

English

JAPAN OPEN-AIR FOLK HOUSE MUSEUM

NIHON MINKAEN

川崎市立 日本民家園



Welcome to Nihon Minkaen Japan Open-Air Folk House Museum

The museum was established in 1967, aiming to preserve the disappearing vernacular houses in Japan, and to hand them down to the next generations. You can enjoy around twenty-five traditional buildings, including the Water Mill, the Ferryman's Hut, the Storehouse on Stilts, and the Kabuki Stage. Furthermore, the museum displays the stone statues and carvings along the passage, as well as the farming tools and daily utensils in each house.

You can see the formation of folk houses in the permanent exhibits besides the temporary exhibits at the Museum House.



Museum House Entrance Hall

Folk Houses



0. The Hara House



1. The Suzuki House



2. The Ioka House



3. The Saji House Gate



4. The Misawa House



5. Water Mill



6. The Sasaki House



7. The Emukai House



8. The Yamada House



9. The Nohara House



10. The Yamashita House



11. The Sakuda House



12. Storehouse on Stilts



13. The Hirose House



14. The Ōta House



15. The Kitamura House



16. The Kiyomiya House



Hut for Storing Firewood



17. The Itō House



18. Kokagesan Shrine



19. The Iwasawa House



20. Kabuki Stage



21. Ferryman's Hut

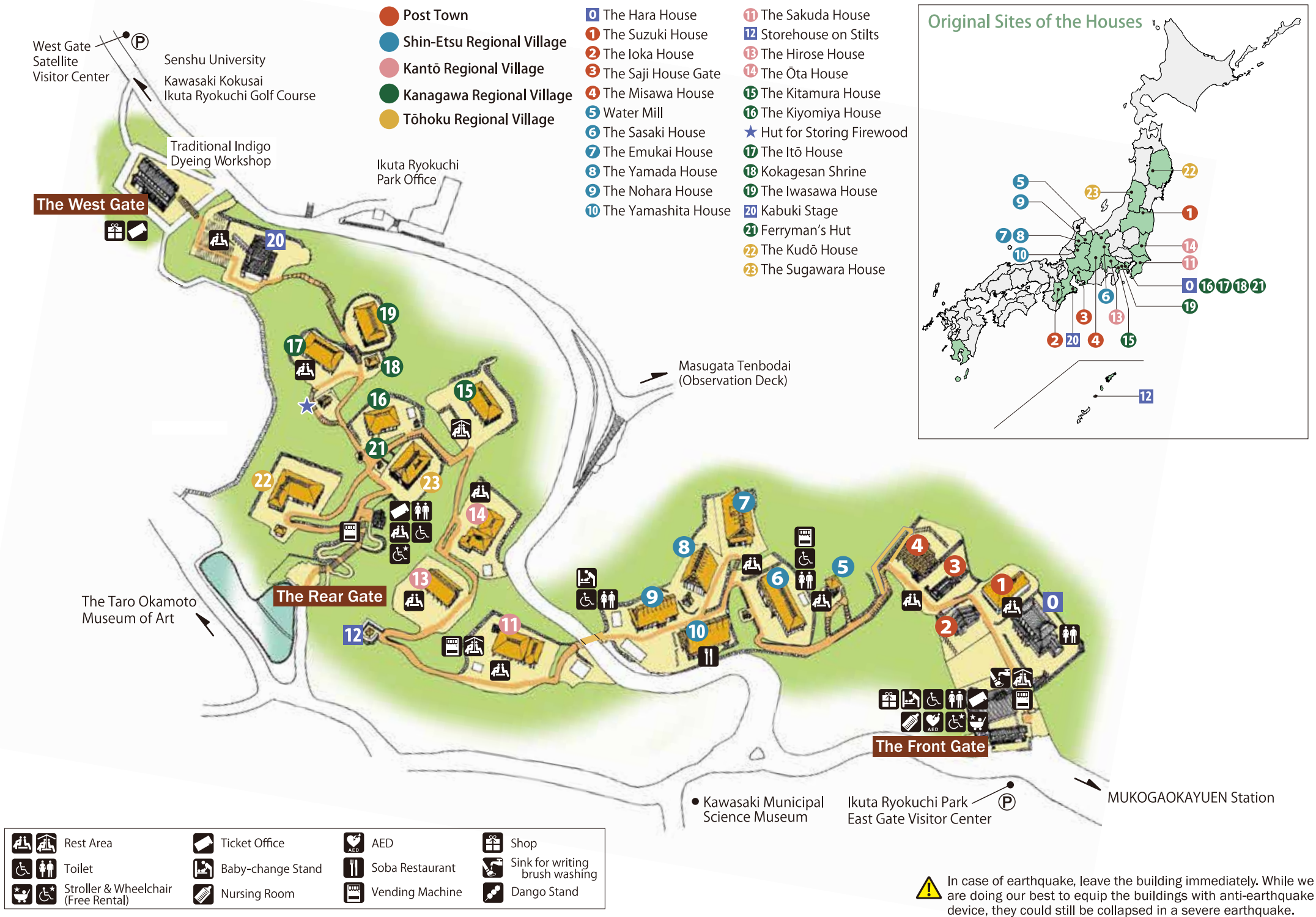


22. The Kudō House



23. The Sugawara House





- = Important Cultural Property of Kawasaki City
- ◎ = Important Cultural Property of Kanagawa Prefecture
- = Important Cultural Property of Japan
- ◎ = Important Tangible Folk Cultural Property of Japan

