

Three Diamonds of the Keramas

Aka Island is located roughly five kilometers to the south of Zamami. It is connected by bridges to the neighboring islands of Geruma and Fukaji.

Diamond-shaped Aka is the smallest of the three main islands of the Keramas. The population is around 300, half that of Tokashiki and Zamami. Forest covers much of the island, which is home to the Kerama deer, a designated Natural Treasure of Japan. Aka is also the site of Nishibama Beach, a one-kilometer stretch of sand with a classic archipelago view that may make it the most idyllic beach in the Keramas. The island has three designated viewpoints and numerous diving spots.

With a circumference of just five kilometers, mountainous Geruma is the smallest inhabited island in the Keramas, with a population of roughly 60 people. Covered with forests of Chinese fan palm, the island—like Yakabi to the northwest—is an officially designated sanctuary for Kerama deer. The historical highlight here is the Takara House, the best surviving example of a house of a seafarer who prospered from trading with China.

Fukaji is naturally flat, and so was chosen as the best place to site the local airport, which now takes up about half the total land area, the rest being forest. Uninhabited by humans, the local sea turtle population comes to Fukaji to lay their eggs on its shores. There is one viewpoint here, which it is fun to visit by bicycle, crossing the bridges. Mukaraku, an island just to the south, is a popular diving spot.