

Nakijin Gusuku

■ Nakijin Gusuku Sites (Hokuzan Gusuku)

Little is known of Nakijin Gusuku, including when or by whom it was built. Excavation studies indicate that castle construction began around the 13th Century.

The Three Principalities and Major Gusuku Sites



■ **Sanzan Period** Chinese history books on the 14th Century contain references to three kings of the Hokuzan principality in the Ryukyus: Haniji, Min, and Han'anchi. At the time, Okinawa Island was divided into three main principalities: Hokuzan to the north, Chuzan in the central region, and Nanzan to the south. The era is known as the Sanzan Period, or period of the three principalities. The three Hokuzan kings dominated northern Okinawa and the Amami Islands, and engaged in trade with China. The history of Hokuzan ended in 1416, with its fall to King Sho Hashi of Chuzan.

■ Governance by Administrator

After the fall of Hokuzan, Chuzan installed an Administrator to see to northern Okinawa. From 1422, Nakijin Gusuku served as the residence of the Administrator. When the Satsuma Clan of Japan invaded the Ryukyus in 1609, the structures of the Gusuku went up in flames. Following the Administrator's abandonment of the Gusuku, the site became a place of worship providing spiritual comfort to the people. Many worshippers visit the Gusuku from outside Okinawa.



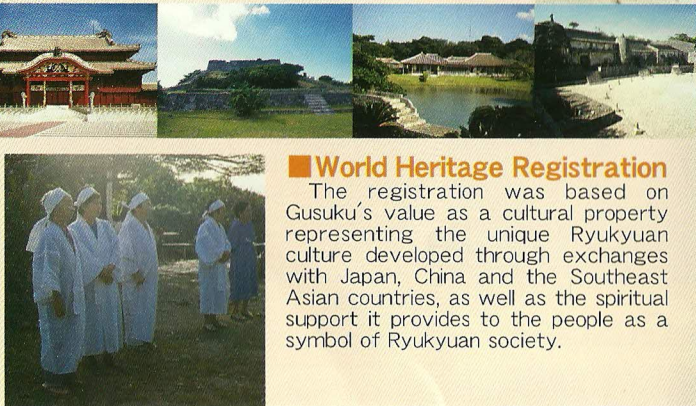
11th World Heritage Site in Japan

In December 2000, Nakijin Gusuku was added to the World Heritage list as one of the nine Gusuku Sites and Related Properties of the Kingdom of Ryukyu, together with Shurijo Castle, Nakagusuku, Zakimi Gusuku, Katsuren Gusuku, Shikina-en, Stone Gate of Sonohyan-utaki, Tamaudun, and Sefa-utaki.



■ World Heritage Registration

The registration was based on Gusuku's value as a cultural property representing the unique Ryukyuan culture developed through exchanges with Japan, China and the Southeast Asian countries, as well as the spiritual support it provides to the people as a symbol of Ryukyuan society.



Area Map



World Heritage NAKIJIN GUSUKU SITES

Hours: 9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.
Entrance closes at 4:30 p.m.
Open year round

Admission:

	Individual	Group(20 or more)
Adults	¥150	¥120
High School Students	¥100	¥80
Primary & Jr. High School Students	¥50	¥40

NAKIJIN VILLAGE MUSEUM OF HISTORY & CULTURE

Hours: 9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.
(Entrance closes at 4:30 p.m.)
Closed: Mondays
National Holidays (except May 5 and Nov. 11)
New Year Holiday (Dec. 28 - Jan. 4)
Okinawa Memorial Day (Jun. 23)

Admission:

	Individual	Group(20 or more)
Adults	¥200	¥160
High School and college Students	¥150	¥120
Primary & Jr. High School Students	¥100	¥80

