

The Shimbaru-Nuyama Tumuli

The Shimbaru-Nuyama tumuli (*kofun*) on Kyushu are the tombs of prominent Munakata family members and constitute one element of the Okinoshima World Heritage Site. Built between the fifth and sixth centuries, the 41 tombs are clustered in groups in the idyllic countryside north of the city of Fukuoka, surrounded by farmland and close to the coast. The tombs look out to the Genkai Sea stretching between northern Fukuoka and Saga, and toward the islands of Oshima and Okinoshima.

These earthen tombs were constructed as round or keyhole-shaped mounds, often surrounded by moats. Five keyhole tombs can be found among the Shimbaru-Nuyama group. The inner chambers of these tombs have yielded artifacts including metal tools and ritual objects similar to those found on Okinoshima. While the chambers within the tombs are not open to the public, it is possible to walk the perimeters of the grassy mounds. They are in close enough proximity (extending 800 meters) to be covered in a leisurely stroll from the Nuyama-guchi bus stop.