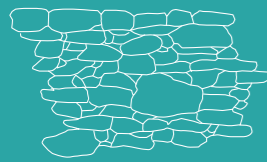


# Stonewalling techniques used throughout the castle's history

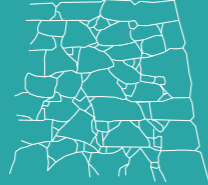
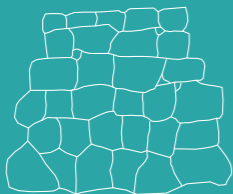


## A Nozura-zumi FIELDSTONE METHOD

Natural fieldstones of various sizes are piled up to create a wall with a mostly straight slope. This technique was often used during the Sengoku period (also known as the Warring States period; 1467–1568), a time of constantly shifting alliances and rivalries among local warlord-led families. Although the stonework may seem unsophisticated, these types of stone walls are very durable. Good examples of this method can be seen at Watagura Gate and Genkaguchimon Gate.

## B Kirikomi FINELY DRESSED STONE WALLS

Smooth-faced stone wall made by finely dressing (kirikomi) the stones with a chisel. This creates a neatly fitted stone wall without gaps. This technique was common during the mid-Edo period; the Oyagura Tower and the main keep provide good examples.

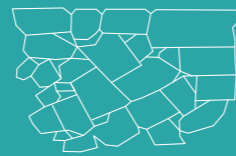


## C Uchikomi ROUGHLY DRESSED STONE WALLS

Filling in the gaps between roughly dressed larger stones with smaller ones. These walls have a curvilinear upward slope, gradually growing steeper near the top. Examples can be seen at Kitamon Gate and Oyagura Tower.

## D Tanizumi DIAGONALLY STACKED STONE WALLS

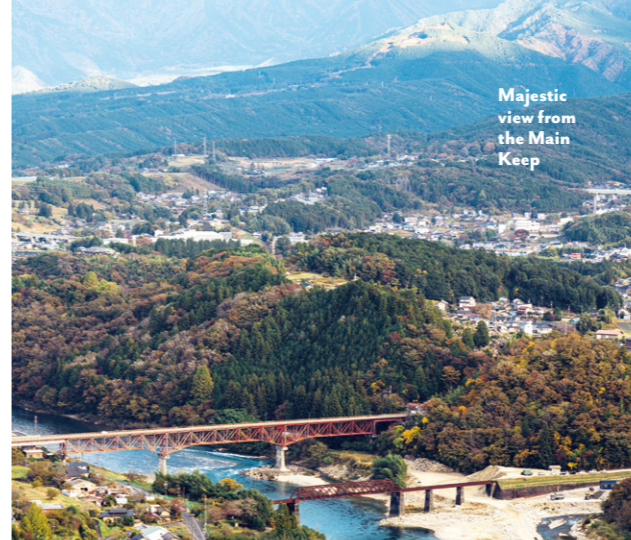
Roughly dressed facing stones are set diagonally, creating V-shaped lines. The next row of stones are set into these Vs. This was a popular technique that was also used in road construction until the Showa era (1926–1989). These types of walls can be seen near the foot soldier headquarters and along the path to the ninomaru (second enclosure).



# 8

## Horse-Washing Boulder (The Uma Arai Iwa)

According to castle legend, after an enemy attacked and cut off the water supply, a horse was led atop this rock (about 45 meters in circumference) and **washed with rice to deceive the enemy** into believing that the occupants of the castle still had plenty of water.



Majestic view from the Main Keep

## 7 The Main Keep

The main keep of the castle was built on a series of support pillars directly atop two colossal boulders at the mountain's summit. Its original dimensions were 9 meters wide by 11 meters long. **The keep was designed to appear on the outside as three-stories high to deceive enemies.** On the inside, however, the true dimensions of the bottom two levels made them too small to be occupied.



## 6 Site of the Kasagiya-gura Tower

A three-story watchtower stood on this site on the west side of the honmaru (main enclosure). Note that the structure would have been built on top of a group of huge boulders. **It commands a fine view of Mt. Kasagi to the west.**

## 4 Site of the SENGOKU WELL

Despite its high elevation on the mountain near the main keep, this well is known as never having gone dry, even in the worst drought. Its name, **"One Thousand Stones,"** derives from the reputation it has held as a well that could provide water for "a thousand" (that is, "many") people. Clean water can still be drawn from the well today.

# 5

## Site of the Weapons Storehouse

This storehouse was primarily used to **store guns and bows**. Most of the foundation and edging stones under the eaves remain as they once were.

# 3

## Site of the Second Enclosure

**The Ninomaru Enclosure** (secondary circle of defense) was the location of the Toyama family residence and had rooms for retainers to assemble in.



# 1

## Site of Oyagura Tower

A three-story watchtower was built here in the mid-seventeenth century. **It was the largest watchtower in the castle complex.** The stone walls enclosing the first floor, which was mainly used for storage, remain standing. Loopholes in the walls were used in defense of the north side of the castle.



