

Mt. Omine Observatory

Mt. Omine Observatory (114.5 m) is located at the highest point of the Watari Peninsula and offers a panoramic view of several World Heritage sites that are collectively known as the Sacred Island of Okinoshima and Associated Sites in the Munakata Region. The Shimbaru-Nuyama Mounded Tomb Group, one of the World Heritage sites, features ancient tombs (*kofun*) on a plateau above the city of Fukutsu. The tombs were built in the fifth and sixth centuries for the Munakata family, which ruled over the region. Photographs of the tombs are on display near the observatory.

From the observatory, visitors can see the islands of Ainoshima, Oshima, and, on a clear day, the sacred island of Okinoshima. The park around the observatory is known locally as Togo Park for its monument to the Naval Battle of the Sea of Japan, during the Russo-Japanese War (1904–1905). The battle took place on May 27, 1905, in the Tsushima Strait, off the coast of Fukutsu. The Japanese fleet was commanded by Admiral Togo Heihachiro (1848–1934). During the decisive battle, two-thirds of the Russian fleet was destroyed, effectively ending the war.

The observatory and monument are within Mt. Omine Nature Park, which has hiking trails around the mountain. The nature park features cherry trees and Japanese maples. The path to the observatory is lined with evergreen camellia trees and with large Japanese bay trees believed to be around 200 years old.