0. *The Hara House* Kanagawa Prefecture 1911 ○

The house belonged to the major landowners who ventured into banking and politics. Their abundant financial resources enabled the skilled carpenters to display their remarkable techniques in erecting the wooden frames.

1. *The Suzuki House* Fukushima Prefecture early 19th century ◎

The house was an inn where horse traders can lodged and also stable their horses. The deep eaves and the latticed windows are architectural traits of post towns.

2. *The Ioka House* Nara Prefecture late 17th–early 18th century ◎

The townhouse belonged to the Ioka family who used be an oil merchant first, then changed their professions to an incense merchant. Both the practice of plastering over posts and the use of a tiled roof were the measures to prevent fire, common features of townhouses.

3. *The Saji House Gate* Aichi Prefecture early 19th century ○

The gate of a samurai residence has a gabled roof covered with pantiles. The room with timber flooring was for the attendants waiting for their masters visiting the main house.

4. *The Misawa House* Nagano Prefecture mid-19th century ◎

The townhouse has a shingled roof weighted with stones, without using nails. The Misawa family was engaged in the manufacture and selling of medicines at home, and offered lodging at the main house.

5. *Water Mill* Nagano Prefecture mid-19th century ○

The water mill has a mill for grinding grain into powder, two mortars for polishing rice, and a straw damper.

6. *The Sasaki House* Nagano Prefecture 1731 ●

The archival records of the house contain the date of its construction and the information of its subsequent alterations. This house was used as both farmhouse and a dye-house. The second floor above the stable served as a private elementary school.

7. *The Emukai House* Toyama Prefecture early 18th century ●

The house is characterised by massive gabled roofing with thatch. The immense attic stories were used to raise silkworms. One of two divided sections of the earth-floored area was used for papermaking.

8. *The Yamada House* Toyama Prefecture early 18th century ◎

The house has a steeply pitched *gasshō-zukuri* roof. The Yamada family made their living through silkworm cultivation and fire farming. The space under the floor had been used for manufacturing gunpowder.

9. *The Nohara House* Toyama Prefecture late 18th century ◎

The typical *gasshō-zukuri* house with a massive, steeply pitched roof, has an extremely sturdy frame in order to support the weight of the heavy snows. The Nohara family raised silkworms and burned wood into charcoal.

10. *The Yamashita House* Gifu Prefecture early 19th century ◎

The *gasshō-zukuri* house has a massive, steeply pitched roof. The Yamashita family engaged in silkworm cultivation and fire farming on a mountain slope. The house was briefly used as a restaurant, before it was moved here. We have preserved that later alteration to the original building in order to continue using the building as a dining facility.

11. *The Sakuda House* Chiba Prefecture late 17th–late 18th century ●

The house has two roofs; one over the living space and the other over the earth-floored area. The head of the Sakuda family was responsible for a seine net sardine fishers' community.

12. *Storehouse on Stilts* Kagoshima Prefecture late 19th century ○

The raised-floor storehouse has four thick columns are made of a toxic tree known as *iju*, which protect the columns from termites. The roof space was mainly used to store rice, and a ladder was used to access there.

13. *The Hirose House* Yamanashi Prefecture late 17th century ◎

The Hirose family originally grew tobacco, but then shifted to silkworm cultivation. The room with the sunken hearth has no floorboards.

14. *The Ōta House* Ibaraki Prefecture late 17th–late 18th century ●

The Ōta family had been engaged in farming and their head was a village headman. The divided-ridge house has a large gutter made from a log, where two eaves meet.

15. *The Kitamura House* Kanagawa Prefecture 1687 ●

The Kitamura family' s major crop was tobacco. Some post ends from this farmhouse were inscribed with the date of its construction and the names of the carpenters. Instead of a timber floor, the living room has been floored with bamboo.

16. *The Kiyomiya House* Kanagawa Prefecture late 17th century ◎

The grass ridge of the roof has been covered with the irises bloom in spring. The house is one of the oldest buildings in this museum. The Kiyomiya family grew rice and Japanese pears and they started working as carpenters.

★ *Hut for Storing Firewood* Kanagawa Prefecture around 1924 ○

The hut has sunken posts without foundation stones. It was used to store firewood and fallen leaves.

17. *The Itō House* Kanagawa Prefecture late 17th–early 18th century ●

The Itō family grew persimmons unique to Kawasaki, along with silkworm cultivation and dry field farming. The uneven ground were developed under certain soil conditions as if pebbles had been buried underneath.

