

Ise-Shima National Park (short version)

Ise Jingu in Ise-Shima National Park is the spiritual heart of Japan, a place where people and nature live in harmony. The national park encompasses indented coastlines and lush forests.

The most important *jinja* (Shinto shrine) complex in Japan, Ise Jingu is dedicated to the sun deity Amaterasu -Omikami. Ise Jingu symbolizes the ancient relationship between nature and people, one which has been nurtured in Ise-Shima for over 2,000 years.

Over ninety percent of the designated area in Ise-Shima National Park is privately owned land. This is testimony to the fact that there are many people here who have a long tradition of living with, and respecting, the environment that provides them with their sustenance and livelihoods. A combination of traditional conservation rules regulating the region's female divers known as *ama*, and modern fishing regulations, ensure that Ise-Shima delicacies like Japanese spiny lobster and abalone can continue to be enjoyed for generations to come.

Given its size and the varied landscape, from the forested mountains of the inland area to the sheltered bays and jagged rock ledges along the Pacific coast, Ise-Shima National Park offers many opportunities to experience a unique culture where local people and nature happily coexist.