

Kobaru Beach and Cliff Descent

This trailhead marks the starting point for the steep descent to Kobaru Beach, a favorite location for Tokunoshima islanders since at least the Meiji era (1868–1912). The appeal is its “hot springs,” shallow ponds formed by erosion in the limestone reef, their waters heated by the sun and high in salt content from evaporation. Tokunoshima does not have any natural hot springs, making these warm salt ponds a welcome alternative. People believe in the natural healing properties of these baths and come here from all over the island for a rejuvenating soak.

Geological Curiosities

The limestone cliffs, formed from uplifted coral, rise some 100 meters above a rugged beach landscape of rocks, many eroded into fantastic shapes. Rainfall filters down from the higher elevations through the porous limestone, riddling it with caves and underground streams. At beach level, about 100 meters to the left of the end of the trail, is a 30-meter-high waterfall, its exposed stalactites offering a glimpse of its underground origins.

The Descent to the Beach

Adventurous visitors who wish to hike the 400-meter trail down to the beach do so at their own risk. The slope is steep, though there are ropes to assist navigating the most difficult spots. In several places, streams flow over the rocks on the trail, which can make them slippery and potentially hazardous. If you plan to hike this trail, please make sure you have suitable footwear and clothing, and are well hydrated.