

The Shimbaru-Nuyama Tumuli and the Sea

The Shimbaru-Nuyama tumuli (*kofun*) were built on a plateau overlooking the three sacred sites that comprise Munakata Taisha today. The cluster of undulating man-made hills make a fascinating sight. These tombs of prominent Munakata family members are approximately an hour on foot from Hetsu-miya, and face out toward the Genkai Sea where the islands of Oshima (Nakatsu-miya) and Okinoshima (Okitsu-miya) are located.

The positioning of the tombs, facing the sea route between Okinoshima and the Korean Peninsula, is a visual metaphor for the longstanding influence that the Munakata family held over the region. While the tomb group is now located several kilometers inland, it once bordered a sea inlet. Over the centuries, the sea has receded, and the traces of the original coastline are barely visible. An observation deck provides a sweeping view over the tumuli, along with information in several languages. The observation deck is just across the road from Showa Gakuen-mae bus stop.