

1 : 50,000

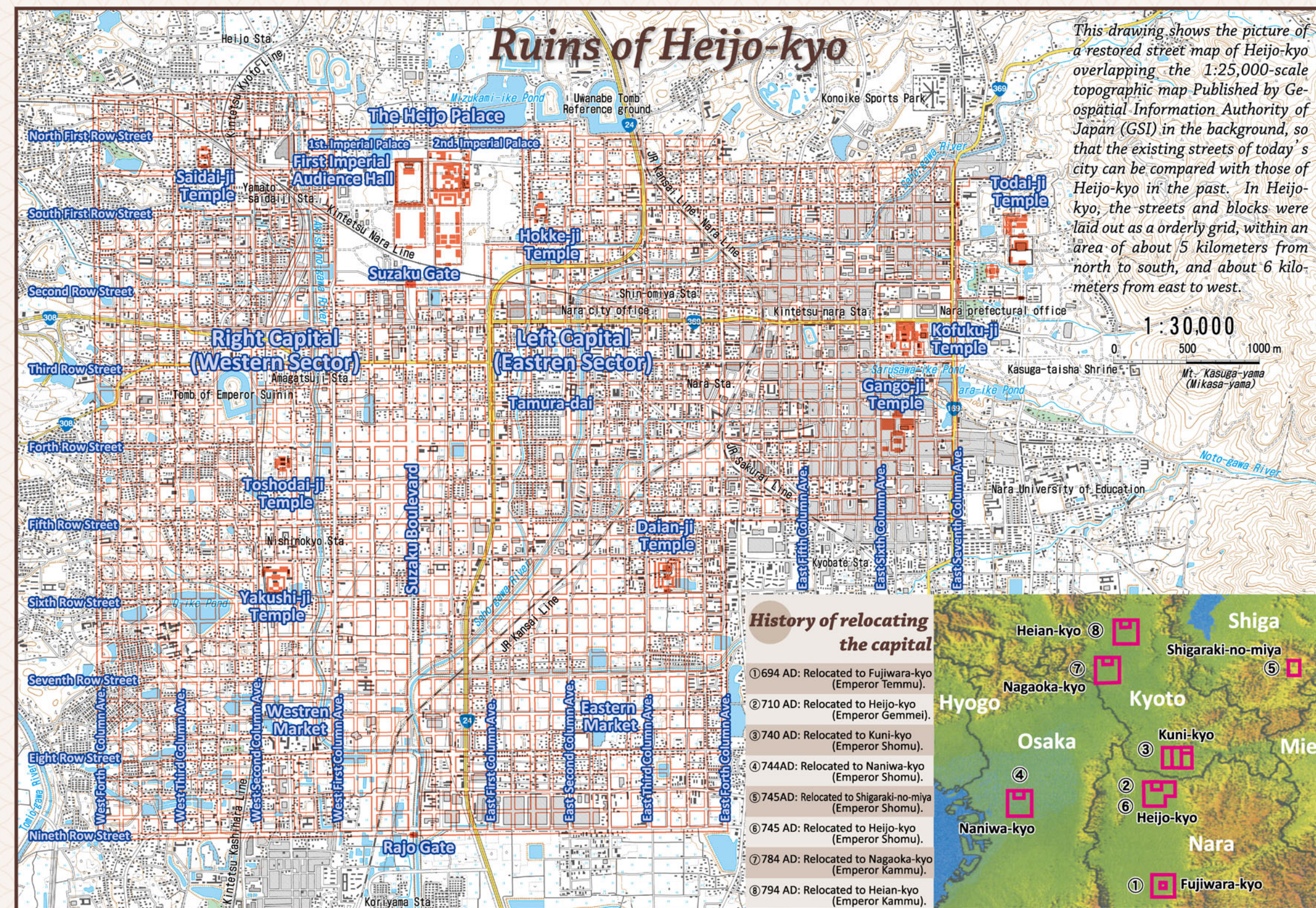
NARA

A city for tracing the history of Japan

Commemorating the 1,300th anniversary of relocating the capital to Heijo-kyo

Geospatial Information Authority of Japan

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Note for Users of 1:50,000 NARA

This map covers Nara, Japan's representative city for history, culture and tourism, and its surroundings. The map on the front side is prepared using 1:50,000-scale topographic maps of Nara, northeastern Osaka, Sakurai, Yoshino-yama, southeastern Osaka and Gojo. And the map on the back side shows changes of the landform around Nara Basin and the ancient roads and highways within Nara Prefecture. This map is designed to be widely used in the fields of culture, education, and tourism.

