

## **Mt. Kinkō-ji**

Mt. Kinkō-ji, on the northern end of Nakanoshima Island, commands excellent views of Dōzen's northern coastlines. The mountain formed around six million years ago as a satellite cone of the huge stratovolcano that created the islands of Dōzen.

In 838, Mt. Kinkō-ji became the site of exile for Ono no Takamura (802–852), a noble in the imperial court during the Heian period (794–1185). Takamura was twice sent as an envoy to the Tang Dynasty in China, but both times he encountered trouble in the Sea of Japan and was forced to return. As he prepared for his third voyage, his ship was unexpectedly commissioned by one of his superiors, and Takamura became so frustrated that he faked an illness to avoid being dispatched again. The emperor suspected Takamura of sabotaging the crossings in an effort to avoid traveling to China, and he sentenced him to two years of exile in the Oki Islands. While on Mt. Kinkō-ji, Takamura wrote what would become the eleventh poem in the celebrated poetry collection *Hyakunin isshu*, meaning “one hundred poets, one poem each.” After a year and two months on Nakanoshima, Ono no Takamura was recalled to the court, purportedly because the emperor missed his literary talents.

Kinkō-ji Temple, at the mountain's summit, is dedicated to the Cosmic Buddha, Dainichi Nyorai. The spring in front is guarded by a statue of the fierce, sword-wielding Mizukake Fudō Myō-ō, who local children are told will come for them if they misbehave. The spring's water is said to be effective in curing skin diseases and neuralgia.