

Dondon Buchi Waterfalls

A path of tumbling pure water

This series of waterfalls begins high on Mt. Gongendake, but only the last few falls are visible from the end of the trail. The Dondon Buchi name comes from the onomatopoeia *don*, describing the thunderous sound of the water striking the rocks, while *buchi* is the deep pool at the bottom of the falls. Ascetic monks once practiced meditation under the pounding water, while today families come in summer to bathe in the pool.

The rocky course of the falls was formed not by a lava flow but by a porous volcanic material called welded tuff, which acts as a filter, so the water here is very clear and pure. The pure water makes this a very good area for raising rice, and *ayu* or sweetfish migrate from the ocean and up the streams toward the falls. Fireflies brighten summer nights along the banks.