# 2

## Site of Foot Soldier Headquarters

There were several buildings at the base of the mountain where foot soldiers would stop to report for duty before entering the castle. **Foot soldiers were the lowest-ranking samurai** and typically fought on the front lines during battles. The original buildings included a captain's office and facilities for training.

## Access Info



From Nakatsugawa Station to Naegi Castle Ruins

With KITAENA BUS

to Naegi Bus Stop - Then by foot (1.5km/30min)

to Naegi Castle Bus Stop - Then by foot (800m/15min)

▲ The route to Naegi Castle Bus Stop is only available for a limited time.

From Nakatsugawa Station by Foot (3.5km/60min)



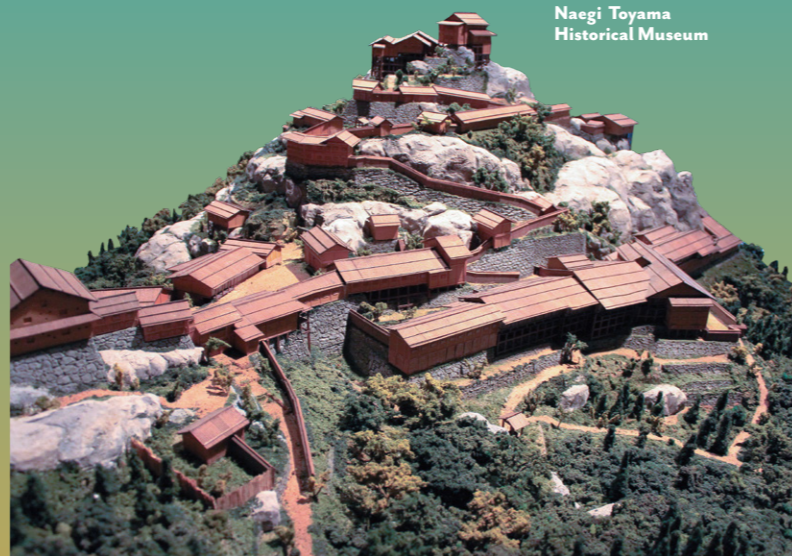
# NAEGI CASTLE SITE

**Naegi Castle** was built in 1526 by Toyama Masatoshi (dates unknown), whose family had served as local administrators of shogunal estates since the fourteenth century (Kamakura period). **The sixteenth century was a time of fierce rivalries among the powerful warlords of the surrounding region**, and Mt. Takamori, with its steep, rocky terrain, made the Toyama fortress highly defensible.

**The Toyama formed relations by marriage with the Oda family of Owari province** to the south as well as with the powerful Takeda family of Kai province to the east. From their seat at Naegi castle, they managed to maintain their family line through the tumultuous sixteenth century and, after a brief interim, on into the subsequent Edo period (1603–1867). **The castle was occupied by the Toyama family for 270 years** until 1871. The newly established Meiji government, which embarked on a policy of rapid modernization from 1868 onward, viewed castles as symbols of the past. Naegi Castle was one of the many castles abandoned and dismantled at that time.

**The castle site is located on the north bank of the Kiso River.** In the past, the river acted as a partial moat, affording defenders yet another level of protection. In addition to the surviving stone retaining walls, **the castle once had gates, watchtowers, enclosures, and the main keep at the top.** Today, the supports of the Castle Observation Tower are based in post holes in the rock made to construct the original main keep overlooking the Nakatsugawa area.

In 1981, the castle was **designated a National Historic Site**, and in 2017, it was recognized by the Japan Castle Foundation as one of the great castles of Japan.



A model of what Naegi Castle could have looked like can be seen at Naegi Toyama Historical Museum

## Naegi Castle History & The Toyama Family

Naegi Castle was the stronghold of the **Toyama family** until Naegi domain (part of present-day southern Gifu Prefecture) was abolished in the aftermath of the Meiji Restoration of 1868. **The original surname of the family was Kato**, and they traced their line back to Kato Kagekado (1156–1221), a retainer of Minamoto no Yoritomo (1147–1199), founder of the Kamakura shogunate. **In 1195, the family changed their surname to Toyama in honor of Mt. Ena, a towering 2,191-meter peak to the south of Nakatsugawa City. At the time, the peak was called Toyama, meaning “distant mountain.”** In 1526, the family chose Mt. Takamori as their castle site, the better to control the Kiso and Hida areas at a pivotal location on the Kiso River and the Nakasendo highway, as well as expand their influence in eastern Mino Province.

### Surviving in a time of war

In 1526, Toyama Masatoshi established Naegi Castle as the administrative center of Naegi domain. **Close ties between the Oda and Toyama families meant that Naegi Castle was considered an important defense against the rival Takeda family of Kai Province** (present-day Yamanashi Prefecture).

