Daikanbo Lookout

The Daikanbo lookout on the Aso caldera northern rim provides what is often considered the most impressive view of the caldera. Daikanbo literally means “summit with a panorama.” The peak was named in 1922 by Tokutomi Soho, a noted journalist and historian from Kumamoto.

From this vantage point, one can see the central volcanic cone group, as well as the green farmland that has been tended for generations and the caldera walls on the opposite side. The five peaks of Mt. Aso in the distance are said to resemble the figure of a reclining Buddha.

In autumn, a phenomenon called cloud inversion causes a “sea” of clouds to fill the caldera, and silvery miscanthus grass (*susuki*) covers the mountainsides. In winter, the peaks are blanketed with snow, while in spring, the yearly controlled burn (*noyaki*) of the grasslands is a remarkable sight. Summer brings the fruits of that labor, when the grasslands grow back in various shades of green.