



## Here, Dosan and Nobunaga Gazed Down Upon the World

Gifu Castle was once called Inabayama Castle. It is said that Joshu (castle lord) Nikaido Yukimasa, a butler to the Kamakura Shogunate, was the first one to build a fortress at the peak of the Mt. Kinka. This castle was also the residence of Dosan Saito during the Warring Period. The castle became renowned throughout the nation in August of 1567 (1564 by another account) when Oda Nobunaga, a hero incomparable to any other historic figure, captured the castle and subjugated the area. At the same time, he changed the regional name from "Inokuchi" to "Gifu", making this district a foothold for the unification of the country. However, in August of 1600, a battle broke out before the war of Sekigahara and, because Nobunaga's grandson, Nobuhide, allied with the West Squad, the East Squad invaded the castle. After a fierce battle, the castle fell into the hands of the enemy force. In 1601, Gifu Castle was destroyed, and the castle towers and turrets were transferred to Kano Castle. The castle that stands today was reconstructed in July 1956, by the Castle Restoration Alliance. It is a 17.7m tall reinforced concrete building of a 3-tier, 4-story structure, standing dignified in an area of 461.77m². Within the castle area is historical museum, and on top of the tower is an observation deck that is favored by many visitors.

■ Historical Sites Designated by Gifu City:  
Remains of Honmaru, Ninomaru, the Upper Lattice Gate, the horse riding ground, the residence of Oda Nobunaga, and Mitarashi Pond.



A view of Nagara River from Gifu Castle

Nobunaga was born in 1534 as the second son of Oda Nobuhide of Owari. His childhood name was Kipposhi and, after coming of age, he was renamed Kazusanosuke Nobunaga. In 1567, he conquered Inabayama Castle, making this castle a foothold for the unification of the nation. In the castle town, he established the "Rakuichi Rakuza (Freedom of Industry, Trade and Market)". A missionary from Portugal named Luis Frois described the town in this period as being "like the bustling of Babylon". In 1576, he handed Gifu Castle down to his first son Nobutada, and moved into Azuchi Castle. He lost his life at the turmoil of the Honnō-ji Temple in 1582.



Oda Nobunaga

His success story of conquering the region, after coming to Mino as an itinerant peddler of oil, is well-known throughout Japan. However, this story is said to overlap with the history of Dosan's father, Nagai Shinzaemonnojo. Dosan was born in Mino, with his childhood name being Nagai (or possibly Fujiwara) Shinkurou Norihide. After reaching adulthood, he seized his master, the Saito family, thereby changing his name to Saito Shinkuro Toshimasa. In the end he took full control of the land of Mino. Later, he shaved his head and called himself Saito Shinkuro Nyudo Dosan. Late in his life, he and his son Yoshitatsu were on bad terms and fought in the battle that took place on both sides of the Nagara River. He lost the battle, as well as his life, on April 20, 1556.



Saito Dosan

## The Gifu Castle Museum

On the east side of Gifu Castle is the Gifu Castle Museum. It is a reconstruction of the weapon storage and food storage house in the structure of a corner turret, built in April 1975. In the building are displays of Gifu Castle related documents and data. Take a glimpse of the historical romance of the Warring Period, where dreams of conquering the country had been prevalent.



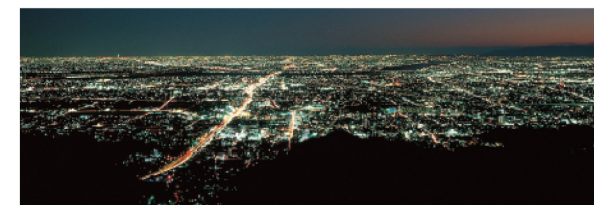
## A View from the Tower

Of all the castles that are standing today, Gifu Castle stands prominently on high ground (329m above sea level).

From the highest level, you can take a view of the clear water of Nagara River, famous for its cormorant fishing, which flows through the city. To the East is a magnificent view of Mt. Ena and the Kiso Mountains, and to the North is the mountain range of Norikura and the Japan Alps. To the East are the mountains of Ibuki, Yoro and Suzuka, and to the South is a vast expanse of the grand plain of Nobi, with a view of the Kiso River serenely flowing into the Ise Bay. This grand sight can be enjoyed as Nobunaga had once viewed the world from here. For the pleasure of a night view, opening hours are extended during the summer period.



A night view in the direction of the Nagara River, as seen from Gifu Castle



A night view in the direction of Nagoya City, as seen from Gifu Castle