**Shimabara Peninsula Geopark Leaflet: General Info**

**What is the difference between a national park and a geopark?**

The Shimabara Peninsula is unusual in that it contains two different but related parks. One is the Unzen-Amakusa National Park, established in 1934 as one of the first three national parks in Japan. It was created to protect the ecological, cultural, and historical resources of the Unzen volcano cluster and the breathtaking coastline of the Amakusa Islands.

The other park, the Unzen Volcanic Area Geopark, was founded in 2009 as the first geopark in Japan. Geoparks are very similar to national parks, but they are designated by UNESCO, which protects sites of international geological significance for the benefit of people and the planet. As of 2019, there are 147 UNESCO global geoparks located in 41 different countries.

**Is there a mountain named “Mt. Unzen”?**

No, the name “Unzen” does not refer to a single mountain, but rather encompasses the many mountains (indicated by the suffix “-yama,” “-san,” or “-zan”) and peaks (“-dake”) at the center of the Shimabara Peninsula. These include Mt. Fugen (1,359 m), Mt. Heisei Shinzan (1,486 m), and Mt. Yadake (971 m), among others.