

The Houses of Karuizawa

By Hanya Yanagihara
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House #1

The avant-garde structures in Karuizawa, mostly designed by Japanese architects, are as humble as they are jaw-dropping. The architect Ryue Nishizawa was commissioned to build a museum that would house works by Hiroshi Senju — an artist whose monumental waterfall paintings adorn many Japanese public buildings.



House # 2



The Hiroshi Senju Museum
opened in Karuizawa in
2011.

House #3

The 730-square-foot Polygon House is almost completely bare of furniture, comprised of mainly steel, glass, concrete and white walls.



House #4



It was completed in 2003 by Makoto Yamaguchi for two musicians.

House #5

In such houses, says Yamaguchi, “the interior and the exterior lie side by side, gently joining together.”



House #6



TNA architects intended the reedlike supports of the Square House to evoke blades of bamboo grass shooting up from the ground.

House #7

Enveloped in a glass skin, the house is without walls and has few interior divisions of space.



House #8



Kendrick Bangs Kellogg, the San Diego-based organic Modernist architect, built the Hoshino Wedding Chapel in the late 1980s.

House #9

There is not a single right angle in the Hoshino Wedding Chapel's cascading concrete arches and soaring interior of inlaid stone.



House #10



The exaggerated gable of the Omizubata N House by Iida Architects creates a spectacular terrace.

House #11

Inside, the windows follow the roof line, giving the sleeping loft views of the forest.



House #12



Shaped like a wedge, the steel-plated wood Stage House by TNA opens up to a tall wall of glass with living areas on elevated platforms looking outside.

House #13

The minimalist entrance, carved into the acute back angle of the structure, gives no hint of the panorama within.



House #14



The house was
completed in 2007.