

Amano Yasukawara

About a ten-minute walk along the Iwato River from the West Sanctuary is the riverside Amano Yasukawara cave. This is where the many *kami* deities of the Heavenly Realm are believed to have discussed how to lure the sun deity Amaterasu out from hiding and return light to the world. It was here the deities decided to create a festive atmosphere.

In the past, there was only a small shrine here and no path, but now there is both a large shrine and a shrine gateway. At some point, visitors began to stack stones around the cave floor as a form of wish-making. The stone stacks have grown tall, creating an atmosphere that feels spiritual. It is important for visitors to remember that these high piles of stones are precious prayers, and to tread the area carefully.