Mt. Hachimanyama

The 272-meter Mt. Hachimanyama, located just north of the town of Omihachiman, was the site of the castle that sparked the town's development into a flourishing mercantile center. In 1585, the warlord Toyotomi Hideyoshi (1537–1598) commanded his nephew Hidetsugu (1568–1595) to build a castle on the mountain and develop the town of Hachiman (now Omihachiman) below it. Later Hidetsugu was disgraced, and in 1595 forced to kill himself. While the town continued to prosper, Hachimanyama Castle was abandoned, and today only remnants of its ramparts still stand. The castle site can be reached via the Hachimanyama Ropeway cable car. At the mountain's summit, a woodland trail leads to Zuiryuji Temple.

Zuiryuji was founded by Hidetsugu's mother in his memory, and it was moved to its present location in 1961. Other trails on the mountain connect to observation points that provide sweeping views over Lake Biwa, the town of Omihachiman, and the surrounding countryside.

Hachimanyama Ropeway

The Hachimanyama Ropeway is a cable-car lift that climbs the 272-meter Mt. Hachimanyama. The mountain offers commanding views over the surrounding countryside and was the site of Hachimanyama Castle in the late sixteenth century. Ruins of the castle's stone ramparts can be seen on the mountain, and Zuiryuji Temple is located on the site of the castle's main citadel.



The ropeway takes passengers from the foot of the mountain to the top in about 4 minutes. The ride affords a sweeping view of the town of Omihachiman to the south. Visible to the northeast are Lake Nishinoko and the wetlands between the town and Lake Biwa. Beyond Lake Nishinoko rise Mt. Azuchi and Mt. Kinugasa, which were also sites of important castles in the sixteenth century. From the station on the mountain, a short walk through the woods leads to an observation point on the summit's north side with a view over Lake Biwa and the Hira Mountains on its west side.

Nishikawa Jingoro House and Museum

This house was the home of the family that founded the Nishikawa company, now best known for its bedding and other textiles. The founder, Nishikawa Niemon (1549–1644), established a trading business when he was 17 years old. At 36, he moved from his home in the village of Minamitsuda to the nearby town of Hachiman (now Omihachiman) when he was commissioned to supervise construction at Hachimanyama Castle. Two years later, he opened a shop in Hachiman called Yamagataya that sold mosquito nets and tatami mat surface covers, laying the foundations for a company that was to profit greatly through its business in Edo (now Tokyo) from the seventeenth century onward.

Members of the Nishikawa family resided in this house from 1587 to 1942. The structure bears the name of Nishikawa Jingoro (also Jingo; 1582–1675), who was the fourth son of Niemon and took charge of the family business after his father in 1628. Jingoro is credited with laying the groundwork for the Nishikawa company's future success through shrewd marketing tactics, including dyeing the company's mosquito nets green to make them more visually pleasing.



Also on the premises are a museum that tells the story of the Nishikawa family through the centuries and a shop selling souvenirs and Nishikawa products.

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