





There are 23 heritage sites located in 8 prefectures and 11 cities throughout Japan, that act as records of this industrialization (iron and steel manufacturing, shipbuilding, coal mining). Saga features valuable assets of shipbuilding.

The small boat dock section

Located at the northernmost end of the Mietsu Naval Dock, the small boat dock section used to be the small boat dock (a management office for Japanese-style ships owned by the Domain) before it was developed as a naval dock. The Ofunato-Keikoshio Naval Academy, which became the predecessor of the Mietsu Naval Dock, was located here.

The training ground section

This was a training facility for feudal warriors studying at the Mietsu Naval Dock. Trainees studying at the Nagasaki Naval Training Center became instructors for navy education such as sailing, operation and measurement, engines, and shipbuilding, as well as technical education including field training. More than 300 people participated in artillery training.

The shipbuilding/repair docks and metal works section

Shipbuilding and repair facilities were concentrated here, at the southern end of the Mietsu Naval Dock. There was a boiler assembly and metalworking factory on the northern side, and a dry dock for ships on the southern side.

Pioneers of Modern Shipbuilding Mietsu Naval Dock

In order to reinforce the security of Nagasaki, the Saga Domain made many of its feudal warriors attend the Nagasaki Naval Training Center to facilitate the study of Western-style naval developments. The Naval Academy was the training center established at Mietsu to spread knowledge of Western techniques. This was the predecessor of the Mietsu Naval Dock. It was selected as the base for the Western-style navy of the Saga Domain due to its geographical advantages of being near to the castle town of Saga and in easy reach of Nagasaki. Later, navy education and training began to take place in earnest at Mietsu. In addition to Western-style navy training, ship repairs and building were also carried out at the Mietsu Naval Dock. Morodomi Town / Kawasoe Town, Saga City 0952-34-9455



1st Practical Steamship in Japan Ryofu-maru The Ryofu-maru was the first steamship to be put into service in Japan. It was built at the Mietsu Dockyard. According to records, the 10th feudal lord of Saga, Naomasa Nabeshima, boarded and sailed in the ship himself.

Introduction of modern science and technology in the Saga Domain at the end of the Edo period

2 Remains of Tsujii Reverberatory Furnace

This is a reconstruction of the first reverberatory furnace in Japan that was put into use. It was made by the 10th feudal lord of Saga, Naomasa Nabeshima. 2 Kaminoshima Town, Nagasaki City, Nagasaki Prefecture

3 Seirenkata Site

This was an institute for chemical and physical research. It supported the casting of cannons from reverberatory furnaces. 3 Tafuse, Saga City

4 Remains of Tafuse Reverberatory Furnace

This reverberatory furnace was built to fulfill a request from the Shogunate to cast metal cannons. The cannons can still be found at Odaiba in Tokyo. 1 Ise Town, Saga City

5 Remains of the Shirogoshima Island battery

These are the remains of the battery where the 10th feudal lord of Saga, Naomasa Nabeshima, had introduced Western military technology in order to strengthen the security of Nagasaki. 2 Kaminoshima Town, Nagasaki City, Nagasaki Prefecture

6 Naritomi Hyogo Shigeyasu

Naritomi Hyogo Shigeyasu was a retainer of the Saga Domain who made great contributions to flood control in Japan. The water utilization facilities developed by Shigeyasu still remain in various parts of the prefecture even today.

7 Johannis de Rijke

Known as the "father of modern soil-erosion control" in Japan, de Rijke left behind distinguished achievements in the area of flood control. He provided guidance for numerous river improvement and port projects.

8 Chikugo River Lift Bridge

The Chikugo River Lift Bridge is about 507m long in total. As ships were one of the main modes of transportation at the time of construction in 1935, the middle section of the bridge was designed as a movable structure to allow ships to pass through.

9 Wakatsu Port Training Wall (Chikugo River De Rijke Training Wall)

The Ariake Sea has a large tidal range that hindered maritime transportation. The Dutch engineer Johannis de Rijke constructed a long embankment in 1890 to speed up the flow of the river, thereby preventing a build-up of mud and sand.

10 Saga Water Chronicle Museum

The museum features materials about disaster prevention, as well as dioramas, videos and other media introducing topics such as the achievements of Naritomi Hyogo Shigeyasu, the Saga Plains, and water. 3247 Niiji, Yamato Town, Saga City 0952-62-1277

11 Ishihibi

Ishihibi is a water channel created about 400 years ago by Naritomi Hyogo Shigeyasu. In addition to supplying the drinking and irrigation water required for farmland and rice in the basin, Ishihibi also prevents water damage in the basin. Niiji, Yamato Town, Saga City

12 Saga Castle History Museum

These are the ruins of Nabeshima's castle. Bullet holes can still be seen in the gates and doors, left behind from the Saga Rebellion (1874), and bear witness to the terrors of that battle. Large camphor trees are estimated to be more than 300 years old and are designated as natural monuments of the prefecture.

13 Saga Castle Park

Saga Castle Park is a municipal city park located in the heart of Saga City, and encompasses a wide range of cultural facilities. It is a haven for relaxation and recreation for the citizens of the prefecture. 1-10-11 Jonai, Saga City 0952-22-5047

14 Mietsu Naval Dock

This is the first museum in Saga Prefecture, and it was founded in 1927 by Naomasa Nabeshima. It was first opened, the museum displayed old documents and implements related to Hizen. Although it was forced to close in 1945, the same building was designated as a registered Tangible Cultural Property of Japan in 1997 and was reopened the following year as a museum.

