

## **Sagakei Gorge**

Sagakei Gorge is considered one of Japan's "Three Great Gorges" and is the only one created by ocean waves, rather than by a river. It is located in a scenic area known as Oku-Matsushima, on a tip of Miyato Island that juts into the Pacific Ocean. Compared to the tranquil waters of Matsushima Bay, the seascape of Oku-Matsushima is more rugged and wild, and the power of the ocean waves is made clear by the dramatic shapes of the islands and cliffs.

Rocks resembling everything from elephants and turtles to calligraphy scrolls and even partial maps of Japan's islands are the highlight of this unusual geography. Pine trees with long roots gripping the vertical rock, hidden emerald-colored caves, oyster beds, and flocks of marine birds are also striking features. During the summer, large white lilies bloom from rock crevices, and white herons perch on the cliffs as they scan for fish.

The islands and steep cliffs of Sagakei Gorge are best seen by boat, and regular pleasure cruises depart year-round from the small port just beyond the Aomina Visitor Center. The small boats allow visitors to experience this ever-evolving landscape up close, stopping within arm's reach of the craggy cliffs and small islands along the gorge.