



# Kitadani Hamlets

Ohara/Kinehashi, Kitadani-cho, Katsuyama-shi

In Kitadani, more than 1 meter of snowfall can accumulate in a single evening. Its resident patiently await the thaw, and time stands serenely still.



Kitadani's Kinahashi settlement<sup>①</sup>

In Kitadani-cho, near the border with Ishikawa Prefecture, hamlets dot the terraces made by the Takinami River's flow. Kinehashi, one of Kitadani's 7 settlements, the white walled-homes and earthen walls have long defined the settlement, and the firewood so central to residents' winter lives can be found everywhere. Known for its tremendous snowfall even within the prefecture, the roof of each house needs to be cleared of snow several times in a normal year.



Kinehashi, steeped in snow<sup>②</sup>



Ohara settlement, built on the mountain's steep slope<sup>③</sup>

The Ohara settlement sits at the entrance to Mts. Akasagi (elev. 1,629m) and Ochō (1,671m), at an elevation of 500m. Cut into the steep mountain slope, narrow openings create a compact living area that maximizes scarce space.

Demonstrating the influence of Hakusan culture, the homes that dot the settlement are of the kiritsuma style, the walls of their two-storied plastered with care.

However, many of these houses have been damaged or collapsed as a result of heavy snowfall.

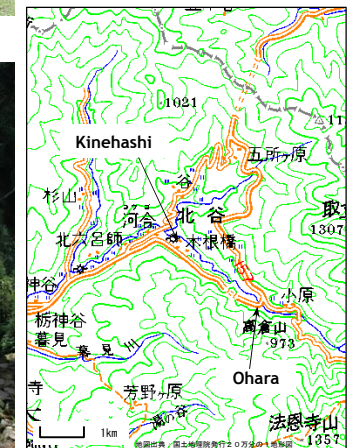
In order to preserve this historic area, local residents are actively involved in conservation and restoration efforts. University students have been important participants in this, and under the guidance of master carpenters learn the traditional construction techniques used to build and maintain the homes.



House atop a stone wall<sup>④</sup>



University students undertaking roof repair and reconstruction<sup>⑤</sup>



Photos①~④ court. of Katsuyama City, ⑤ of the Fukui University of Technology