

English

The famed "black" castle.
in the process of reconstruction

熊本城

Kumamoto Castle
Complete Guide

Multiple Towers kazukazu-no-yagura

Kumamoto Castle features numerous towers of different types, all of which function as watchtowers in four directions. Constructed in the shitami-itabari style, one can also look down at the castle moat. The Uto-Yagura Tower, the castle's largest, retains the same style of 400 years ago.

Black walls kurokabe

Main Keep and walls of towers are painted black, a characteristic that suggests a great degree of impregnability of the castle to this day. The paint consists of black lacquer and persimmon juice, a combination that prevents deterioration caused by weather conditions such as wind and rain, as well as by insects.

Stone Walls ishigaki

The angle of the castle's stone foundation walls increases toward the top to nearly 90 degrees, a high-technology construction designed to turn back enemies attempting to scale the walls. This function has earned it the name "musha gaeshi," which literally means "repels warriors."

Preparing for sieges rojo-no-sonae

Kumamoto Castle differs from others in the sense that it has defense mechanism in place to withstand extended sieges. Specifics included numerous ginkgo trees planted for construction materials as well as for food, and the many water wells on the grounds.

Walls hei

The Castle has in place an array of defense mechanisms designed to keep enemies out, including a wall that faces the moat. At 242 meters, it is Japan's longest such wall. These are some prime examples of Japan's advanced construction technologies.

National cultural treasure / national historic site
熊本城
Kumamoto Castle

MAP

Main Keep tenshukaku

Kumamoto Castle is an example of a style of architecture known as connected-keep layout, consisting of one large and one small keep. Though it burned in the Satsuma Rebellion, the solid structure has been reconstructed, sitting atop the stone wall.

Castle grounds as of January 1st, 2017

Former residence of Hosokawa Gyobu

City Museum

Prefectural Art Museum

Ni-no-Maru Square

Ni-no-Maru Parking Lot

Open from 8:30 - 18:00

Hitsujisaru-Yagura Tower

Stairwell

Josaien

Uto-Yagura Tower

Nishide-Maru

Hohote-Gomon Gate

Main Keep

Honmaru-Goten Palace

Iidamaru-Gokai-Yagura Tower

Bizen Moat

Hazekake-Mon Gate

Bagu-Yagura Tower

Nagabei Wall

Umaya-Bashi Bridge

Sudoguchi-Mon Gate

City Hall

Civic Auditorium

Photo spot

Direction

Ni-no-Maru / Main Keep route (on foot only)

Circular route (on foot only)

Shuttle bus route

Restoration in progress

Restoring to a beautiful state.

Iidamaru-Gokai-Yagura Tower iidamaru-gokai-yagura

One column of stones holds up the building. There is a green arm that was specially engineered in Japan. From the 14th floor of city hall there is an observatory overlooking this site. Weekdays: 7:30-22:00; Saturday, Sunday and holidays: 9:00-22:00

Repairing stone walls ishigaki-no-shufuku

In order to restore the Castle to its original beauty, each of the stones that have fallen from the structure are numbered and restored to their original places as shown in photos taken prior to the damage.

You just might meet a real military commander!
The Kumamoto Castle Omotenashi Bushotai

The Bushotai come alive at Kumamoto castle, skipping through 400 years of time to bring some fun to Higo Province. The group consists of ten people including the original owner of the castle, Kato Kiyomasa. Performances and monologues, which are popular with tourists, are held daily at the Sakura-no-baba Josaien (at the foot of the Castle).

Secrets of Impregnability

Kumamoto Castle: one of Japan's three most famous castles, unrivalled impregnability

Amongst the castles built by powerful warrior Kato Kiyomasa, Kumamoto Castle is considered the masterpiece.

Secrets of Beauty

The striking combination of the Castle's black walls and plaster is part of the appeal of Kumamoto Castle, giving it extreme beauty in addition to its renowned impregnability. The Goten (Palace) re-enacting the life of the feudal lord is also a must-see!

01. The elaborately decorated Honmaru-Goten Palace

02. A major characteristic of Kumamoto Castle is the various defense mechanisms in place designed to stymie intruders.

03. Colorful cherry blossoms enliven the black-walled Main Keep. The blossoms peak every year in late March through early April.

Kumamoto Castle Plus Info + @

The innermost area of Kumamoto Castle is currently under construction. The following are some recommendations on additional sights to see after touring the castle area.

