A chance to encounter a golden age of history of Nagasaki

The Nagasaki Museum of History and Culture is one of the few museums in Japan with the theme of "Overseas Exchange." The museum holds approx. 48,000 precious collections including historical documents and arts & crafts that tell the story of Nagasaki developed as the sole window opened to foreign countries during the period of national isolation. In addition, part of Nagasaki Magistrate’s Office called Bugyosho (a local agency of the central government in the Edo period) was faithfully reconstructed based on historical materials, allowing visitors to understand the life of samurai warriors in those days. Historical materials are displayed in an enjoyable and new manner. Come and spend meaningful time encountering the history and culture of Nagasaki.
Encounters with the West -European trade and Christianity-

The trade with the West prospered from the middle of the 16th century, and there was also the propagation of Christianity. Later, the government forbade Christianity and restricted foreign trade to a few ports such as Nagasaki. As a result, Nagasaki prospered as the only harbor that was open to the West.

Exchange with Korea -Joseon missions to Japan and Tsushima-

During the Edo period, Japan and Korea had formal diplomatic relations. Information and materials from Korea, China, and the rest of the continent flowed in through this exchange with Korea. The Tsushima-han, which had had diplomatic experience with Korea since medieval times, was in charge of the diplomacy and trade.

Nagasaki trade -Chinese ship, Dutch ship, and the goods that came and went-

Ships from China and Holland brought items to Nagasaki to be sold and then returned laden with Japanese goods. Imports, such as silk, sugar, and medicines circulated from Nagasaki to the rest of the country. Japanese articles, such as gold, silver, and copper, marine products, and pottery, were exported to China, Asia, and Europe.

Exchange with China -Chinese temple and Chinese Quarter-

Nagasaki prospered thanks to the East Asia trade. The Chinese living in Nagasaki founded Chinese temples. When the government strengthened management control over the trade in Nagasaki, the Chinese residents were required to live in a special area called the Chinese Quarter. From the Chinese temples and the Chinese Quarter, people in Nagasaki could come in direct contact with Chinese culture.

Nagasaki’s Overseas Exchange

Life in Nagasaki -Prosperity of Nagasaki and system of the city-

Most of the people in Nagasaki were deeply concerned with trade or were involved in the administration of the area and its activities as local government officials. The big fire, which broke out in 1663, burned most of the city and the arrangements of houses and streets in Nagasaki were greatly changed.

Arts and Crafts of Nagasaki -Exoticism brought about by exchange-

Under the influence of both domestic and foreign aesthetics, enticing works of art and craft were produced, such as gorgeous Blue Shell Works (Mother-of-pearl work) and pictures incorporating the styles of painting in China or Europe.

The forerunner of modernization, Nagasaki

The exchange with Western countries deepened after the opening of the port of Nagasaki to other countries with the Ansei Treaties of 1858. New learning and technology came flooding into Japan, much of it through Nagasaki. A period of rapid change was ushered into Japan, first with the Bakumatsu, or Late Tokugawa Shogunate Period, and then with the Meiji Restoration and subsequent Meiji Era, all beginning with the city and port of Nagasaki.

The Japanese Government of Nagasaki Zone

The Nagasaki Magistrate’s Office. Here the Magistrate conducted trials for criminals or those suspected of crimes, and here the investigation of smuggling and forgery took place.

Oshirasu

Oshirasu is where Nagasaki Magistrate called Bugyo carried out trials in those days. This is its faithful reconstruction based on drawings and archaeological excavations. Every Saturday, Sunday and holiday, a play is performed to show how cases were tried then. The scene of smugglers facing trial is unique to Nagasaki.

Shoin Room

The living room in the Nagasaki Magistrate’s Office. Here the Magistrate received dignitaries.

Theater of the Japanese Government of Nagasaki

It introduces the history of Kirishitan of Nagasaki by the high-definition television image.

Bugyo Exhibition Room

This gallery introduces the function and role of the Magistrate’s Office showing from recent historical diggings and documents on trials.