

The Agari no Azana

The Agari no Azana (eastern lookout) is an observation post built atop the easternmost edge of the inner wall of Shuri Castle. It is the highest point in the castle, about 140 meters above sea level. The lookout offers a superb panoramic view of the entire surroundings: the town of Shuri, the port of Naha, and when the weather is clear, to Kudaka Island in the east and the Kerama Islands in the west. The Agari no Azana is also a good location from which to view the overall layout of Shuri Castle and to appreciate the design of the castle walls. In former times, a bell that hung here tolled to announce the time. The form and construction of the Agari no Azana is unusual, with two lobe-like open spaces linked by a narrow parapet. It is approached via a narrow, arched opening in the stone wall near the Bifukumon Gate, which leads to a long slope and a stone stairway that climbs between two steep walls. There is also a western observation post, the Iri no Azana (western lookout), at the opposite end of the castle compound.