Sakura-no-baba Josaien

Conveniently located in close proximity to Kumamoto Castle, this complex features facilities introducing the history of Kumamoto, gift shops, hands-on experience facilities and more. There is also a tourist information center. Stop in before you take a walk around the city!

Experience the sankin kotai or "alternate attendance" system of the Hosokawa clan, which involved a maximum of 2,700 people.

At the Narikiri experience corner, dress up like a town girl, a traveler or a samurai of the Edo period, and have a photo taken free of charge!

Our goal of restoring Kumamoto Castle
Reconstruction Sponsor program launched!!

Individuals donating 10,000 yen or more at a time are given a Reconstruction Sponsorship Certificate. When you digitally register your name, you are issued a Reconstruction Sponsor Pass. Present the Pass at tourist facilities or participating stores in the city to receive special privileges.

How to make a donation

① Bank transfer: Pick up the specified form and make a bank transfer at your nearest post office.
② Cash: Payments are accepted at the Kumamoto Castle General Affairs Office, at the Wakuwakuza, Sakura-no-baba Josaien.

Access from major Shinkansen stations

As of January 2017.

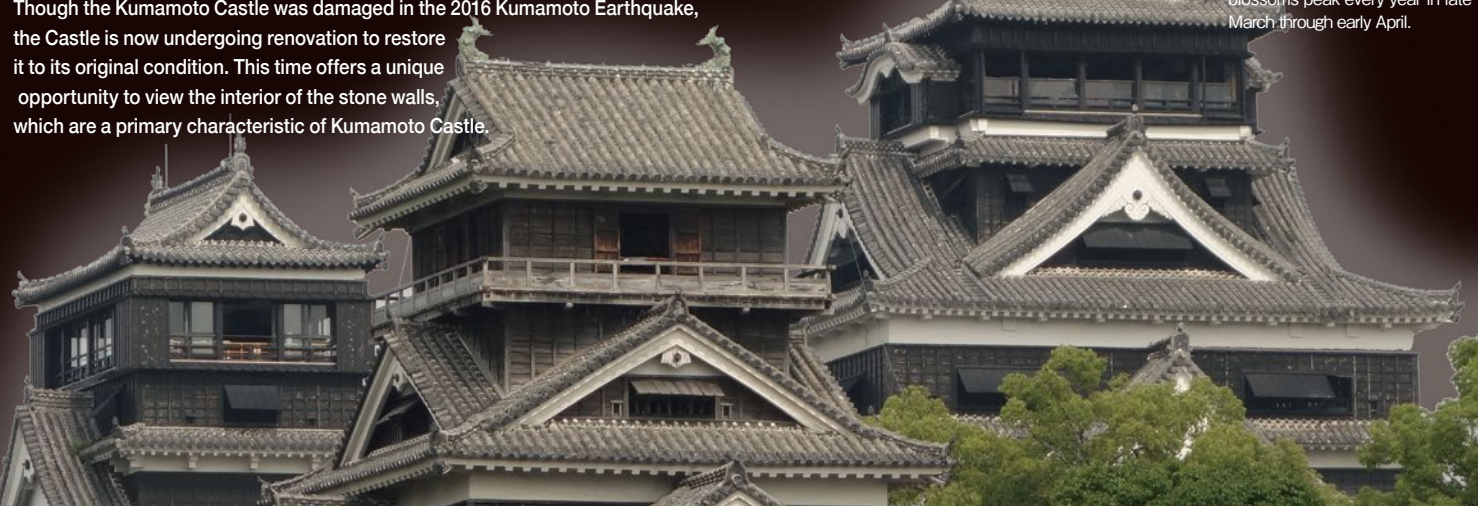
	Hakata	Hiroshima	Himeji	Shin-Osaka	Kyoto	Tokyo
Kumamoto	38 min.	1 hr. 43 min.	2 hr. 45 min.	3 hr. 14 min.	3 hr. 33 min.	5 hr. 33 min.
	Sakura	Sakura	Sakura	Sakura	Nozomi	Nozomi
					Change to the Mizuho Shinkansen at Shin-Osaka	Change to the Mizuho Shinkansen at Shin-Osaka

Access from the airports (approx.)

Kumamoto Airport	55 min. (airport limousine bus)	Kumamoto
Fukuoka Airport	2 hr. 15 min. (highway bus)	Kumamoto

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Get tourist information on Kumamoto City Official Tourist Site.

After completing your tour of Kumamoto Castle, take a walk around the castle town. See the Visit! Kumamoto (Kumamoto City Official Tourist Guide site), which lists local gourmet choices as well as crafts and other sights to see.