The map on the front side Features:

- Hill shades in mountainous areas to show the relief of the landform.
- The locations of structures designated cultural properties or otherwise important sites are clearly indicated with symbols, along with annotation.
- Ancient roads and highways, parks and green spaces.
- Orthogonal grid lines per 2,000 meters.

The map on the back side Features:

- Cover: Drawing of the First Imperial Audience Hall restored by the Agency for Cultural Affairs.
- Rules of Heijo-kyo: In order to compare the layout of streets, a restored street map of Heijo-kyo (provided by Nara Prefecture's board of education) is overlapped with a 1:25,000-scale topographic map. The history of relocating the capital is also indicated in a hysteresis map map (with shading of the area around the Nara Basin).
- Changes in the landform around the Nara Basin: Based on Technical Report of the GSI D-1-No.430 entitled "In search of the ancient geography of the Kinki region" (a survey report on the ancient geography of the Kinki region, as jointly prepared by the Kinki Regional Development Bureau, MLIT and GSI), the changes in the landform of the area around the Nara Basin from the Jomon era to the present day are reproduced and explained.
- Appearance of the Nara Basin in the Nara period: Based on Technical Report of the GSI D-1-No.430 entitled "In search of the ancient geography of the Kinki region" (a survey report on the ancient geography of the Kinki region, as jointly prepared by the Kinki Regional Development Bureau, MLIT and GSI), the appearance of the Kinki region when the capital was relocated to Heijo-kyo is reproduced and explained.
- Ancient roads and highways in Nara Prefecture: An outline of the route of and cultural heritage along the major historically valuable ancient roads and highways is introduced here. The routes are indicated based on reference materials regarding Nara Prefecture and 1:50,000-scale topographic maps, and its former edition issued by GSI and others. Other passable routes are shown for sections that are difficult to pass, and any natural route developed as a footpath or trail is also adopted. The generally used names are indicated here.
- Nara Prefecture and its surroundings: The geographical proximity between Nara Prefecture and other nearby prefectures and major cities is indicated along with the ranges of drawings, national parks, quasi-national parks, and others.
- Guide to points of interest: The locations of major Buddhist temples, Shinto shrines and Historic spots sites (shown in the front map) designated a national treasure, important cultural property, and/or a World Heritage site, and those designated as government-designated dig sites, scenic beauty spots or natural monuments are marked with squares.

Nara is a city with highly valuable cultural assets to be globally treasured. You are kindly requested to observe the rules and manners for their protection and preservation.

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Changes in the landform of the area around the Nara Basin

1:650,000

0 10 20km

Jomon period (about 6,000 years ago)

During the Jomon period, Osaka Bay intruded as far as the foot of the Ikoma mountain land due to rising sea levels after the last glacial period. At the mouth of the bay, the plateau known today as Uemachi plateau extended to the north, with most of the present-day Osaka Plain under water. A number of rivers had flowed down the Yamato-gawa River valley to the Nara Basin, forming marshlands around the confluences in areas subject to occasional flooding, and leaving marshlands and basin lake in areas that did not drain well. According to surveys of excavated ruins, many relics of civilization in the later Yayoi period were found in the Yamato-gawa River Basin, which was considered inhabited by people since ancient times.

Nara period (about 1,300 years ago)

A declining sea level during the Nara period resulted in waters that reached the foot of the Ikoma mountain range, later transforming into a shallow fresh-water lake; moreover, vast amounts of earth and sand carried by the flooding Yodo-gawa River were deposited downstream, gradually causing the shallow lake to vanish and the Osaka Plain to expand. Likewise in the Nara Basin, the marshlands and basin lake gradually vanished and began transforming into a flood plain. Around this time, the capital was relocated from Naniwa (present-day Osaka) to Heijo-kyo via the Saho-gawa and Yamato-gawa Rivers.

Sea level · Lake and marsh · Marshland

Flood plain · Delta

Alluvial cone · Plateau/Terrace

Higher than 400m

200~400m

100~200m

0~100m

Edo period (about 400 years ago)

During the Edo period, much of the Osaka Plain was a flood plain formed by the Yodo-gawa and Yamato-gawa Rivers. Around this time, replacement work was conducted along the Yamato-gawa River, resulting in the large-scale development of new fields in former riverbed areas where cotton was later widely cultivated. There were no major changes in the landform of the Nara Basin and the rivers there (as during the Nara period), but as many rice paddies were developed with the evolution of agriculture, irrigation ponds and irrigation canals were also developed, and thanks to the replacement work along the Yamato-gawa River, the means of water transport was developed.

