

## The Meitestu Hiromi Line

—Shin Kani Station to Mitake Station—

# Historical Sites Three Sengoku Warriors

### Walking Map



Mori Ranmaru

Akechi Mitsuhide

Kani Saizō

## Akechi Mitsuhide

1528? – 1582

Born in Kani City in 1528, Akechi Mitsuhide is a well-known historical figure from Japan's Sengoku Period, the "Warring States" Period from 1467 to 1600. He was a member of the Toki Clan, which lived for generations in the expanse of land known as Akechi Manor in Kani. In 1556, Saitō Dōsan, the ruler of Mino Province (modern-day Gifu Prefecture) was overthrown by his son Yoshitatsu in the Battle of Nagara-gawa, and since Mitsuhide had been an ally of Dōsan's, he was also attacked and defeated by Yoshitatsu and forced to go into hiding.

After spending time in obscurity, he became a retainer for Oda Nobunaga, and had several military victories in Omi Province (modern-day Shiga Prefecture) and Tanba Province (modern-day Kyoto/Hyōgo Prefectures), earning him the trust of his lord. However, in June 1582, Mitsuhide betrayed Oda Nobunaga during the "Honnō-ji Incident" in Kyoto, earning him the titles of "traitor" and "treacherous retainer." In recent years though, Mitsuhide's historical image has undergone a revision. He is now seen not only as an officer valued by Nobunaga for his mastery of statecraft and military strength, but also as a man of cultural refinement known for his kindness and consideration toward other political nobility.

## Kani Saizō

1554? – 1613?

Kani Saizō was a military commander who is said to have hailed from the town of Mitake. Saizō changed his commanders one after another, including Mitsuhide Akechi, Toshiie Maeda, and Hidetsugu Hashiba, before he was later taken into Fukushima Masanori's service. Saizō's success and bravery in the battlefield under these men were well known among the people of the time, and many anecdotes remain in various parts of the country. In the Battle of Sekigahara, the most important battle in the fight over Japan's rule, Saizō fought with a bamboo branch on his back, and when he took the head of an enemy, he put bamboo leaves as proof that they were his to claim. It is said that Tokugawa Ieyasu, who was impressed by Saizō's prowess in taking 17 heads in this battle, gave him the nickname Sasa-no-Saizō (meaning bamboo-grass Saizō). Although the time period is unknown, Saizō served Mitsuhide Akechi, and it is said that he followed Mitsuhide in the attack during the Honnō-ji Incident. There is also a record that Saizō taught a man who failed to take the head of an enemy general at Honnō-ji how to do so by setting him an example. However, no historical records have yet been found that can give a complete picture of Saizō, and his life is still shrouded in mystery.

## Mori Ranmaru

1565? – 1582

Mori Ranmaru was born in 1565 in Mino Kaneyama Castle. His father was Mori Yoshinari, an important vassal of Oda Nobunaga, and his mother was the daughter of Hayashi Michiyasu (Myōkōni). His brothers included Mori Nagayoshi, known as a fierce general, Tadamasa, who later took over the Mori family, Bōmaru, and Rikimaru. He is known to have served Nobunaga at a young age, and to have played a secretarial role as a minor retainer until just before the Honnō-ji Incident. There are many anecdotes about Ranmaru's cleverness and quick wit even at a very young age, and it seems that Nobunaga was fond of him as well. After the fall of the Takeda clan in April 1582, his elder brother Mori Nagayoshi, lord of Mino Kaneyama Castle, was transferred to Kaizu Castle (now Nagano City) in Shinano Province. On that occasion, Ranmaru was granted Mino Kaneyama Castle and a fiefdom in the vicinity by Nobunaga, making him lord of Mino Kaneyama Castle. However, two months later, the Honnō-ji Incident occurred and Ranmaru was killed, so it is said that Ranmaru never actually entered the castle, nor did he ever take part in political affairs. Ranmaru's gravesite is located at Kajō-ji (Kaneyama), along with those of successive lords of the castle, Yoshinari, Nagayoshi, and others.



