

SHISHI – IWA — HOUSE

In May, Shishi-Iwa House Unveils Hinoki House No.3, Designed by Pritzker Laureate Ryue Nishizawa

Nishizawa employs traditional Japanese architecture to create a meditative timber retreat in Karuizawa



Shishi-Iwa House No.03 designed by Pritzker Prize laureate Ryue Nishizawa (Photo credit: Kenichi Suzuki)

KARUIZAWA, JAPAN, 11 April 2023 – Shishi-Iwa House announces the opening of SSH No.03, the latest in its collection of intimately crafted architectural masterpieces situated in Japan’s popular Karuizawa mountain resort town just an hour by train from Tokyo. Designed by Pritzker Prize laureate and co-founder of SANAA Ryue Nishizawa, SSH No.03 is a mountain nature retreat for families and friends to spend quiet time together without the interruption of urban life and to inspire the regeneration of intellectual creativity. The retreat is Nishizawa’s first hotel project and pays homage to century-old traditional Japanese residential architecture.

SSH No.03 follows SSH No.01 and SSH No.02, opened in 2018 and in 2022, respectively, and designed by another Pritzker Prize laureate Shigeru Ban. All three Houses, each situated mere minutes on foot from the other, collectively form SHISHI-IWA HOUSE KARUIZAWA with guests sharing all common facilities. The three Houses present an unique opportunity for guests to compare different architecture styles by these master architects. Promoting the harmonious coexistence of **architecture and nature**, all Houses are designed to connect the guests to their natural surroundings while celebrating simplicity in its purest form.

SSH No.03 is comprised of 10 pavilions interconnected by a series of *engawa* (covered walkways) and garden courtyards. The retreat is exclusive with only 10 guest rooms and 1 cabin villa offering both Superior Rooms (western style) and Tatami Suites. Inspired by spacial transparency as well as *Ma*, the Japanese concept of negative space, Nishizawa deliberately creates empty areas through minimal furnishings and embellishments, allowing natural light to stream continuously through the rooms’ windows. All guest rooms are stand-alone units with open windows on all four walls, affording the guests with unparalleled connection with the surrounding

SHISHI – IWA — HOUSE

forest and internal Japanese gardens. All units also come with a wrapped terrace, extending seamlessly the boundaries from the inside to the outside.



SSH No.03 is comprised of 10 pavilions interconnected by a series of engawa (covered walkways) and garden courtyards (Photo credit: Kenichi Suzuki)

The revered hinoki cypress wood features prominently throughout SSH No.03. Sourcing the Japanese hinoki from Gifu Prefecture, Nishizawa deploys the distinctive shade and fragrance of the rare wood to both the structure and the interiors of the retreat, including fixed furnishings, resulting in a breathtakingly austere visual impact upon entering the room. Hinoki cypress is considered a “sacred” wood in Japan as it has been used for centuries to build shrines, temples and palaces given its durability and aromatic scents. In the practice of building SSH No.03, high standards for sustainability are carefully maintained through a small building footprint, using carbon-friendly timber sourced primarily in Japan.

A favorite feature of the architect himself, the winding *engawa* walkway that intersects the pavilions offers in-between spaces that allow for discovery and contemplation. The landscape is carefully constructed with more than hundreds of cherry, maple and evergreen trees planted to provide an ever-changing display of colorful foliage in all seasons. Four Japanese courtyards plotted along the walkway are designed to create moments of stillness, completing a spiritual journey in which guests become one with nature – and with themselves.

A bathhouse and tea house also serve to complement the *Ma* experience envisioned by the architect. Deepening the mental wellness experience, SSH No.03 plans to offer carefully designed massage, yoga and meditation sessions. SSH No.03’s location within the serene Karuizawa Yacho no Mori, the National Wild Bird Sanctuary, in the embrace of almost 100 hectares of lush forest, naturally expands moments of rejuvenation, with forest bathing and special walking tours such as a waterfall trail, art and architecture tours, and farm excursions.

SHISHI – IWA — HOUSE



Shishi-Iwa House No.03 – Superior Room (Photo credit: Kenichi Suzuki)

Guests can also enjoy direct access to all facilities at SSH No.01 and SSH No.02, including the restaurant and bar, which offer fine dining options; sake, wine and whisky tastings; and tea rituals.

Complementing the House's traditional architecture is a collection of antique Japanese furniture as well as vintage mid-century modern furniture, including historically significant pieces by **Charles and Ray Eames**, **Pierre Jeanneret**, **Arne Jacobsen**, **Borge Mogensen**, **Bill Max**, **Michael Thonet**, and **Bodil Kjaer**.

On display throughout SSH No.03 is a significant cultural heritage collection of approximately 50 original *ukiyo-e* woodblock prints from a dozen major artists including **Utagawa Hiroshige** and **Shibata Zeshin** in the 1840s, and **Azechi Umetaro** and **Sekino Junichiro** in the 1960s.

-END-

For high-resolution press images (photo credit: Kenichi Suzuki), please access:

<https://finnpartners.box.com/s/alg5izm2j1fwin4xugkloi9b01gmxc3>

For media enquiries or interview opportunities, please contact **CatchOn, A Finn Partners Company**.

Florence Leung (852) 2807 0222 florence.leung@finnpartners.com

Vivian Pau (852) 2887 1992 vivian.pau@finnpartners.com

About Shishi-Iwa House

Shishi-Iwa House is an international hospitality brand deeply rooted in Japan. It is a collection of intimate crafted retreats, fusing a mastery of contemporary architecture, design, and art with culinary tastemaking and a deep connection with nature. Shishi-Iwa House is a sponsor of sustainability architecture and its positive impacts on human emotions and the environment. Shishi-Iwa House's first retreat is in the national parks of Karuizawa

SHISHI – IWA — HOUSE

where it is home to three architectural masterpieces. SSH No.01 and SSH No.02 by Shigeru Ban; and SSH No.03 by Ryue Nishizawa. SSH No.04 by another Pritzker Prize laureate Kazuyo Sejima is scheduled to open in 2025 in Hakone Japan. International locations are currently being planned for openings thereafter.