Present

During the Heisei era, large-scale reclamation work was conducted in Osaka Bay. The development of residential areas, railroads, expressways and airports was accompanied by urban development in areas around the mouths of the Yodo-gawa and Yamato-gawa Rivers, and in the low marshlands and hilly areas along those rivers, making it difficult to distinguish between present and former natural landform. In the Nara Basin and surrounding hilly areas, forest, agricultural lands and the number of irrigation ponds have been decreasing due to the prevalence of manufacturing industries over agriculture and the ongoing development of residential areas.

Appearance of the Nara Basin in the Nara period

1:170,000

0 5km

Explanation of "Appearance of the Nara Basin in the Nara period"

A restored image of the landform in the Nara period based on documents and data overlapped on the present-day 1:200,000-scale regional map.

The Nara Basin is a fault basin extending about 15 kilometers east and west, about 30 kilometers north and south, and up to 100 meters above sea level, and is located in the northwestern part of Nara Prefecture. The central part of the basin is formed by a marshy flood plain made of deposited sand and silt, with flood plain periphery formed by successive alluvial cones, plateaus and terraces. The mountainous areas of the Yamato Plateau and Kongo-san mountain land were formed by granite containing hard gabbro and similar rocks.

It is believed that upthrusting of the Ikoma mountain land millions of years ago in the Nara Basin created a lake now called Ko-Nara-ko, and a stream flowing from that lake was the origin of the Yamato-gawa River.

Since the Saho-gawa, Hase-gawa, Asuka-gawa and Tomio-gawa Rivers in the Nara Basin all ultimately flow into the Yamato-gawa River, the areas of confluence were not drained well and formed marshlands, causing frequent flood damage inside the basin. Conversely, given the relatively small amount of precipitation in the basin, more water was used to irrigate rice paddies, and many irrigation ponds were built as an effective way of using water, thereby resulting in the development of advanced agriculture employing irrigation techniques, and consequently affording more potential locations for the capital.

Looking at the map overlapped the range of Heijo-kyo, we can see that the capital was located in an area having a relatively high sea level in the basin, surrounded by mountains to the east, west and north. Since the basic landform of the Nara Basin has not significantly changed relative to the present day, when examining its landform overlapped with that of the present day, we find that Heijo-kyo was at an elevation of about 55 meters at its lowest point, about 100 meters at its highest, and 65 to 75 meters along its periphery. According to certain literary documents, the flooded areas in those days were about 50 meters above sea level; therefore, we can easily surmise that the capital was built in an area not subject to flooding disasters.

Incidentally, the map outlines of the forms of the ruins of Heijo-kyo and Fujiwara-kyo, ancient roads and highways, and other sites.

Classification of landform

- Marshland**
A landform that always contains water, and characterized by soft soil in which wetland plants grow.
- Flood plain**
A lowland extending in the area downstream of a relatively large river, and formed by river flooding.
- Alluvial cone**
A gently-sloping, fan-shaped landform formed where a river flows from a mountainous area into flatland, typically depositing much silt.
- Plateau/terrace**
A landform where flatland forming near a river or the seacoast became much higher than present-day lowland due to crustal changes and/or sea level changes.

Ancient roads and highways in Nara Prefecture

In Nara Prefecture, the roads that were developed to link the capital with local districts (roads for transporting people, culture and commodities) are preserved as "ancient roads" and "ancient highways", along which we can encounter many elements of precious historical heritage.

Kuragarigoe-Nara-Kaido (ancient highway)

A road that connects Osaka and Nara via Kuragarigoe Pass, a road built to connect Naniwa (in Osaka Prefecture) and Heijo-kyo via the shortest distance. It has been designated one of the "100 selected roads in Japan."

Takenouchi-Kaido (ancient highway)

The oldest kaido (national road) in Japan, it connects the cities of Sakai (in Osaka Prefecture) and Katsuragi via Takenouchi-gate Pass, and during the Asuka period served as the means of conveying Chinese and Korean culture to Japan.

Yamanobe-no-michi (ancient road)

Katsuragi-Kodo (ancient road)

An ancient road extending north to south at the foot of Mt. Kongo-san and Mt. Katsuragi-san, and along which are Shinto shrines dedicated to major deities and some historical Buddhist temples.

Yagyu-michi (ancient road)

An ancient road that connects Takabatake-cho, Nara and Yagyu. The road has also been developed as the "Tokaido Nature Trail", along which can be found Kasuga-taisha Shrine, Kasuga-yama Sekkutsu-butsu, Enjo-ji Temple, and other important sites.