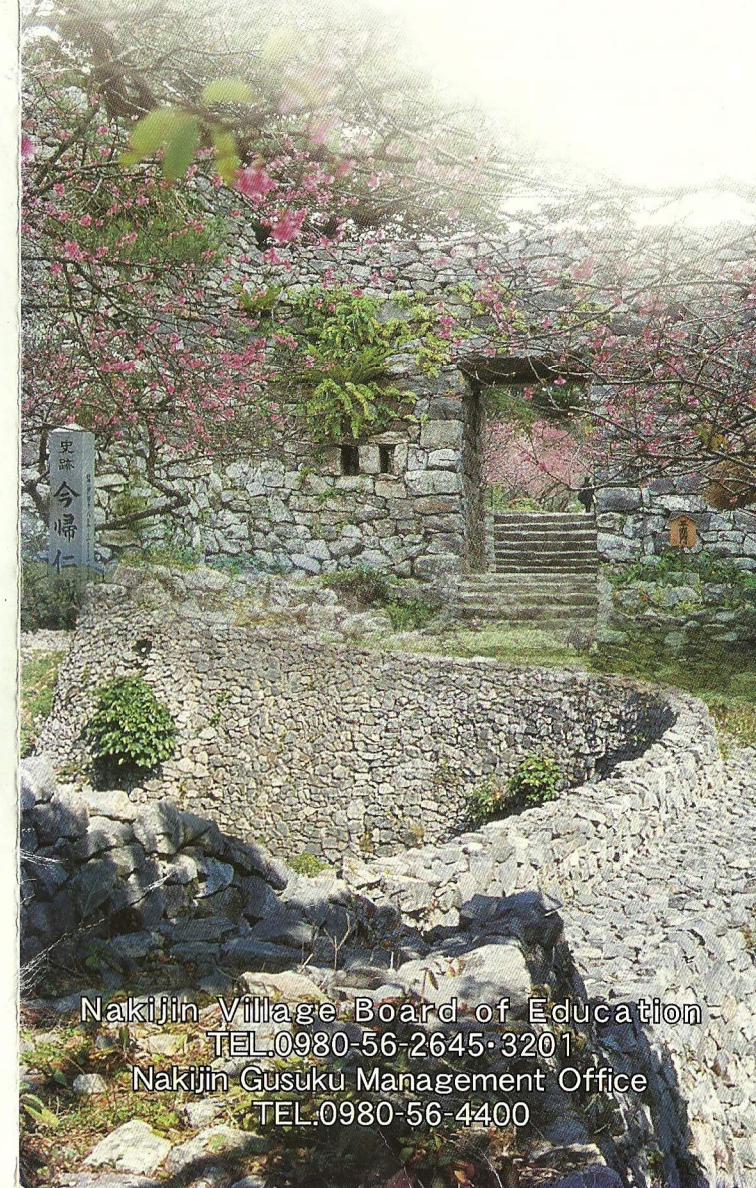


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WORLD HERITAGE UNESCO

Gusuku Sites and Related Properties of the Kingdom of Ryukyu

NAKIJIN World Heritage GUSUKU SITES



Nakijin Village Board of Education
TEL.0980-56-2645-3201
Nakijin Gusuku Management Office
TEL.0980-56-4400

Historical Site Designated
by the National Government

NAKIJIN GUSUKU SITES

① Remains of Nakijin Hamlet

Nakijin hamlet was located here until the early 17th Century. The area includes shrines of Finukan (fire god) worshipped by the Aoriyac Noro and Nakijin Noro priestesses.

② Remains of Nakijin Hamlet

Heiromon is the main gate of the Nakijin Gusuku. The existing gate was built in 1962. The holes on both sides of the gate served as peepholes for the gate guards. The stone wall is built of natural Paleozoic limestone stacked in "Nozurazumi" (plain stacking) style, offering a dignified appearance.

③ Ushimi

Ushimi is the largest enclosure of the castle. The horse bones and teeth uncovered here suggest this area was used for raising and training horses. It is believed that the cave in the center of Ushimi was once a secret passage, leading to a cliff by Shigema River.

④ Kazafu

Ka means river or spring. Safu originates from the word sako, which means valley. The area was probably a small valley with fresh spring water.

⑤ Old Road

The old path led from the main gate to Umiya. The straight stairwell with auspicious number of steps (three, five, and seven) was built fairly recently in 1959.

⑥ Umiya

This was the venue for various events held at Nakijin Gusuku. The buildings on the northern and southern sides of the Umiya were called Hokuden and Nanden, respectively.

⑦ Uchibaru

Uchibaru was the quarters of the female court attendants of Nakijin Gusuku.

⑧ Inner Enclosure (Donjon)

Excavation uncovered a foundation platform with transepts and other evidences of the construction method at the time. The area includes cornerstones of buildings constructed in the years of the Administrator, as well as a stone monument describing the history of the Sanhoku Nakijin Administrator.

⑨ Shijima-jokaku

The curved stone wall retains much of its original state. Remains of a vassal residence were discovered in the excavation. The southern side of Shigemajo (back gate) was the site of Shigema hamlet until the early 1600's.

Shigema River

今婦仁の城
しもなりの九年母
志慶貞乙樽が
ぬきやいはきやい

The concubine of the Hokuzan King, Shijima Utudaru is a legendary figure famed for her unsurpassed beauty.

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The Ryukyuan poetry describes a peaceful scene in Nakijin Gusuku of Shijima Utudaru fondling an off-season citrus fruit. It is a metaphorical expression of Shijima Utudaru coddling her child born in her later years.

Artist's Rendition of Nakijin Gusuku