

Udo Shrine: Cliffs and Concretions

The coastline around Udo Shrine is dotted with strangely shaped rocks and boulders, which are reminders of geological events that occurred here millions of years ago. The cliffs in the area, including the cave that houses the shrine's main sanctuary, are a combination of hard sandstone and softer mudstone. Sand and mud accumulated in layers under water some 8 million years ago, partly as the result of earthquakes. Countless organisms such as jellyfish and sea cucumbers were buried within these layers. Over time, the sand and mud hardened into stone and created the yellowish rock that now dominates the Udo coast. The calcium contained in seawater cemented the still-soft sediment around the remains of the dead organisms, forming round boulders called concretions that stick out of the cliffside here and there. The concretion-dotted cliffs emerged from the sea following land uplift. Udo Shrine's cave was carved out by waves that battered the rock over millions of years, and the cave—a masterpiece of nature—eventually came to be worshiped as the abode of the divine.