

# Examining the essence of the Meiji era in Duke Matsukata's Villa

Duke Matsukata's Villa stands quietly in a corner of the Senbonmatsu Farm, surrounded by trees. Lingering vestiges of the Meiji era can still be found in the building.



An intriguing space where Japanese and Western influences mix

Masayoshi Matsukata (duke and prime minister) built a two-story wooden villa on his Senbonmatsu Farm in 1903. The first story is built with stone (or brick with stone facing) and the second story is a wooden structure with plank siding. Still cared for by the Matsukata family, the stylish building has been preserved with its original appearance intact. The building's interior is not open to the public, but we have special permission to show it here.



▲ **Living room:** while the walls are the same color as those in the kitchen, the relaxing colors of the furnishings give the room a warm feel.



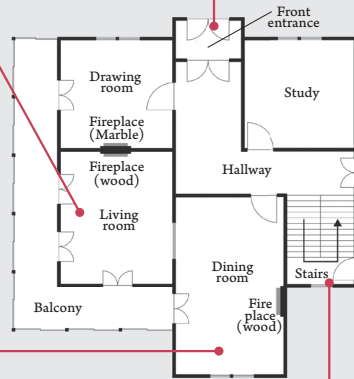
▲ **Front entrance:** the entry porch extends outward, covered by a tiled roof.



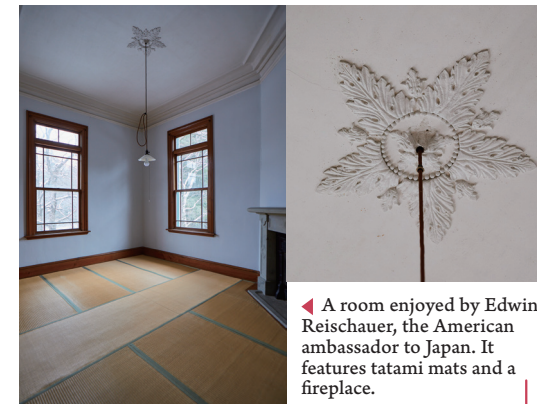
▲ **Dining room:** red carpeting, orange lighting, and blue-gray walls combine for a stately ambience and lively colors.

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Upon entering the front door, a drawing room and living room are on the right side of the hallway and a study is on the left. The dining room lies straight ahead. All are Western-style rooms with eye-catching and precious décor, including reliefs on the ceiling, lighting, window designs, and furnishings.

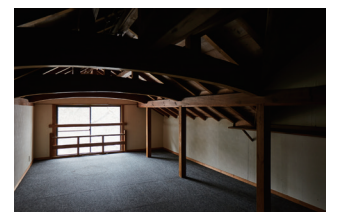


▲ A historical Japanese-style room where Emperor Taisho and Emperor Showa stayed before assuming the throne.



◀ A room enjoyed by Edwin Reischauer, the American ambassador to Japan. It features tatami mats and a fireplace.

◀ **Ceiling light relief:** a delicate relief reminiscent of a snowflake. The designs vary slightly from room to room.



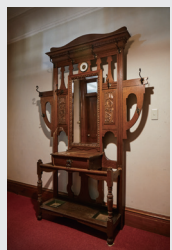
▲ **Attic:** it uses a traditional Japanese roof framing technique called wagoya.

## The original furnishings still retain their beauty

Many of the original furnishings still remain in Duke Matsukata's Villa. Much of the furniture's beautiful color and luster has deepened over the years, and all feature designs and forms that can rarely be seen today.



▲ A wooden bench placed along the wall in the dining room. It features a compact and appealing design.



▲ A coat rack in the entryway. It performs multiple functions with its mirror and umbrella rack.



▲ An armchair in the living room. Its quiet texture blends well with the other furnishings.



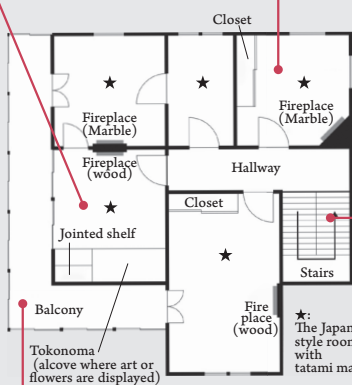
▲ An oil lamp on the living room mantle. Oil is added to the bottom of the lamp.



▲ The stairs to the second floor.

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The second floor features décor that mixes Japanese and Western elements. The Japanese-style rooms with tatami mats have high ceilings and fireplaces of marble or wood that vary in design for each room. The sunroom-like glass-enclosed balcony still remains in its original condition.



▲ **Fireplace:** features decorative tile that portrays farm scenes of cows and sheep.



▲ **Balcony:** a long, sun-filled balcony enclosed in glass.



▲ The stairs to the attic.