

Project: JINS Sakudaira store

Team: Ryuji Nakamura and Associates

Size: 197 m²

Location: Saku City, JAPAN



Feature:

Project - Nestled in the mountainous Saku Basin of eastern Nagano Prefecture, the JINS Sakudaira shop by Ryuji Nakamura Architects presents an unconventional approach to commercial architecture. The site boundaries seamlessly blend with adjacent restaurants, roads, parking lots, and a park, allowing unimpeded flow from all directions.

Inspired by freestanding park pavilions and trees, Nakamura envisioned an omnidirectional building without defined front or back. The resulting design is a subtly squashed 36-sided polygon in plan, ringed by identically shaped windows that bring 360-degree views into the interior.

"These site characteristics immediately brought to mind standalone large trees or all-directional pavilion-like structures found in parks," explains Nakamura. "I thought this approach would also suit a shop typology."

The circular layout avoids dead ends, enabling visitors to freely circulate through the warm, wood-lined interior while taking in panoramic vistas of the encompassing mountain scenery. Transcending a typical retail environment, the shop invites passersby to linger and experience the architecture's symbiotic relationship with its bucolic basin setting.

With an innovative form tailored to the unique terrain, JINS Sakudaira exemplifies how thoughtful design can dissolve boundaries between architecture and landscape.

Design Team - Established in 2004, Ryuji Nakamura and Associates has emerged as one of Japan's most acclaimed architectural practices. Led by principal Ryuji Nakamura, the Tokyo-

based firm is renowned for its innovative and conceptually rich designs that transcend traditional typologies.

With a portfolio spanning residential, commercial, and public projects, Nakamura's work exhibits a mastery of form, materiality, and spatial experimentation. Landmark projects like the award-winning JINS Kyoto Teramachi-dori (2016) and the Kobe City Hall Lobby (2017 competition winner) showcase the firm's ability to craft immersive environments that dissolve boundaries between interior and exterior.

Beyond architecture, Nakamura's multidisciplinary practice encompasses installations, exhibition design, furniture, and collaborations with artists and theater companies. This cross-pollination results in architecturally-informed pieces collected by institutions like the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston and SFMOMA.

With accolades including the prestigious JCD Grand Prize and Good Design Award Best 100, Ryuji Nakamura and Associates continues to push the discourse through conceptually and contextually grounded projects that redefine spatial experiences.