

I want to wash
Japan once again.

何の志さしもなき所二
ぐずくして日を送ハ、
実ニ大馬鹿ものなり

People must not make
rash decisions
that result in their own
or others' death.

ニッポン
日本を
今一度せんたく
いたし申候

To spend your days
hesitating without
any ambition is a
great foolishness.

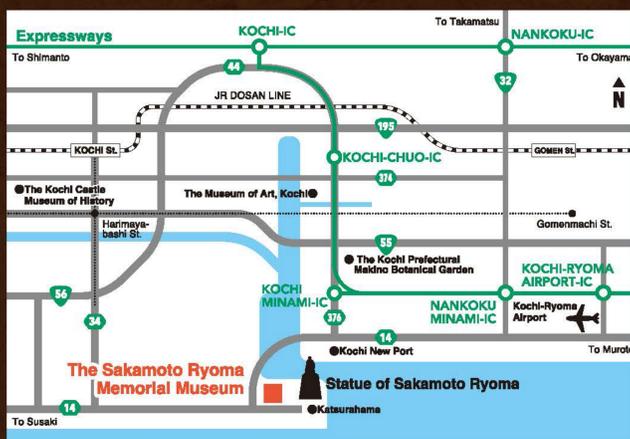
人と言ものハ
短気してめつたニ死ぬものでなし、
又人おころすものでなし

Information

- Opening Hours 9 a.m. - 5 p.m.: Open year round
- Admission Fee [Rotating Exhibition Period]
Adults: (18 years and over) 900 yen
Groups: (20 or more people) 720 yen
- [Other Periods]
Adults: 500 yen Groups: 400 yen

Access

- Bus Get off at Kochi station. Take Tosaden Kotsu bus at Kochi bus terminal stop bound for Katsurahama and get off at "Ryoma kinenkan mae". (34mins) 2minutes walk on uphill.
- Car Get off at Kochi interchange following "Katsurahama" sign. Drive through Godaisan road, turn right at Kochi Shinko (new port), cross the Urado Ohashi bridge following "Katsurahama" sign. (25mins)
- Parking: Buses: 4,
Standard-sized cars: 42 (including two disabled parking spots)



高知県立坂本龍馬記念館
The Sakamoto Ryoma Memorial Museum

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Ryoma Sakamoto: The Great Man who ended the samurai era.

Ryoma Sakamoto is remembered as one of the most renowned figures in Japanese history. He worked to bring an end to samurai rule and played a vital role in Japan's modernization. When Ryoma was born, Japan was divided into regions governed by local lords.

These lords were vassals of the Tokugawa Shogunate, which had established a stable government beginning in 1603 that lasted for more than 250 years.

As part of the Shogunate's policies, Japan maintained strict limits on diplomacy and trade, cutting ties with all but a handful of countries.

This policy was disrupted in 1853 when the United States sought to establish diplomatic relations with Japan, an event that transformed Japanese society.

The Shogunate was compelled to sign what became known as "unequal treaties," which angered many within the country and threw society into turmoil.

Amid this unrest, Ryoma worked with other progressive-minded samurai, and his efforts ultimately led to the Shogun voluntarily relinquishing his authority.

1835 1835: Ryoma is born in Kochi

Beginning of the Opium War (1840)

Ryoma Sakamoto was born to a samurai family. Ryoma looked up to his older sister Tome, who was 3 years older than him.

1853 An American fleet arrives in Kanagawa [19 years old]

Napoleon III ascends the throne as Emperor of France (1852)

Outbreak of the Taiping Rebellion in China (1851-)

After improving his kendo skills, Ryoma joined a dojo in Edo, present-day Tokyo. Meanwhile, a fleet of US steamships led by Commodore Matthew Perry arrived in Uruga (present-day Kanagawa), requesting the Shogunate to open the country. Ryoma, who was tasked with coastal defense at the time, may have witnessed Perry's arrival.

1862 Ryoma leaves the Tosa Domain [28 years old]

Abraham Lincoln becomes president of the United States (1861)

Beginning of the American Civil War (1861)

After returning from Edo to his hometown of Tosa, Ryoma spoke with Shoryo Kawada, a painter and scholar. He told Ryoma of John Manjiro, a man who had been rescued by Americans after being lost at sea. As Ryoma learned about steamships, navigation techniques and the importance of globalization, he cultivated an interest in world affairs. However, Ryoma's low status meant there was no role for him back home. He escaped from the Tosa Domain without permission, and eventually became an apprentice to a Shogunate naval officer, Kaishu Katsu.

