

# ●Shinagawa Historical Museum Explanatory Sheet

## Shinagawa Goten

### The Origin of Gotenyama's Name

Gotenyama derives its name from the shogun estate known as Shinagawa Goten that stood on the hill in the early 17th century. Shinagawa had many locations for hawking, and many generations of shoguns often visited the estate as a place of rest. Shinagawa Goten is also believed to have played a role as a military stronghold for defense.

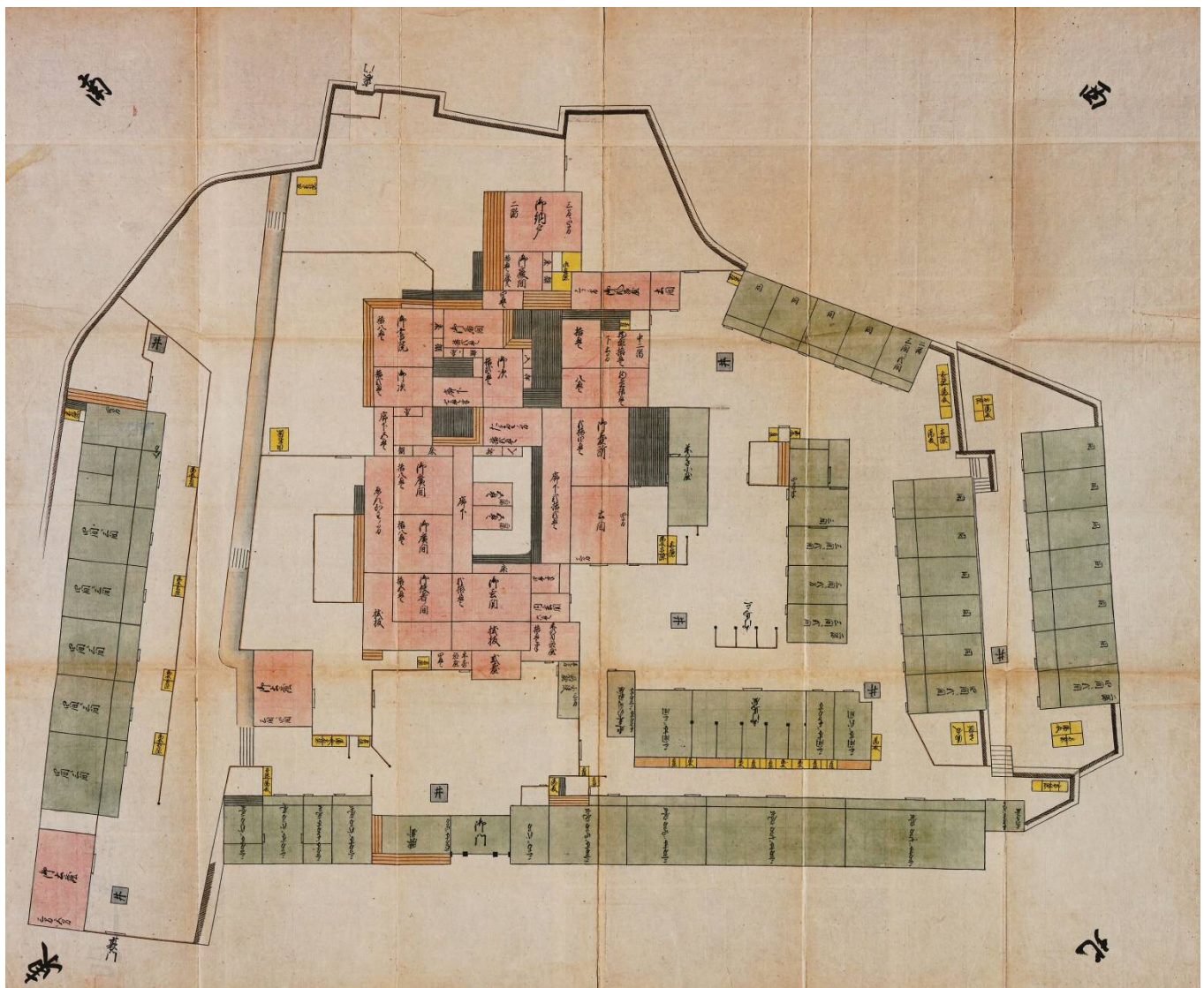
### Tokugawa Iemitsu and Shinagawa Goten

Among the many generations of shoguns, the third shogun, Tokugawa Iemitsu, was the most frequent visitor of Shinagawa Goten. Iemitsu visited Shinagawa for many important ceremonies of the shogunate

government, such as tea ceremonies, hunting and hawking outings, and military induction ceremonies. Over 18 years, Iemitsu visited Shinagawa Goten 200 times, the most out of any of his estates near Edo.

A letter written by Takuan Soho quotes Iemitsu as saying, "Shinagawa is a place of beautiful landscapes, and I visit often to wash away my weary days," clear proof of Iemitsu's love of visiting Shinagawa. Iemitsu's proposal to build the Tokai-ji Temple, and appoint Takuan as its first chief priest also took place at a tea ceremony held at Shinagawa Goten.

Iemitsu also visited many other locations in Shinagawa, such as Kita-shinagawa Inari Shrine (present-day Shinagawa Shrine), Myokoku-ji Temple (present-day Tenmyokoku-ji Temple), and Jorin-ji Temple (present-day Raigo-in). Iemitsu visited



▲ A Map of Shinagawa Goten (Shinagawa Historical Museum Collection)

Myokoku-ji Temple particularly often, and in 1634 ordered the collapsed buildings to be rebuilt.

### The Large-scale Tea Ceremonies of Gotenyama

At the time of the military induction ceremony of 1633, Shinagawa Goten was only a provisional building, but by the tea ceremony held on May 21, 1636, it was already a fully standing building surrounded by a grove.

Twenty-two tea ceremonies were held in Shinagawa during the reign of Iemitsu, including those hosted by the shogun himself. The largest one was held on September 16, 1640, hosted by the *daimyo* lord Mori Hidemoto of the Chofu Domain (currently, the area around Shimonoseki City, Yamaguchi Prefecture). This tea ceremony was a grand event, inviting the shogun Iemitsu himself, his ministers, the members of the Tokugawa clan, and many other prominent *daimyo* throughout Japan. It is believed that by inviting key power-brokers from throughout Japan, the tea ceremony served as important opportunity for political discussion. The tea kettle used in this tea ceremony is now kept at Toyokoto Shrine in Shimonoseki City, Yamaguchi Prefecture.



▲ Tea Kettle (Shimonoseki Toyokoto Shrine Collection)

### The Impact of the Fire of 1702

While Shinagawa Goten was maintained up through August 1685, it was entirely destroyed in a fire on February 11, 1702. The site was abandoned on August 14, 1702, and the building was never rebuilt. This fire, which also destroyed the Five-storied Tower rebuilt by Iemitsu at Myokoku-ji Temple, represented a major catastrophe for Shinagawa.

Thereafter, Gotenyama became known as a place for *Sakura* cherry blossom viewing, and served as a place for recreation and relaxation for people throughout Edo.

### The Remains of Shinagawa Goten

The location of the former Shinagawa Goten is believed to be near a hotel in Kita-shinagawa 4-chome, Shinagawa City, Tokyo today. Records in September 1845 state that the foundation stones of Shinagawa Goten, still remained in the area, measuring approximately 14 meters across by 11 meters long. This shows that while at this point Shinagawa Goten was already lost to fire over 150 years ago, its ruins still remained in the area.