
Globally Important Agricultural Heritage Systems	UNESCO	Regions where globally important traditional agriculture is practiced	Not required	2002	67	13	Lake Biwa area of Shiga "Lake Biwa System for Freshwater Fisheries and Agriculture"

The UNESCO World Heritage program was created 50 years ago, making it the oldest such program today, as well as the best known and most influential. For that reason, the requirements for being inscribed on the list become more complex all the time.

Value as a World Heritage Site

Discover the Value of a Castle That Has Never Seen Battle

Hikone Castle Teaches You about the Edo Period

No battle has ever taken place at Hikone Castle. During the Edo period (1603–1867), daimyo and samurai gathered at the castle to govern for the stability of Hikone domain, as well as to take part in cultural activities and martial arts. Eventually, the castle became an indispensable part of the landscape as a symbol of stability and harmony.

Symbolic design

The castle was built to be visible from far away. Having the same form as the shogun's castle demonstrated that the shogun approved of Hikone Castle.



(1) Main keep (National Treasure)

The keep is a powerful symbol rising from the heart of the castle. Large decorative roof slopes combine in complex patterns, a design intended to make the keep visible from far away.

The word "castle" does not refer only to the main keep. Everything within the secondary moat is called a "castle".



(2) Sawaguchi entrance

Facing the secondary moat, this was an important entrance leading to the front gate of Hikone Castle. From here, it is easy to recognize the symbolic design formed by the moats, stone walls, and turrets.

Development of castles as the Edo period governance system evolved

Warring States Period (15th–16th century)	Daimyos' vassals also had their own territories and castles.
1600 Battle of Sekigahara	Generals of the victorious eastern army were assigned the territories of the generals of the losing western army (start of creation of local domains).
1603 Tokugawa Ieyasu becomes shogun (establishment of Edo shogunate)	New castles were built as centers for the local domains. Important castles were built by mobilizing many daimyos under direct order of the shogunate, and Tokugawa-style castles spread around Japan in this manner.
Summer Siege of Osaka/fall of Toyotomi clan	The shogunate started to control the daimyo.
1615 Law of one castle per domain	The general rule was that each local domain was allowed only one castle. Vassals of the daimyo were no longer allowed to have their own castles. Local domains were not allowed to use any military force unless ordered by the shogunate. Regional daimyos lost the right to mobilize armies.
Establishment of law decreeing rules for daimyo	The basic structure of castles no longer changed, because maintenance required permission from the shogunate.
System of daimyo living alternately in Edo and their own domains	All daimyos shuttled back and forth between Edo and their own domains, spending a year in each. In this way, they learned how the shogunate was organized and how it governed. Daimyos incorporated the same practices into the governance of their own local domains. Also in their own domains, daimyos conducted the rituals they learned from the shogunate and passed those lessons on to their vassals, so that a common ideal of vertical order and governance was created.

If Naomasa was granted the Hikone domain, previously the territory of Ishida Mitsunari.

Starting in 1604, many daimyos took part in the construction of Hikone Castle. (The shogunate sometimes ordered daimyos to help with large-scale engineering projects.)

As a result, castles essentially lost their military function. Rather than displays military might, castles became symbols authorized by the shogunate.

Castles held the daimyo's palace and residences of senior vassals. The daimyo's garden, a noh stage, and other places for rituals were also founded inside castles.

Some 150 castles were built across Japan in the Edo period to provide bases for local domain governance. Most, however, were torn down after Japan's system of government changed in the latter half of the 19th century and castles no longer had a role to play. Hikone Castle was an exception: the government preserved it in response to the urging of local citizens. The castle also avoided damage and development pressures. As a result, it is in good condition as the best preserved castle today and has many structures and structural remnants that enable us to know how the Hikone domain was governed.

Ii family, daimyos of Hikone Castle

- The Ii family supported the Edo shogunate and shogun.
- A preeminent hereditary daimyo (exceptionally high annual revenue of 300,000 *koku*)
- High family status, producing many chief ministers, six in total
- Always maintained its role of aiding the shogun

The family embodied the shogunate's ideals as a model for all daimyos.