Oda Nobunaga (1534–1582) was the first of “three unifiers” who brought about the end of the Sengoku (Warring States) period (1467–1568). After Nobunaga was killed at Honnoji Temple in Kyoto by a trusted general, Akechi Mitsuhide (1528–1582), Toyotomi Hideyoshi (1537–1598) began jockeying to succeed Nobunaga as unifier of the realm. **The Toyama family, which did not swear allegiance to Hideyoshi, were forced to flee their castle by Hideyoshi’s general, Mori Nagayoshi (1558–1584).**

The Mori family made Kawajiri Hidenaga their castellan and the Toyama family fled, allying themselves with Tokugawa Ieyasu (1543–1616) in Owari Province. Ieyasu would eventually challenge Hideyoshi and his allies in the Battle of Sekigahara in 1600 and complete the unification of the country. Just before that, **Ieyasu sent Toyama Tomomasa, the head**

## The City of Nakatsugawa

Nakatsugawa flourished as a merchant town during the Edo period (1603–1867). Much of its traditional culture has been preserved, including one of its post stations along the Nakasendo highway and a ji-kabuki playhouse called **Kashimo Meijiza Theater.** Today, Naegi Castle and the **Naegi Toyama Memorial Museum** are Nakatsugawa’s top tourist attractions along with the post station area called **Nakatsugawa-juku.**

Nakatsugawa-juku is a short 10-minute walk from JR Nakatsugawa Station. It was a checkpoint on the Nakasendo highway that connected Edo (modern-day Tokyo) to Kyoto during the Edo period. Most traces of the old highway have

been lost, but a section of the original road has been preserved in this historic district. The road is lined with sake shops, confectionery stores, and restaurants housed in traditional wooden buildings. Nakatsugawa also houses the **Nakasendo Historical Museum**, which displays artifacts from the town’s rich history. The museum’s exhibits include documents, wood-block prints, paintings, and other materials concerning the Nakasendo.

A popular scenic attraction can be found in Tsukechi Gorge. Waterfalls and clear streams flow through its rugged and rocky terrain and lush foliage fills the valley with color from spring through late autumn.



Nakatsugawa-juku



Tsukechi Gorge

**of the family, to retake Naegi Castle and the former Toyama territory.** Castellan Kawajiri was killed at the Battle of Sekigahara in 1600, and after Ieyasu emerged victorious, Naegi Castle and the domain were awarded to Tomomasa. **Thereafter, twelve generations of the Toyama family ruled Naegi domain until the change of regimes led to their removal from power in 1871.**

### Ruling in a time of peace

In the peaceful Edo period, many mountaintop castles were abandoned in favor of more accessible castles on plains. **The Toyama family resisted this temptation to move and kept the castle their family had built over generations.** During the Edo period (1603–1867), Nakatsugawa was a major transportation hub. It was next to the Kiso River and was the 45th post station on the Nakasendo, one of five main highways that connected Edo (modern-day Tokyo) to Kyoto. **The domain was strategically important, as it controlled both the land and river routes between Owari and Mino Province.**

Naegi was one of the smallest domain to have a castle and was valued at a relatively modest 10,000 koku (approx. 50,000 bushels) of rice produced annually. Koku was a unit for measuring rice and was used to determine land value for taxation under the Tokugawa shogunate. One koku (roughly equivalent to five bushels of rice) was theoretically enough rice to feed one person for a year.

### The end of an era

As one of the poorest domains, Naegi faced a difficult financial situation and struggled to grow enough rice to support itself. **When the castle was dismantled in 1871, the timber and other items of value were auctioned to help pay off the domain’s accumulated debts.**



## Naegi Toyama Historical Museum

The museum’s galleries display a wealth of artifacts from Naegi domain. The exhibits trace the domain’s history from the Sengoku (Warring States) period (1467–1568) to the Edo period (1603–1867) with particular emphasis on the Toyama family and the 12 successive lords of the domain.

### Opening Hours:

Tuesday-Sunday 9:30-17:00 (Last entry 16:30)

### Closed:

Mondays (except on national holidays falling on Mondays, when it closes the following day) and Year-end New Years holidays

### Admission Fee:

¥330 (free for children under 16)



## Scenic Views from Naegi Castle Site

### Castle Observation Tower

The view south from the observation tower includes the city of Nakatsugawa, the Kiso River, traces of the historic Nakasendo highway, and Mt. Ena, which was named one of the 100 most famous mountains of Japan.

### Kasagiyagura Tower

This site where a watchtower once stood commands a view of Mt. Kasagi (1,128 m)

### Monomiyagura Tower

This tower, which once stood on the cliff facing the Kiso River, commands a panorama of the mountains around Nakatsugawa as well as the majestic Shiroyama Ohashi Bridge, completed in 1984, which crosses the Kiso river just west of the castle.

### Sengoku Well

The well is at the bottom of the path leading to the Castle Observation Tower. From this spot, the Oyagura Tower, which is especially impressive in autumn when surrounded by autumn foliage, can be seen to the west. The path continues to the right, up to the site of the main keep (honmaru).

### Foot soldier Headquarters

One of the most popular places to view the castle is the foot soldier headquarters at the base of the fortress. From there, visitors get an exceptional view of the mountain’s summit where the main keep once stood, with Mt. Ena in the background.