



Landscape of Itsukushima Island by Kobayashi Geppo

Miyajima History and Folklore Museum

Opening Hours

8:30-17:00 (last admission at 16:30)

Closed

Monday (when a national holiday or a substitute holiday falls on a Monday, the museum is open on that Monday and is closed on the following day.) and December 26 to 31.

Access

20-minute walk from Miyajima Ferry Terminal

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Battle of Itsukushima by Utagawa Sadahide

A Brief History of Miyajima

593	Itsukushima Shrine is said to have been founded.
806	Buddhist Priest Kukai , also known as Kobo Daishi , is said to have founded a training ground on Mt. Misen.
1146	Taira-no-Kiyomori was appointed the head of Aki Province. * After that, to show his faith in Itsukushima Shrine, Kiyomori rebuilt the shrine into the structure standing today, in cooperation with the head priest Saeki Kagahiro.
1389	Shogun Ashikaga Yoshimitsu paid a visit to Itsukushima Shrine. * Around this time, Shinto priests, Buddhist monks in attendance and Shinto maidens started to settle on the island, followed by craftsmen working for the shrine. * Markets were established on the island and a town was formed. The island began to enjoy prosperity as a strategic center of transportation and commerce in the Seto Inland Sea.
Muromachi period ?	
Warring States period	
1555	Mori Motonari defeated Sue Harukata in the Battle of Itsukushima.
1587	Toyotomi Hideyoshi had Toyokuni Shrine built as a library of Buddhist sutras.
1619	Asano Nagaakira was appointed the lord of Hiroshima Domain in place of Fukushima Masanori. * Town magistrate office was established in Miyajima. * Miyajima was called one of three most scenic spots of Japan, along with Matsushima and Amanohashidate. * Seasonal markets in spring, summer and autumn were held, prosperous with lotteries and theatrical plays. * In the late 18th century, a Buddhist monk named Seishin contributed to public works including thinking up the rice scoop and digging wells.
1868	The Decree of the Separation of Buddhism and Shinto was issued. An anti-Buddhist movement erupted, leading to the destruction of many Buddhist temples.
1899	The main shrine of Itsukushima Shrine and others were designated as special protected buildings.
1923	The whole area of Itsukushima Island was designated as a historic site and a place of scenic beauty.
1950	The whole area of Itsukushima Island was incorporated in the Setonai-kai National Park.
1996	Itsukushima Shrine was inscribed on the World Cultural Heritage List.



Main Entrance to Museum

In Miyajima, houses with wide entrance are rare. In this sense, the old house once owned by the Egami Family is exceptional. It was built on a lot of over 1,500 square meters which occupies a whole block surrounded by streets on all sides. Its wide entrance and lattice windows give an impressive appearance as an old merchant's house.



The Museum Garden with Pond

The garden with a pond was laid out in the days when the Egami Family owned the house. It was improved in 1973 after due consideration was given to preserve its original landscape. The exhibit rooms are located around the garden, which is counted as one of the features of the museum.



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Exhibit Room D (First Floor)

This room is dedicated to artifacts related to Itsukushima Shrine and Taira-no-Kiyomori. Such materials as images and a chronology outlining the footsteps of Taira-no-Kiyomori and the present-day Itsukushima Shrine inscribed on the World Cultural Heritage List are exhibited in six zones.



Statue of Taira-no-Kiyomori

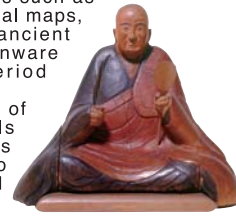


Statue of Nii-no-Ama (Wife of Kiyomori)



Exhibit Room D (Second Floor)

Numbering 400 in all, historical items such as paintings, folding screens, old pictorial maps, old photographs, guidebooks and ancient documents on Miyajima and earthenware dating as far back as the Edo period (1603-1867) are displayed. Pictures depicting sightseeing spots of the Edo period and other materials related to theatrical plays and lotteries conducted in Miyajima are essential to understand Miyajima Island, an island of worship and sightseeing.



