

Nature and History

Kaka and its environs are home to numerous islands and sea caves that can be reached only by boat, including Kaka no Kukedo. This famous sea cave is split into two areas, New Kukedo and Old Kukedo. New Kukedo has three entrances, and the cave itself is huge, measuring 40 m high and 200 m in length. If the weather is not too rough, sightseeing boats can sometimes go right into the cave, offering passengers a spectacular view of the interior. This cave is featured in an episode from *Izumo no Kuni Fudoki*, an eighth-century chronicle. The story goes that the mother of Sada Okami, one of the gods of Izumo, was about to give birth in this cave, but it was terribly dark. She used her golden bow to bore light holes in the cave, and not long after gave birth to Sada Okami. Old Kukedo is a smaller cave about 5 m wide and is said to be the site of the Sai no Kawara, an underworld riverbed where the souls of children who died in miscarriages or at a very young age become stranded. The coast of Kaka includes many spectacular rocky coastal sites, including Katsurashima Island, a lava dome formed 15 million years ago by underwater volcanic activity, and the Seven Caves of Tako (Tako no Nanatsuana), a series of caves formed by the constant crashing of waves against 50 m-tall sea cliffs. The town of Kaka itself was an important port town for large wooden trading ships, called *kitamaebune*, that distributed goods all along the coast of the Sea of Japan in feudal times.

Activities

Weather permitting, visitors to Kaka can take a cruise boat that visits the mystical sea caves of Kaka (Kaka no Kukedo). The cruise takes about one hour. There is also a tour of the Seven Caves of Tako (Tako no Nanatsuana). Sea kayaking, swimming, and fishing are available along the coast, while those who prefer dry land can go for a stroll through the historic harbor town of Kaka or for a 30-minute trek on Katsurashima Island. There is a campsite on this island, located right by the beach.