



Excavation of the remains of Saiku

The remains of Saiku is designated as a national historic site with an area of 137 hectares, 2 kilometers in the east-west direction and 700 meters in the north-south direction. The excavation research started at full scale in 1970 and is currently ongoing. In the eastern part of the site, orderly blocks in a grid street pattern in the early Heian period, with seven blocks in the east-west direction and four blocks in the north-south direction, were confirmed. In addition, the research on Naini (inner living quarters) where Saio used to inhabit has progressed and major artifacts are designated as national important cultural properties.



119th excavation on the remains of Saiku
(remains of building columns where each person is standing)



Main facilities in and around the historic site

On the north side of the Saiku Station on the Kintetsu Line, there is a facility where you can learn about the Heian period when Saiku flourished the most. "Itsukinomiya Hall for Historical Experience" is located immediately after getting off the Saiku Station. It is a wooden facility constructed by a traditional construction method replicating a nobleman's residence (in Shinden-zukuri style; Heian residential architecture) where you can experience an aristocratic life during the Heian period. Also, you will find "Saiku-ato Rekishi Roman Hiroba" (Historical Romantic Square on Saiku Site) with 1/10 models on the national historic site "Saiku-ato" (the remains of Saiku) and other exhibits.

In the northeast of the Saiku Station, a historic park named "Saiku Heian Era Park" opened in the autumn of 2015, which consists of the reconstructed main part of Saiku, including the three buildings where important rituals were carried out.



Restored buildings in "Saiku Heian Era Park"
Photos from the left: Nishi-waki-den (west annex to the main building), Seiden (main building) and Higashi-waki-den (east annex to the main building)
Seiden is a symbolic building used for rituals.



1/10 full model of the historic site
The back building is "Itsukinomiya Hall for Historical Experience".



The exterior of the museum

User guide

Admission fees		Revised on October 1, 2019
	Individuals	Group visitors (for groups of 20 or more)
Adults	JPY340	JPY270
University students	JPY230	JPY180
High school students and younger	Free of charge	Free of charge

1. The following persons are eligible for free admission.

- School children and students of elementary schools, junior high schools, compulsory education schools, high schools, six-year secondary schools and special support education schools located in Mie Prefecture, and their leaders (Provided that prior application is made as educational activity in the educational curriculum.)
- Persons with physical/intellectual disabilities and their caregivers (one per disabled person)
- School children belonging to the child welfare facilities (under the Chapter 7 of the Child Welfare Act) located in Mie Prefecture and their leaders

2. On Family Day (the third Sunday of each month), group fees are applicable to individuals.

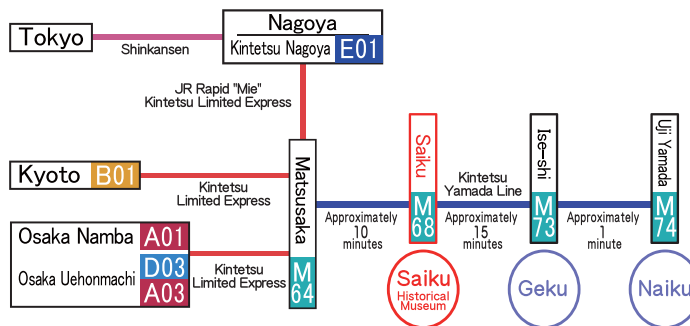
3. For themed exhibitions/special exhibitions, a separate fee is required.

● **Opening hours** 9:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. (please note visitors are admitted until 4:30 p.m.)

● **Days closed** Mondays (except for public holidays)
Days following public holidays (except for Saturdays/Sundays)
Year-end/New Year holidays (December 29 to January 3)

● **Traffic guide** Approximately 15 minutes' walk from the Saiku Station on the Kintetsu Line
Approximately 20 minutes by car from the Tamaki Interchange on the Ise Expressway
Approximately 30 minutes by car from the Matsusaka/Ise cities

● **Parking** Free of charge (parking lots for 200 passenger cars)



Note: Symbol such as "A01" refers to the station number on the Kintetsu Lines.
Note: from Kyoto, you need to change trains at the Yamato Yagi Station (B33 / D39) except for some trains.
Note: Sightseeing Limited Express "Shimakaze" on the Kintetsu Line does not stop at the Matsusaka Station.
■ From the Chubu Centrai International Airport, please take the Tsu Airport Line (high-speed boat services) and the Mie Kotsu Local bus to the Tsu Station, and use the Kintetsu Line from there.



Saiku Historical Museum

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Japan Heritage

"Saiku", the palace of praying imperial princess "Saio"



Saiku Historical Museum



Upper Residence of Saio Lower Praying Saio



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Itsuki-no-miya

(Residence of Imperial Priestess)

This site with the graceful name unsuitable for the countryside was once the residence of Saio who used to serve Kami (deity) of Ise.

