

Overview

Takachiho Gorge was formed long ago by an eruption of nearby Mt. Aso. One of its main features is the layered look of the precipices on either side. Other attractions within the gorge include the 17-meter Manai Falls and an iconic view of three arched bridges. There are rental boats that can be rowed out into the gorge waters for an up-close experience.

Takachiho Gorge is deeply connected to local mythology. Nearby sites include an island called Onokoro Shima, believed to be the first made by the *kami* deities, and a massive stone referred to as the Stone of Kihachi's Might, which is said to have been hurled by the fearsome deity Kihachi during a legendary battle. On November 10th, 1934, Takachiho Gorge was designated a national place of scenic beauty and a natural monument.

Geological History

The layered look of Takachiho Gorge, known as columnar jointing, was created from the rapid cooling of fast-flowing lava that eroded over time into the present deep V-shaped valley. On average the precipices are 80 meters high, though some areas reach 100 meters. The edges of the gorge continue east and west for about 7 kilometers. In 1965, this area became a part of the Sobo-Katamuki Quasi-National Park (Note: Part of the name comes from the famed Mt. Sobo).