

In 1573, gold was discovered in the Yagigawa River which runs through Nakaze. A mine was opened soon after, and it became such an important source of income for the government that the mining community was as heavily guarded as a castle town. The discovery of antimony followed, and by the mid-twentieth century Nakaze mine became Japan's largest source of antimony ore. The mine closed in 1969, but antimony refining continued. Today, 70 percent of all domestic antimony products are still produced in Nakaze. The old mine is not open for tours, but the Nakaze visitor center offers guided tours of the town.