**Chōshi Falls**

A very long time ago Chōshi Falls looked quite different. The river disappeared through a hole in the ground, and the flowing water slowly dissolved the subterranean limestone, forming a large hollow dome beneath the earth. But at some point, part of the ceiling and the wall of this underground dome collapsed, creating the grotto that exists today.

During the Edo period (1603–1867) a large rock was balanced above the grotto of Chōshi Falls. It made the waterfall look like sake being poured from a *chōshi,* a type of sake decanter, giving the falls its name*.* Chōshi Falls is part of the Yunosawa River, which joins the Fujisato River in the west before flowing into the Sea of Japan. The rock is no longer above the falls.

During winter, most of Akita Prefecture’s rivers freeze over, but the waterfalls continue flowing. Chōshi Falls develops a large, dome-like stalagmite of ice that can rise up to 2 meters above the base of the falls. Water continues to fall through a narrow hole in the stalagmite’s center, flowing down into the pool beneath the ice.

 Based on Fujisato’s town records, Yu no Sawa Shrine was likely built here in the late 1600s, following the discovery of the nearby hot springs. Since then, Chōshi Falls has been a site of local worship and ceremony.