

## Nature and History

Cape Hinomisaki is home to the tallest stonemasonry lighthouse in Japan. Built over a century ago, this white tower rises approximately 44 m, and visitors willing to climb to the top can enjoy magnificent views of the coastline. The coast near Hinomisaki is unique, with clusters of hexagonal rocks formed by columnar jointing, closely spaced, intersecting fractures in the rock that form as volcanic lava flows cool and contract. The jagged coastline and inlets make access difficult, so the area's unique ecosystems remain largely untouched. Fumishima Island, for example, serves as an important breeding ground for black-tailed gulls (*Larus crassirostris*). The birds arrive in late November and early December and remain on the island until mid-July. Fumishima Island has long been considered an important sacred site and has been considered off-limits to humans since ancient times.

Hinomisaki Shrine, with its brilliant vermillion paint, is dedicated to Amaterasu. The sunset, in particular, has long been revered here. One of the buildings on the shrine grounds—the one where Amaterasu is enshrined—is considered to represent the setting sun. The *miyuki* ritual, an annual celebration of the sunset, is held here to this day, offering spectators to the coast an opportunity to witness Japan's unique nature spirituality while enjoying a stunning view of the sun as it sinks into the Sea of Japan.

## Activities

Visitors can work up an appetite by swimming, kayaking, snorkeling, and diving along the coast of Hinomisaki. Afterward they can enjoy the delicious seafood bowls offered by local restaurants. Other activities include climbing the lighthouse, visiting Hinomisaki Shrine, and strolling along the shore to enjoy spectacular views of Fumishima Island and the sea cliffs with their unique columnar joints. These coastal views are especially spectacular at sunset.