

Audio Guide: Machiko-iwa and Christian Martyrs' Memorial

Walk downhill from the observation point and take in the view of Mt. Kinugasa. On the right is a boulder with a plaque embedded in it. This is Machiko-iwa, or the Machiko Stone.

This boulder was the setting for a memorable scene in the 1953 film *Kimi no na wa*, or “What is your name?” The film and its female lead character, Machiko, made Unzen famous and produced a sudden increase in tourists who wanted to visit the beautiful winter landscape that they had seen in the film. The actress who played Machiko, Keiko Kishi, was even invited to the ceremony commemorating the stone she made famous.

Behind Machiko-iwa is a different sort of monument: a cross that marks the Christian Martyrs' Memorial. As described earlier, Christianity was widespread in Unzen during the late 1500s and early 1600s. However, beginning in the early seventeenth century, Christians were brutally persecuted by the Tokugawa shogunate, and approximately 33 people were scalded to death with the boiling hot-spring water in an attempt to torture them into recanting their faith. This monument commemorates their sacrifice.