1865 Ryoma founds trading company [31 years old]

Gojong ascends the throne as the King of the Joseon Dynasty (1863)

In 1864, Ryoma studied navy techniques at his master's Naval Training Center. However, this facility soon closed once word got out that its pupils were active in the movement to overthrow the shogunate. With nowhere to go, Ryoma moved to Nagasaki where they were supported by

the Satsuma Domain (present-day Kagoshima Prefecture). They established a trading company called "Kameyama Shachu".

1866 Establishment of Satsuma-Choshu Alliance [32 years old]

Completion of the Transatlantic Telegraph Cable

The rebellious Satsuma and Choshu Domains formed an alliance with the help of Ryoma. Only two days later, Ryoma was attacked by Shogunate officers at an inn in Kyoto. Ryoma was injured, but thanks to the help of Oryo, who later became his wife, he successfully took refuge in the Satsuma Domain Residence. Ryoma and Oryo then travelled to Satsuma — this trip is said to be the first honeymoon in Japan.

1867 Ryoma is assassinated [33 years old]

The Paris World Exposition opens its doors

Ryoma met with Shojiro Goto in Nagasaki, a high-ranking official of the Tosa Domain in charge of political matters. Ryoma was pardoned of desertion and was able to return home. His trading company was incorporated into the Tosa Domain and reorganized as the Kaientai (Maritime Support Force). Ryoma became its captain and worked hard to establish a new government.

Return of political power to the Emperor

Beginning in June, the Satsuma and Choshu Domains began implementing their plan to overthrow the Shogunate through military force. The former lord of the Tosa Domain, Yodo Yamauchi, strongly opposed this, so he promoted a peaceful restoration to imperial rule. Ryoma and Goto devised a plan which they then suggested to Yamauchi, which was later accepted by the shogun and the imperial court. This came to the end nearly 700 years of samurai rule, which had begun with the Kamakura Shogunate.

Assassination

Following the restoration in October, Ryoma revealed the framework of the new government. Unfortunately, on November 15th on his 32nd birthday, Ryoma was assassinated. It's said that the perpetrators were most likely members of a group within the Shogunate organization who were responsible for maintaining security. However, the person who ordered the assassination remains a mystery to this day.

RYOMA SAKAMOTO HISTORY

RYOMA'S GEAR

Weapons and Outfit

Ryoma's outfit, pistol and sword that he used for self-defense.



Smith & Wesson Model II Pistol

The same model of pistol that was given to Ryoma by Shinsaku Takasugi. Ryoma's original was lost after he threw it away during an attack by the magistrate's office at Teradaya inn.



Ryoma's Blade

This sword was made by the same smith as the family sword Ryoma received from his brother, Gompei. During the surprise attack at Omiya Inn, Ryoma attempted to draw it from an alcove to defend himself, but was caught off guard and fatally struck before he could react.



Ryoma's outfit

Based on the proportions of his kimono, Ryoma would have been around 180 cm tall. The average male height at that time was about 155 cm, making Ryoma a considerably tall man.

CORRESPONDENCE

Letters & Documents

Ryoma Sakamoto was a prolific writer, with nearly 140 confirmed letters.

These were addressed to senior officers, his brother Gonpei, sister Tome, and others.

The museum holds Japan's largest collection of his letters, featuring both originals and replicas.



Ryoma's Famous Quote

Ryoma's beliefs towards national reform could be summarized by his famous quote "Let us wash Japan once more".

Ryoma and Oryo enjoy a Romantic Journey to Kirishima

In his writings with his sister Tome, Ryoma described humorous anecdotes such as playing with his pistol, climbing Mt. Takachiho-no-Mine, or visiting Satsuma with his wife, Oryo.

Ryoma signs the Satsuma-Choshu Alliance

The Satsuma-Choshu Alliance was established in the presence of Ryoma. He signed his name on the back of the Six-Article pledge as proof of authenticity.

Ryoma encourages Shojiro Goto

Shogun Yoshinobu Tokugawa summoned high-ranking retainers to Nijo Castle to ask for their opinions on returning political power to the emperor.