## Akechi Mitsuhide Course

Akechi Station — Gifu World Rose Garden

### Akechi Castle Ruins



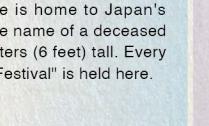
The castle that Akechi Mitsuhide lived in for 30 years, from his birth to the downfall of the castle. In 1342, the castle was founded by Yorikane, the second son of Toki Yorikiyo, a governor of Mino, and in 1556, when Akechi Mitsuhide's uncle Mitsuyasu was the lord of the castle, it was attacked by Saitō Yoshitatsu, lord of Inabayama Castle. Mitsuhide was entrusted by Mitsuyasu with the revival of the Akechi family and succeeded in escaping, but Mitsuyasu died by his own blade and Akechi Castle fell.



### Tenryū-ji Temple



The temple grounds contain the burial site for several generations of the Akechi family, and inside is home to Japan's biggest spirit tablet — a placard with the name of a deceased ancestor written on it — at 184 centimeters (6 feet) tall. Every year in June, the "Mitsuhide Memorial Festival" is held here.



### Gifu World Rose Garden



The main attraction is the world's largest rose garden with approximately 6,000 species and 20,000 rose plants, including new varieties from Japan and all over the world.

In addition to the world-famous rose garden, you can enjoy seasonal flowers such as Nemophila (spring) and sunflower (summer).

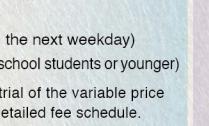
Furthermore, you can see the garden from 45 meters above the ground of the Flower Tower and there is one of the largest playground equipment in Gifu prefecture. People of all ages can enjoy it here.

Hours 9:00a.m. – 4:30p.m. (entry until 4:00p.m.)

Closed Mondays (open on Monday holidays)

days after holidays, and New Years

Admission fee Adults - 210yen, Various other discounts available



\* The price will change depending on the trial of the variable price system. Please check the website for a detailed fee schedule.

\* Events or maintenance may cause the change of opening hour or temporary closure. Please check the website.

### Kanitte

A marketplace specializing in fresh products and local goods from the Kani area, as well as a sit-down cafe where you can enjoy them right there. Also features an open plaza that holds events, bringing people and cultures together.

Hours 9:00a.m. – 6:00p.m.

Closed The year-end and New Year Holidays



## Mori Ranmaru Course

Akechi Station — Kaneyama Area

### Mino Kaneyama Castle Ruins



Uhojo Castle, built by Saito Masayoshi (Myōshun) in 1537, was renamed Kaneyama Castle in 1565 when Mori Yoshinari, a vassal of Oda Nobunaga, became the lord of the castle. Later, Ranmaru, who served Nobunaga, became the lord of the castle, but only two months later, the Honnō-ji Incident occurred and he fell alongside Nobunaga. It is said that the castle was destroyed after the Mori family was transferred to Kawanakajima in Shinshū, and traces of the castle still remain. In 2013, the Mino Kaneyama Castle Ruins were designated as a national historic site.

### Kajō-ji Temple

This temple was founded by Myō Kōni, a nun of the Mori family, to mourn the loss of her husband, Mori Yoshinari, who was killed in the Battle of Usayama Castle (1570), and to pray for his repose. The temple contains the graves of Ranmaru, Yoshinari, Nagayoshi, Bōmaru, and Rikimaru, and is designated as a cultural property of the city. The sune-ata (samurai armor for the shin) said to have been worn by Mori Nagayoshi still remains (prefectural-designated cultural property).

### Jōshō-ji Temple

Established by Hayashi Tametada, the chief retainer for the Mori Family, Jōshō-ji Temple contains two scrolls showing images of Myō Kōni, as well as the head of the spear that Mori Ranmaru was said to have used. Myō Kōni is known not only as the wife of Mori Yoshinari and the mother of Mori Ranmaru, but also for her aid during Oda Nobunaga's siege of Ishiyama Hongan-ji Temple (in modern-day Ōsaka). The scrolls of Myō Kōni, as well as her grave site, are all designated as cultural artifacts of Japan.

