

Gyoran Kannon Viewpoint

This overlook on the western edge of Fukue Island offers a sweeping view of the coastline and East China Sea. To the south is an inlet that shelters the blue waters and white sands of Takahama Beach. To the north, near Kaizu Port, the shore is studded with angular, black blocks of basaltic lava.

On a pedestal overlooking the water is a stone statue of the Buddhist deity Kannon, Bodhisattva of Compassion, holding a basket of fish. Kannon is depicted in many standardized forms, but this one—known appropriately as “Fish-Basket (*gyoran*) Kannon”—is relatively rare.

Seen in Chinese, Japanese, and Korean art, the fish-basket form comes from a Chinese folktale in which the deity appears as a beautiful fishmonger. To spread Buddhist teachings, she encourages her many suitors to memorize sutras in order to woo her.

This statue was erected to give fishermen a place to pray for safety at sea and for bountiful catches. In the sculpture, the fish in Kannon’s basket is a large sea bream (*tai*), both an auspicious symbol in Japanese culture and one of the most sought-after fish in the Goto Islands.