15 Tsunetami Sano and Mietsu Naval Dock Memorial Museum

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Flood control of Saga

The Saga Plains spread across Saga, and many rivers, including the Kase River, flow through it toward the Ariake Sea. Hence, Saga has had strong ties with flood control and water utilization since the Edo era, and has developed civil engineering technologies to prevent the rivers from flooding. This section introduces the history of flood control in Saga.

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C u i s i n e

Saga beef is one of the highest quality and ranked Japanese Wagyu beef. We give you a strong recommendation to enjoy this excellent marbled beef bred in Saga's rich natural environments.

Ureshino tea (Ureshino City) Ureshino tea has a strong flavor. Enjoy the changing taste and flavor as you pour hot water over it in a teapot.

Black Mont Blanc ice-cream (Ogi City) This delicious ice-cream is familiar to everyone in the Kyushu region. It is a combination of a crunchy texture and chocolate.

Takezaki crabs (Tara Town) The Takezaki crab, which grows on the tidal mudflats of the Ariake Sea, is said to be especially delicious.

Ariake nori seaweed (south part of the prefecture) Nori seaweed from the Ariake Sea is characterized by its rich umami flavor and strong aroma.

Ika-no-ikizukuri (Karatsu City) Live squid that has grown in the waters of Genkai and caught at Yobuko. It is characterized by its almost crunchy texture, and is very popular among local Yobuko residents as well as tourists.

Local brew from Saga Saga's local brew, a product of the blessings of the natural environment, is characterized by its rich and full-bodied taste.

Sicilian rice (Saga City) The sweet and spicy stir-fried beef and rice go perfectly well with mayonnaise.

Saga Domain

The Saga Domain was large. It was governed by the Nabeshima clan and the territory included a part of present-day Nagasaki Prefecture. The Saga Domain had provided security for the Nagasaki Port, which was the sole point of contact between Japan and the Netherlands and China. At the end of the Edo era, it adopted technology ahead of other domains.

Naomasa Nabeshima

Naomasa Nabeshima was the 10th feudal lord of the Saga Domain. Known as an unparalleled and virtuous ruler, he took over as the head of the family at the age of 17 in 1830, and promoted reform of the feudal administration. He left behind great achievements in fields such as academia, providing assistance to farmers, and industrial development, actively incorporated elements of Western civilization while promoting the development of new industries.

Shigenobu Okuma

Shigenobu Okuma was the first Minister of Foreign Affairs. During the same year, 1898, he established the first partisan cabinet in Japan. This cabinet was dissolved in just half a year, but he became the Prime Minister once again in 1914.

Tsunetami Sano

On his visit to the Paris Expo in 1867, Tsunetami Sano was touched by the spirit of the Red Cross movement. Returning to Japan, he founded the Philanthropic Society, and fostered the spirit of humanitarian philanthropy.

Shimpei Eto

Shimpei Eto advocated for equality among all the people and worked tirelessly to convene Diet sessions of the Japanese parliament. However, he was brought down by Seikanron (advocacy of the Korea invasion) and resigned.

Learn about the Saga Domain

1 The Museum CHOKOKAN

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日本遺産 Nagasaki Kaido, "Sugar Road"

In the past, sugar was transported to Edo through the Nagasaki Kaido. This gave rise to a widespread "sugar culture" along this road.

Map of Nagasaki Kaido with various sweets and products like Omura-zushi, Kitayushu City, Maruboro, Ureshino City, Ogi City, Saga City, Nagasaki City, Okashi, Ikkoukou, Ogi Yokan, and Castella.

List of Accommodation Facilities

Table with columns for location, hotel name, and address. Includes Yoshinogari, Karatsu, Yobuko, Takeo Onsen, Ureshino Onsen, and various hotels in Saga and surrounding areas.

1 Tsunetami Sano and Mietsu Naval Dock Memorial Museum (formerly the Tsunetami Sano Memorial Museum)

The museum has been reopened after renovations in September 2021. It provides explanations on how the dry dock was operated through a full-scale model of part of the dry dock and videos projected on a large screen (4K) that is near the model. It is an exhibition space that provides visitors with the chance to see and experience the "invisible" buried Mietsu. 444-1 Hayatsutsu, Kawasoe Town, Saga City 0952-34-9455

Western Form Combined with Japanese Technology Dry dock

At Mietsu, the tidal range of the Ariake Sea was harnessed to operate the dry dock. Ships to be repaired were docked at high tide, and after the gates were closed, the ebb and flow of the tides were used to drain water naturally from a small opening built into the gates. After that, repairs were carried out on the bottom of the ship when the dock was dry. We could describe Mietsu's dry dock as being characterized by having a "Western form" in combination with "Japanese technology." Japan's own conventional technology was applied to the manufacturing works carried out at the Mietsu Naval Dock, beginning with the construction of the dock. For example, in the construction of the dry dock, Japanese conventional civil engineering technology was used to prevent the collapse of the stepped walls through a complex combination of timber braces to reinforce the sides and bottom of the dock.



The most ancient Japanese dry dock was made of wood and soil.

Main map of Saga City showing various heritage sites, museums, and landmarks. Includes a legend for sites, a scale bar, and a compass rose.