### Sengoku Mountain-Castle Museum

The museum showcases the characteristics and history of Mino Kaneyama Castle, built in the Warring States Period, as well as the ruins of other castles that remain in Kani City. It also shows the charming castle town of Kaneyama, where many cultural assets such as shrines and Buddhist temples still remain. The museum exhibits artifacts excavated from the Mino Kaneyama Castle Ruins and a facsimile of the will of Mori Nagayoshi.



Hours 9:00a.m. – 4:30p.m. (entry until 4:00p.m.)

Closed Mondays (open on Monday holidays)

days after holidays, and New Years

Admission fee Adults - 210yen, Various other discounts available

### Kani City Tourist Exchange Center

This is the main hub for touring the castles and a tourist information center. The first floor of the museum is furnished in the image of a military headquarters, with jinmaku (curtains used as a defensive perimeter), armor, spears, bows, and other items on display. Visitors can try on armor and various other hands-on activities (for a fee). In addition, visitors can browse brochures of about 250 castle ruins from all over Japan.

Hours 8:30a.m. – 10:00p.m. (armor-wearing until 5:00p.m.)

Closed December 28 – January 4

### Ranmaru's Hometown Forest

A lush, natural park that stretches up Kojōzan Mountain. With sakura, hydrangea, fall foliage and more, there's something to enjoy every season.

Hours 9:00a.m. – 5:00p.m. (Opening hour for cafe use 10:00a.m. – 3:00p.m.)

Closed Wednesdays, New Years



## Kani Saizō Course

Mitake Station Area

### Ohterasan Ganko-ji Temple



A Tendai Buddhist temple originally built in 815, Ganko-ji Temple has been burned down twice over the course of its long lifetime. Thankfully many sacred images housed inside survived the disasters, including the ones of Yakushi Nyorai, the Japanese name for the Buddha of Medicine, the main deity of the temple. First burnt down in 1108 during a rebellion, and then not fully rebuilt until over 100 years later, it was burned down again in 1572 during a battle between Oda Nobunaga and the rival Takeda Clan. Miraculously, it was rebuilt again in only 10 years by the local residents who loved the temple, calling it "Kani Yakushū" locally, with "Kani" being a play on words that also means "crab." It currently contains 24 images on display in the main hall, which along with its bell tower gate, are all designated as important cultural property. It is believed to be the birthplace of Kani Saizō, the son of a concubine of Asakura Yoshikage (a rival Sengoku Period feudal lord defeated by Oda Nobunaga) who fled while pregnant from Echizen (modern-day Fukui Prefecture) after his death to safety here.

Hall of sacred treasures viewing cost: 700 yen / group of two or more, 1000 yen / person (reservation required)

Starting in 2017, Gankō-ji Temple has been undergoing a ten-year reconstruction, so visitors cannot go inside, but the hall of sacred treasures is still open to viewing.

### Daichisan Gukeizen-ji Temple

A temple for the Rinzai School of Zen Buddhism, Gukeizen-ji Temple was established in 1396 by Giten Geneshō, a renowned priest from the Myōshin-ji Temple complex in Kyoto. He first developed the idea of the zen rock garden here, which he would later expand upon at the famous rock garden in Ryoan-ji Temple in Kyoto. The head monk's chambers has a stunning view of Mitake Fuji, able to cleanse any heart with its beauty.

### Nakasendo Mitake Museum (Mitake Town Local Museum & Library)

It is a base for learning activities about the history of the local area, with a permanent display of materials related to Mitake Town from primitive times to the present day. And a place where you can feel the breath of our ancestors and walk through their footprints.

Hours 10:00a.m. – 6:00p.m. (weekdays)  
9:00a.m. – 5:00p.m. (weekends, holidays)

Closed Mondays (open on Monday holidays)

every 3rd Tuesday, every last Friday, Admission free



Takeya Family Merchant House

Hours Same as Nakasendo Mitake Museum (Mitake Town Local Museum & Library)

Closed Wednesdays, New Years



Mitake Castle Ruins Park

Hours 9:00a.m. – 5:00p.m. (Opening hour for cafe use 10:00a.m. – 3:00p.m.)