Paving the way for a New Government

The Eight Articles laid out a path for the new government to follow, including the establishment of a constitution and a bicameral legislature after overthrowing the Shogunate. This was the culmination of Ryoma's life's work.

COLLECTION

Collection of the Sakamoto Ryoma Memorial Museum



The Sakamoto Ryoma Memorial Museum showcases a variety of materials about Ryoma Sakamoto, a forward-thinking leader from the late Edo period. Our new building features a Permanent Exhibition Room displaying historical items and a Rotating Exhibition Room focused on Ryoma's era. The main building also includes interactive exhibits.

●authentic original copy ■replica

KAIENTAI To the ocean, to the world

Ryoma's company was reorganized into the "Kaientai" supported by the Tosa Domain after he was pardoned. The Kaientai engaged in transportation, overseas trade, publishing, land development, and also served as a naval and educational organization.



The Flag of the Kaientai

This flag is called "Nibiki". It was originally a ship's mark of the Tosa Domain, and was also used by the Kaientai.



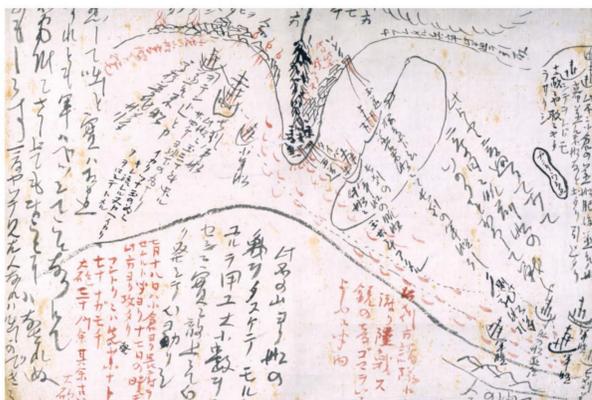
The Fundamentals of Japanese-English Phonetics

An English textbook published for Kaientai members. Arabic numbers and clock illustrations are accompanied by a phonetic guide.



The Kaientai Charter

Only those who had once left their Domains and had strong aspirations to go abroad were qualified to enter the Kaientai. They were encouraged to develop practical skills according to their own aspirations.



Shimonoseki Naval Battle Sketch

This illustration by Ryoma depicts the naval clash between Shogunate and Choshu forces in the Kammon Strait. He reflects on the battle, saying, "Only those who have truly fought can understand it" and comparing the gunfire to "sesame seeds being roasted."

ASSASSINATION

Omiya Inn in Kyoto

A month after returning power to the Emperor, Ryoma was assassinated, along with Shintaro Nakaoka. It remains a mystery as to who orchestrated the assassination.



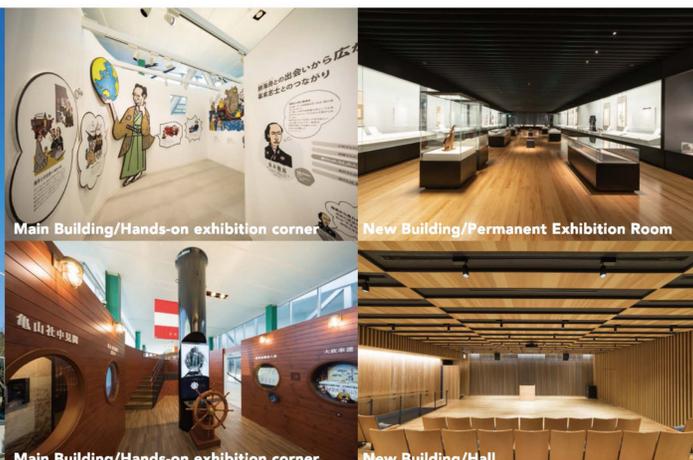
Hanging Scroll and Folding Screen in the Omiya Inn

The hanging scroll and folding screen, both with bloodstains at the bottom, were found at the site of Ryoma's assassination. Ryoma sat near the scroll, while Shintaro was by the folding screen. The museum's main building features a recreation of the room.



Main Building

Hands-on exhibition corner
Museum Shop



Main Building/Hands-on exhibition corner



New Building

Permanent Exhibition Room
Rotating Exhibition Room
John Manjiro Exhibition Room