

Remnants of the dreams of Meiji aristocrats

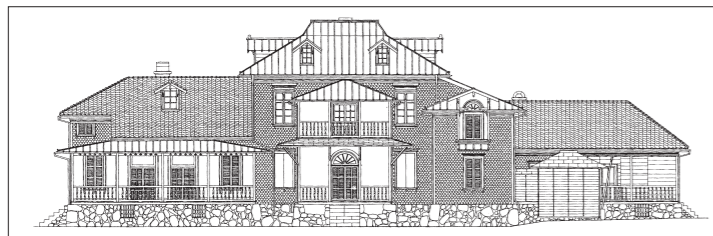
Western-style villas featuring the best of modern architecture can be found in Nasunogahara. Built as part of their own farms by nobles who strove to emulate the West, they still stand today as proof of those nobles' dreams.



Viscount Aoki's Country Villa in Nasu

National important cultural properties

A Western-style villa built by Shuzo Aoki (viscount) on the Aoki Farm in 1888. Having served as ambassador to Germany and being married to Elisabeth, the daughter of a German aristocrat, Shuzo was known as an authority on Germany. Designed by Tsumunaga Matsugasaki, who studied architecture at the Technical University of Berlin, the villa incorporates German architectural techniques such as wooden framework for the attic on the third floor of the central building.



▲ Elevation drawing of the Aoki villa before relocation.



▲ A second-floor bedroom with an elegant ambience.



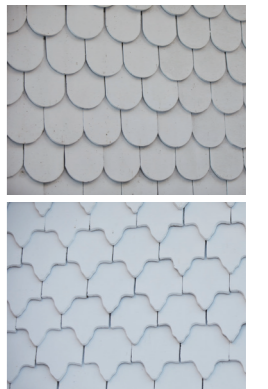
▲ An attic featuring German-style architecture



▲ A carriage said to have been used at the time



▲ The original entrance is still in use today.



▲ Two different shapes of shingles adorn the exterior walls.

Duke Oyama's Villa

Solid, red-brick construction

Iwao Oyama (duke and field marshal) built this villa on Oyama Farm in two parts—a Japanese-style villa called the “Japan Building” and the Western-style building. It was initially only the Japanese-style villa, but the solid Western-style building was added around 1905 using red bricks produced on the farm. The villa features an entrance with a gable roof and brick arch on the southern side.



▲ Duke Oyama's Villa currently stands on the farm of Tochigi Prefectural Nasu Takuyo High School. The Western and Japanese buildings are connected by a roofed passageway. The star-shaped relief on the entrance lights was modeled on the army's star symbol.

General Yamagata Memorial Museum

The YA designs on the building

One of the Western-style buildings from Kokian, a villa in Odawara where Aritomo Yamagata (duke and prime minister) spent his final years. It collapsed in the Great Kanto Earthquake of 1923 after Aritomo's death, but was moved to its current location on Yamagata Farm and rebuilt the following year. The “YA” design (based on Aritomo Yamagata's initials) can be found in various places such as the exterior walls of the sunroom and the doors.



▲ A clean, navy blue Western building. While komainu statues are usually placed in pairs, a solitary komainu stands in the garden. It is said that its counterpart is in the imperial palace.