18. *Kokagesan Shrine* Kanagawa Prefecture 1863 ○

This shrine was revered among the people engaged in silkworm cultivation. On its both sides are two of four reliefs depicting the afflictions the Indian princess, who was believed to have brought the sericulture to Japan, went through in her life.

19. *The Iwasawa House* Kanagawa Prefecture late 17th century ◎

The Iwasawa family were engaged in charcoal making and tea cultivation. The simple lattice windows were to ward off wild beasts.

20. *Kabuki Stage* Mie Prefecture 1857 ○

The *kabuki* stage has a revolving platform that was used when changing scenes during a play. You can see a space under the revolving stage, going through an underground passage from behind the building.

21. *Ferryman's Hut* Kanagawa Prefecture 1929 ○

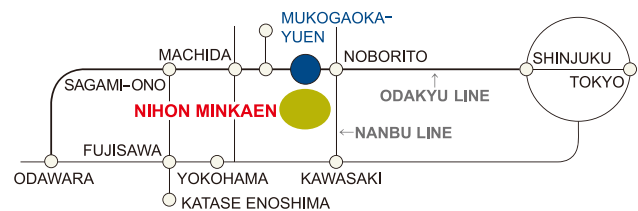
The hut was located at a ferry station on the Tamagawa River. When the river overflowed four people lifted it to a safer place.

22. *The Kudō House* Iwate Prefecture 1751–63 ●

The shape of the house resembles the letter 'L' from its above. With two horses on one side of the earth-floored area and humans on the other, they lived as a family. The Kudō family's principal occupation was silkworm and tobacco cultivation.

23. *The Sugawara House* Yamagata Prefecture late 18th century ◎

The head of the Sugawara family was traditionally a farmer and a mountain ascetic. The high windows in the roof were designed for silkworm cultivation. The walls are made of wood rather than clay, as earthen walls are not very durable in the snowy region.



By Train

- 13 minutes walk from the Mukogaoka-yuen station of Odakyu Line
- 25 minutes walk from the Noborito station of JR Nanbu Line



Hours & Admission

March–October	9:30–17:00
November–February	9:30–16:30
Last Admission	30 minutes prior to Museum closing time

Adults.....	¥550
Seniors (65+ with valid ID)	¥330
Students (Senior High School and College with valid ID)...¥330	
Children (Junior High School and under).....	Free
Kawasaki City Residents (65+).....	Free

★Group Rates (groups of more than 20)

Adults	¥440
Seniors	¥260
Students	¥260

(Please inform our office in advance if you are planning for a group visit)

Closing & Holidays

- Mondays (Open on holidays)
- The day after national holidays (Open on Saturdays and holidays)
- December 29–January 3

Notice

Please refrain from the following:

- Eating and drinking outside the rest areas. Bringing alcohol.
- Entering with animals.
- Using tripods or easels when it is crowded.
- Using oil paint or acrylic paint.
- Taking photographs for commercial purposes.
- Measuring our properties for research purposes without a prior permission.

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https://www.nihonminkaen.jp/index_english.html



The Itō House at its Original Location

The Itō House was the first house to be moved to Nihon Minkaen.



Stone Statues and Carvings



Kōshintō

Rokujizō

Batō-Kannon Dōsojin

Kōshintō

On the night of *Kōshin* once every 60 days, people stayed awake the whole night through, wishing for good health and long life. As time goes by, they began to form the associations for sharing information and mutual help, and put up the memorial stone carvings of *Kōshintō*. There are three popular designs of the carvings: One is either of three monkeys or of the Chinese character 'shin' in 'Kōshin', which means a monkey; the other is of the image of *Shōmen-Kongo*, the guardian deity of people.

Rokujizō

After the six lower world of Buddhism, where people suffer the torments in the afterworld, people put up the stone carvings of *Rokujizō* for the repose of restless souls.

Batō-Kannon

The stone statues of *Batō-Kannon* usually have three faces and six arms. They carry a horse's head on their heads. People made the statues wishing for good health of their cattle and horses, or holding the memory of those animals after their death.

Dōsojin

The stone statues of *Dōsojin* can be seen at a boundary of villages or at a mountain ridge. They were put up against evil spirits.

Events and Workshops



A Room Open to the Public



The Dolls' Festival



Traditional Bamboo Crafts



Indigo-dyeing Workshop

The museum offers various events and workshops. You can check their details on our web site.

- The traditional crafts of straw, bamboo and weaving are demonstrated mainly on Sundays.
- Seasonal displays can be seen at either the Kitamura, the Hara or the Kiyomiya House. These illustrate celebratory events throughout the year, such as the New Year's Day, the Doll's Festival and the Boy's Festival in spring, and the Bon Festival in summer.
- You can try the traditional indigo-dyeing in the Traditional Dyeing Workshop at the West Gate.



Interior of the Kitamura House