

## **Aji Stone**

The town of Aji is famous as one of Japan's premier granite-producing areas. Aji granite, or Aji Stone as it is branded, bears the nickname "diamond granite." The stone is naturally white and primarily consists of quartz and feldspar, but it has a unique speckled appearance due to the small amount of black mica in the mix.

Aji Stone is prized among artists and masons for its fine grain and extreme durability, which make it an ideal material for buildings as well as outdoor sculptures and other ornaments. Aji Stone is as hard as quartz and is known to allow greater precision in carving than other types of granite. Internationally renowned artists such as Isamu Noguchi (1904–1988) and Nagare Masayuki (1923–2018) maintained studios in Aji or the neighboring town of Mure in order to have easy access to Aji Stone. Today, approximately 200 masons and stone dealers do business in Aji and Mure.

Aji Stone is quarried from Mt. Goken, which stands between the two towns. The mountain is the only known source of Aji Stone in the world.