



Ajimano

Ajimano District, Echizen City

Ajimano: said to be where the Keitai Emperor was raised before his enthronement, it receives mention in the *Manyōshū*, a collection of Japanese poems from the country's early history. The cherry tree in front of Ajimano Elementary School and the clear waters of nearby Jisa River paint a picture as poetic as the *Manyōshū* held it to be.



Ajimano Elementary School's cherry tree (City Natural Monument)



Echizen no Sato Ajimano Park

Among the poems collected in the *Manyōshū*, one tells of the love between the exile Nakatomi no Yakamori and Sano no Otogami no Otome, a lady courtier in the service of the emperor.

In Ajimano Park, visitors can find inscriptions of 15 essential poems from the *Manyōshū*, nestled among peonies, wisteria, irises, Japanese clovers, and Asian skunk cabbages, providing floral delights for each season accompanied by classical Japanese poetry. The cherry tree at Ajimano Elementary School is over 130 years old, and visitors are free to view it during the cherry blossom season.



Echizen manzai (National Folk Cultural Property)^①

Ajimano manzai, unique to the Ajimano district and with a long heritage, has been designated an Intangible Folk Cultural Property by the government as well as one of the three great traditional *manzai*. The first day of every calendar year is marked by a performance of this dance at Ajimano Shrine to pray for the well-being of residents. Locals continue to preserve this intangible treasure and essential aspect of their cultural heritage.



Ajimano no Manyō Festival (May 3-4)^②

Every May, the Ajimano Manyō Festival is held in the vicinity of Ajimano Park. The festival's main event is a parade of locals dressed in period clothing from the time the *Manyōshū* was written, vividly recreating the look and feel of that era.

The pristine waters of Ajimano's Jisa River are well known, and nourish the duckweed of Kamimakara-cho until the bloom from June to August.



Duckweed in the Jisa River^③

