

Kanoura Overlook

The Kanoura Overlook—high on a cliff along National Route 101 in the town of Happō—offers broad views of the Sea of Japan and a distinctive black sand coastline. The roofed platform has picnic tables and is a popular spot to watch the sun set over the ocean. Opposite the ocean, the mountains of Shirakami Sanchi form a majestic backdrop to the coastal scenery.

The dark rocks and striking black sand beneath the overlook are a legacy of Hassei Mine, an open-pit mine that once operated just north of the overlook. Silver and copper were extracted from the black rock, and the residual slag was blasted with water into tiny particles that were disposed of along the coast, creating beaches of black sand. Although the mine closed in 1989, the black sand remains. Rocks dug up during the mining process were also left along the beaches, though their jagged edges are gradually being worn down by the sea.

There are three food establishments at the site, offering set meals made with local produce and festive fare such as grilled squid and soft-serve ice cream. Diners are welcome to take their purchases up to the tables at the overlook to enjoy the view while eating.

The Kanoura Overlook is most easily reached by car, and is an approximate 5-minute drive from Higashi-Hachimori Station on the Gonō Line. Free parking for 20 vehicles is available, and there is also a public toilet.