

Monzen Shopping Street

Each shop on Monzen Shopping Street has its own spring. Although the water all comes from the same source, many of the shops have given their spring a playful nickname. For example, the local bank's water is called *kin no mizu*, or “gold water,” a tongue-in-cheek reference to money. These nicknames, though playful, are a symbol of the deep connection between Aso's residents and their region's natural resources.

The pedestrian-friendly shopping street leads to Aso Jinja Shrine (*monzen* means “before the shrine gate”). The street is lined with restaurants and cafés, as well as shops selling fresh Aso produce, souvenirs, and baked goods.