Statue of Buddhist Monk Seishin



Picture depicting Itsukushima and Miho-no-Matsubara



Folding Screen depicting Nanaura



Picture depicting a Kabuki Actor



Picture depicting Itsukushima Shrine

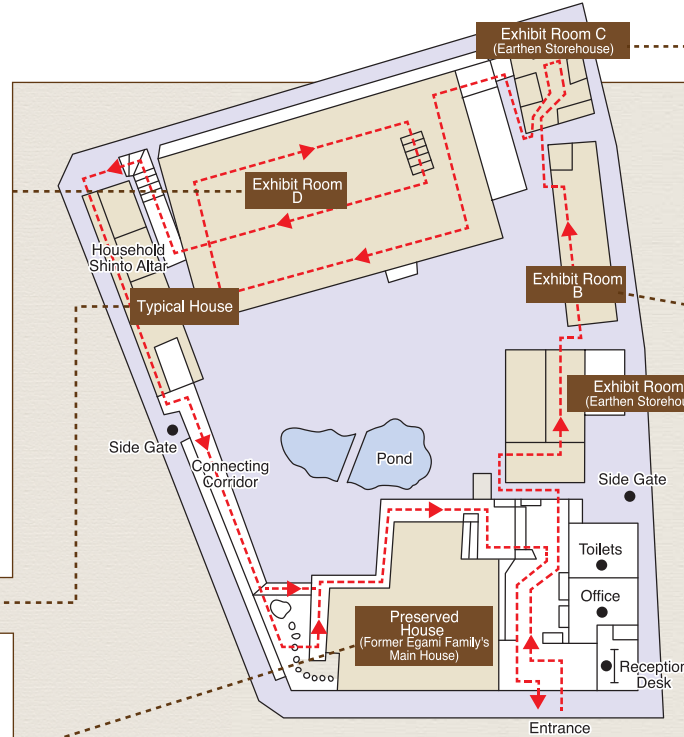


Exhibit Room C

The major industry on Miyajima Island has been woodwork. Woodcrafts, such as the rice scoops conceived by the Buddhist Monk Seishin, trays and sweet bowls made with a lathe, wooden spoons and Miyajima-bori carvings, were developed late in the Edo period (1603-1867). About 100 items, including models used in the production process, tools and products, and signboards of wholesalers, showing the development of the industry to this date, are exhibited.



Exhibit Room B

Miyajima has a variety of traditional events, including Toka-sai (Jin-noh), Kangen-sai, Tamatori-sai, Tanomo-san, Ujigami-sai and Chinka-sai. In this room, about 70 items, including photographic panels and related materials and models, introduce these annual events. It also exhibits a miniature model of the main boat with a sacred palanquin and escort boats for the Kangen-sai Festival.



Exhibit Room A

It preserves a storehouse with a stone floor. About 200 items, such as jars, pots, wooden buckets and mountain saws, are exhibited. Among others, a big cauldron once used in the Sacred Fire Hall on Mt. Misen, noted in connection with Kobo Daishi, deserves special attention.



Typical House

Old houses in Miyajima have a narrow frontage and long length from the front to the back. A passageway extends from the front shutter to the back. Along the passageway are three rooms, the front, the middle and the rearmost. The room in the middle, called "oue", has no ceiling. On a shelf is a household Shinto altar. These are features of Miyajima Island, an island of Shinto deities.



Preserved House (Former Egami Family's Main House)

This main house was built in the early 19th century and is designated as a registered tangible cultural property by the Agency of Cultural Affairs. The Egami Family were wealthy merchants brewing soy sauce from the last part of the Edo period (1603-1867) to the Meiji period (1868-1911). The garden, observed from the drawing room in the rear, makes visitors feel the wealthy merchant's life in those days. The room also exhibits such traditional items as turtle shell decorative combs and cloths with the family crest used in tea ceremonies.

Miyajima History and Folklore Museum

Miyajima Island, also called Itsukushima Island, became well-known due to worship at Itsukushima Shrine by the Taira clan, including Taira-no-Kiyomori. Protected by a number of people who came to Itsukushima Shrine from ancient times and local people in the shrine town that was created in the 15th century, it is known as one of three most scenic spots of Japan. It has kept its beautiful scenery and rich cultural properties.

The Miyajima History and Folklore Museum is a cultural facility with the aim of preserving and handing down various materials related to Miyajima's history and culture, and folklore cultural properties that are at risk of being lost in modernization.

Commencement of Construction: September 2, 1972
 Completion of Construction: October 22, 1973
 Opening: April 26, 1974