Closed Wednesdays, New Years

Mitake Feudal Lord Inn



## Akechi Mitsuhide Course

Akechi Sta.-Gifu World Rose Garden

Time Required  
**1h30min**  
not including browsing time



## Akechi Mitsuhide Historical Site

# Akechi Manor

There are various theories about the origin of Mitsuhide Akechi, but it is commonly believed that he was a member of the Toki-Akechi clan, which was descended from the Toki clan. Akechi Manor in the Kani district, the birthplace of the Toki-Akechi clan, was a manor that existed from the northeastern part of present-day Kani City to the western part of the town of Mitake. Although no reliable historical record has been found to prove that the Toki-Akechi clan held any power in the Akechi Manor area during the birth of Mitsuhide Akechi, the Mino Province Historical Records state that the clan resided in Akechi Manor in the Kani district for generations, from the time of Yorikane Toki to Mitsuhide.



## Gōdo Castle Ruins

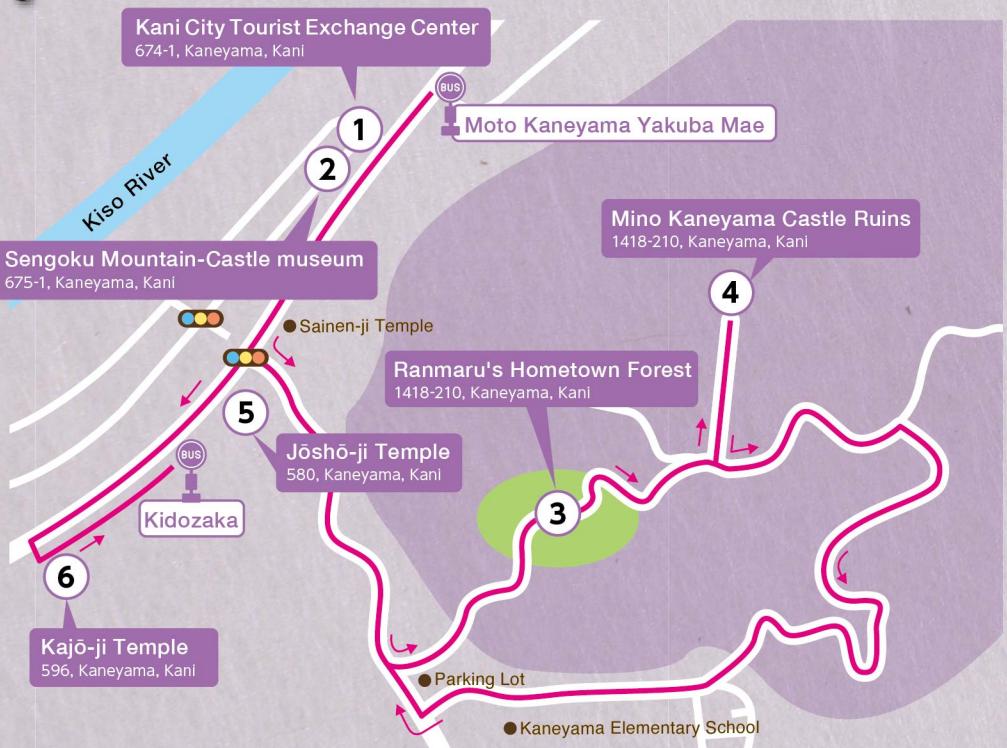
Gōdo Castle is believed to have been built by the Saitō clan, a powerful clan in Mino Province in the early Muromachi Period (1336-1573). The castle measured approximately 180 meters from east to west and 150 meters from north to south, and had a trapezoidal shape with a deep moat and high earthen mounds around the perimeter to prevent attacks. Considerably large in scale for a castle in a flatland area, with well-preserved earthen mounds and moats, it is said to be one of the finest in the Akechi manor. Saitō Myōchin, who is said to have been the lord of the castle, began his political career around the time of the death of his brother Saitō Toshinaga, who was the deputy military governor. During the Onin War (1467), Myōchin's actions are said to have been so influential that even the central government (Kyoto) was shaken.



## Mori Ranmaru Course

Akechi Station — Kaneyama Area

Time Required  
**1h40min**  
not including browsing time



## Kani Saizō Course

Mitake Station Area

Time Required  
**1h10min**  
not including browsing time

