

Geological History of Tosashimizu (2)

Memories of magma

Some 14 million years ago, after the Japanese islands had reached their current location, magma began to spout from the depths of the earth in parts of what is now western Japan. Some researchers posit that this magma formed the basis for many of the region's mountains and for the numerous capes that protrude into the Pacific Ocean along the coast of Shikoku. The tip of one of these peninsulas became Cape Ashizuri, whose granite cliffs consist of magma that consolidated deep underground during this time. The various properties of rocks in these cliffs resemble those in far older, continental rock. This similarity holds promise for scientists who hope the cliffs of Cape Ashizuri could one day help them understand how continents are born.

Continued change

The primordial land formed by the interaction of tectonic plates continues to be affected by geological forces, as do the strata that took shape after the Japanese islands broke off from the edge of the Asian continent and the consolidated magma that turned into granite. Magmatic and seismic activity alter the landscape, as do weathering and erosion, keeping the geologically diverse land of Tosashimizu in constant flux.