- Ii family as daimyos of Hikone domain
- Ii family governed the Hikone Domain for more than 260 continuous years during the Edo period
- The family was never relocated or replaced (terminated)
- Custodians of a large stockpile of rice under the shogunate, at approximately 3 million kilograms
- Stable territorial management, with little civil turmoil
- Documentation and materials survived and have been preserved in the Hikone Castle Museum

As a classic example of a castle from the early Edo period, Hikone Castle has maintained the style of that time.



(3) Former site of Omote-Goten palace (main palace)

Governmental policies were made and rituals were conducted here. Archaeological remnants are stored in the basement of the Hikone Castle Museum.

Layout with all necessary functions

Hikone Castle held all the functions necessary for government and rituals. The inside of the castle was like a special space because stone walls, turrets, and moats separated the castle from outside.



(4) Umoreginoya residence

Ii Naosuke lived here before he became daimyo. The entire building and garden remain as they looked in Naosuke's time.



(5) Keyaki-Goten palace (secondary palace)

It is a rare example of a Japanese palace with structures from the Edo period still surviving today.



(6) Site of senior vassals' residences

Residences of senior vassals, who played important roles in the government with the daimyo, arranged around the main keep and main palace. The senior vassals' terraced house gate (photo) is one of the largest such gates remaining in Japan today.



(7) Genkyu-en garden

The scenery in the daimyo's garden appears today just as it is shown in illustrations from the Edo period. The daimyo and his vassals not only enjoyed the scenery but wrote waka poems and partook in tea ceremonies and martial arts here.



(8) Noh stage

Noh plays were staged during important rituals for the daimyo and his vassals. Hikone Castle is the only castle in Japan that still has an authentic noh stage.

Preserving and Passing on Hikone Castle

Passing on cultural traditions



Tea ceremony

Tea ceremony was an important part of Edo period samurai culture. Ii Naosuke, daimyo of Hikone, in particular was a devotee of tea ceremony, founding one branch of the Sekishu school. In the foreword to his book *Chanoyu Ichie Shu*, he used the phrase "ichigo ichie," meaning that "providing hospitality to another person like it is once in a lifetime encounter," and thus implying that the participant should pay attention. Today the phrase comes up in many settings, and tea ceremony conveys this ideal of Naosuke.

Photos: Children experiencing tea ceremony at Hikone Castle Museum



Rice planting

Genkyu-en garden contains a small paddy field. Important ceremonies took place in this re-creation of a rural village; even the daimyo planted and harvested rice, learned the hardships faced by farmers, and prayed for a bountiful harvest. The field fell into a long decline starting in the Meiji period (1868–1912), but was restored in 2012. Since then, local volunteers have revived planting and harvesting here. Members of the community appreciate the abundant crop.



Noh & kyogen

Noh plays were held as public rituals during the Edo shogunate. Local domains learned from the noh plays staged by the shogunate during all sorts of rituals and began holding their own plays, employing actors to perform in them. Sometimes, they built noh stages in their castles. The stage that remains in the Hikone Castle Museum continues to bring noh to audiences.

Local initiatives

Volunteer guide activities



Guides explain interesting points to visitors to Hikone Castle. Tours convey interesting points of castle-building technologies, such as how stone stairways, the keep, and other structures were built during 260 years of peace.

Intergenerational lessons



Hikone Castle is building bonds between generations. For example, university students and children from elementary schools in the castle town meet to discuss what they can do to promote listing of the castle as a World Heritage Site.

Sketching events for citizens



Each year, many locals take part in a Hikone Castle sketching event. Running for some 60 years now, this is an opportunity for young and old, families and groups to become familiar with the castle.

* The front of this pamphlet features sketches from the 2022 event.



Primary moat

Secondary moat

The boundary of Hikone Castle nominated for World Heritage Site status is the area within the secondary moat, as well as Umoreginoya residence.