Ise-Kaido and Ise-Hon-Kaido (ancient highway)

Two roads that were used to conduct pilgrimages to Ise Shrine. The road running along Route 165 (a national highway) connecting the cities of Sakurai and Ise (in Mie Prefecture) is called Ise-Kaido; the other road running along Route 365 is called Ise-Hon-Kaido.

Ise-minami-Kaido (ancient highway)

A road that connects Takami-toge Pass on the border between Mie Prefecture and Wakayama Prefecture at the city of Gojo, running east to west across Nara Prefecture. Along this road you can find Mt. Yoshino-yama and "Kuriyama Residence", the oldest private residence remaining in Japan.

Kumano pilgrimage roads (Omine-okugake-michi and Kohechi)

The Kumano pilgrimage roads were used by people to visit Kumano Sanzan (Kumano-hongu-taisha Shrine, Kumano-hayata-taisha Shrine, Kumano-nachi-taisha Shrine). Omine-okugake-michi and Kohechi in Nara Prefecture are two of the pilgrimage roads included in the World Heritage list and registered under "Holy places and pilgrimage roads in the Kii mountain land."

Nara Prefecture and its surroundings

1:800,000

0 10 20 30 40 50km

GUIDE TO POINTS OF INTEREST

National Treasures (Buildings)
Nationally designated important cultural properties (Buildings)
Historic sites (Designated country)
Natural Monument (Designated country)

Buddhist Temples

- Akashino-dera
- Chokyu-ji
- Chugu-ji
- Enjo-ji
- Gango-ji
- Hannya-ji
- Hase-dera
- Hoki-ji
- Hokke-ji
- Horyu-ji
- Jyurin-in
- Joruri-ji
- Kairyo-ji
- Kinpusen-ji
- Kofuku-ji
- Konbu-in
- Ryosen-ji
- Saidai-ji
- Shin-yakushi-ji
- Shoso-in
- Taima-dera
- Todai-ji
- Toshodai-ji
- Yakushi-ji

Shinto Shrines

- Isonokami-jingu
- Kashihara-jingu
- Kasuga-taisha
- Kinpu-jinja
- Omiwa-jinja
- Yoshimizu-jinja
- Yoshino-mikumari-jinja

Historic Spots

- Asuka-ike-koubou Remain
- Asuka-kyo-ato-enchi
- Fujiwara-kyuseki Trace
- Heijokyo-sakyo-sanjo Nibo-miya-ato-Garden
- Heijo-kyuseki Trace
- Ishibutai Ancient Tomb
- Kasugayama Primeval Forest
- Kitora Ancient Tomb
- Monjuin-nishi Ancient Tomb
- Motoyakushi-ji-ato Trace
- Nara Park
- Omine-okugake-michi
- Suyama Ancient Tomb
- Takamatsuzuka Ancient Tomb
- Yamada-dera-ato Trace
- Yoshino-ato

Nara Public Offices

Nara Prefectural Office

Gojo City Office

Gose City Office

Ikoma City Office

Kashihara City Office

Kashiba City Office

Katsuragi City Office

Nara City Office

Sakurai City Office

Tenri City Office

Uda City Office

Yamatokoriyama City Office

Yamatotakada City Office

Ando Town Office

Heguri Town Office

Ikuraga Town Office

Kanmaki Town Office

Kawai Town Office

Koryo Town Office

Kawanishi Town Office

Miyake Town Office

Oji Town Office

Oyodo Town Office

Sango Town Office

Shimoichi Town Office

Takatori Town Office

Tawaramoto Town Office

Yoshino Town Office

Asuka Village Office

Kawakami Village Office

Taishi Town Office

Kyoto Public Offices

Kizugawa City Office

Universities

Kinki University

Nara Institute of Science and Technology University

Nara Medical University

Nara Prefectural University

Nara Sangyo University

Nara University

Nara University of Education

Nara Women's University

Osaka Kyoiku University

Osaka Shoin Women's University

Osaka University of Economics and Law

Tenri University

Tezuka University

Museums

Asuka Historical Museum

Heijo Palace Site Museum

Heijo-kyo Historical Museum

Karako-Kagi Archaeological Museum

Nara National Museum

Nara Prefectural Folk Museum

Nara Prefectural Museum

Nara Prefectural Museum of Art

Nara Prefectural Man-yo Museum

Takamatsuzuka Mural Museum