Saiku refers to the palace of Saio (Itsuki-no-Himemiko; Imperial Princess of Itsuki) who was designated by the Emperor at the time of his enthronement and served Ise Jingu, as well as the Saiku-ryo (the bureau of officials who served Saio). Saio is determined among unmarried imperial princesses (females of the imperial family) through divination. After three years of purification and abstinence at the Shosain of the Imperial Court and the Nonomiya, Saio leaves for Saiku. The journey called Gunko (pilgrimage to Ise in procession) was a trip from Omi to Ise Province over the mountains of Suzuka for 6 days and 5 nights during the Heian period. The system of Saio established by Emperor Tenmu lasted for approximately 660 years. Saiku reached the peak of prosperity from the 9th century to the 10th century and discontinued in the middle of 14th century due to the disturbance of the Nanbokucho (the period of Northern and Southern Courts).



Ryokuyu Toki (green-glazed ware) Inkoku-Kamon-Ryowan (edged ceramic bowl with incised flower patterns) **【Important Cultural Property】**

Exhibition room I

The exhibition room is themed on "Saiku revealed through words". Focusing on the Heian period when Saiku flourished the most, the formation of Saio, life in Saiku and Saio after returning to the capital, as well as Saio described in the classical literature including "Ise Monogatari (The Tales of Ise)" and "Genji Monogatari (The Tale of Genji)" are presented by real materials, models and video materials. Also, model of Sokaren (man-carried carriage for an emperor with a golden flowering leek head on its rooftop) that Saio used for Gunko is displayed at the entrance of exhibition room and the full-scale Saio's room (with the figures of Saio in a twelve-layered ceremonial kimono (junihitoe) and court ladies as well as furnishings) is restored and displayed in the far side of the room.



Exhibition room I

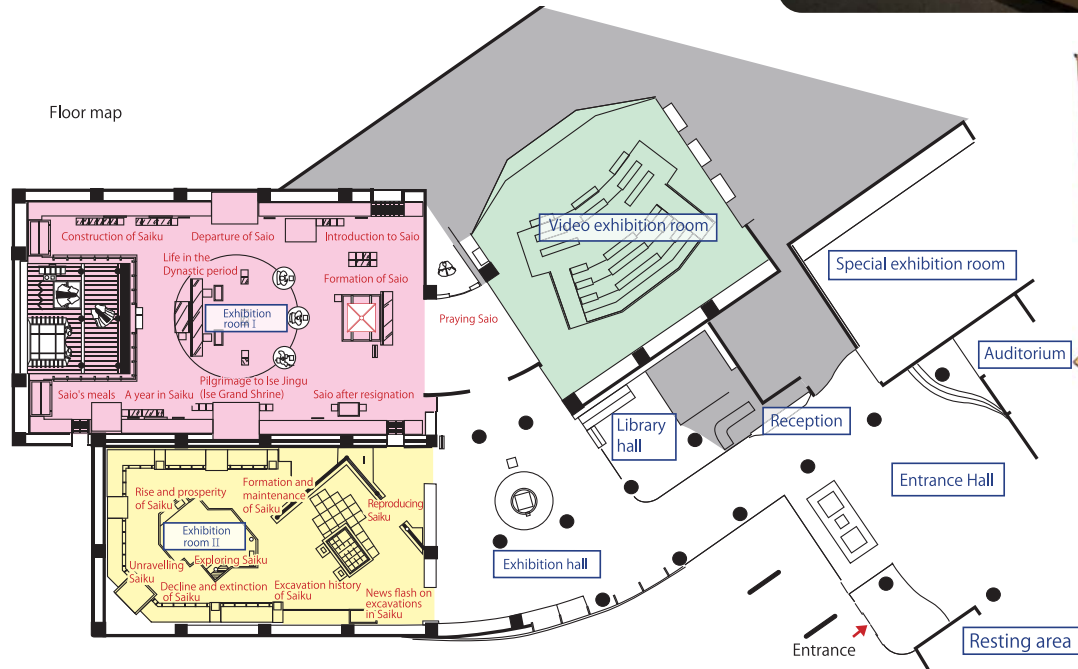
Exhibition room II

The exhibition room is themed on "Saiku revealed through artifacts". Saiku's excavation research results are presented through the typical excavated artifacts of Saiku from Asuka period to Kamakura period, as well as the 1/400 models of the excavation site and the reconstructed Saiku during the Heian period, and so on. Also, interactive exhibits including chronology quiz on earthenwares and restoration puzzle of earthenwares will make you feel more familiar not only with Saiku but also with archeology.



Restoration puzzle of earthenwares

Exhibition room II



Uchiki (Heian period ordinary clothing for court ladies)



Torigata and Hitsujigata Suzuri (bird-shaped and sheep-shaped inkstones) **【Important Cultural Property】**

Video exhibition room

Two videos, "Saio Gunko" reproducing the rituals of Saio and the journey from the capital to Ise, and "The Revived Phantom Palace" reproducing the atmospheres of Saiku during the Heian period based on the result of excavation on the remains of Saiku, are shown.



Video exhibition room

A scene from "Saio Gunko"