

Ginryudo Cave

The entrance to Ginryudo, a cave in Kenbuku village, is down the path just beyond the rustic torii gate. It is one of many caves on the island created by acidic water eating away at the limestone over centuries. Just to the right, after the slope down to the entrance, is a hole where a stream of water plunges out of sight, a dramatic example of the stream-riddled geological makeup of this island. The cave is a single passage about 200 meters long that follows an underground stream and ranges between 2 and 5 meters in height and width. The passage ends at a subterranean pond.

Sacred Shrine

Inside the cave, on a stalactite platform on the left side of the passage about 100 meters along the route, is a shrine dedicated to the *ujigami*, the village's guardian deity, which is related to the god Hachiman, a revered Shinto figure. Prayers are still made at this site, the reason for the torii gate near the entrance.

Cautions for Cave Explorers

Visitors enter the cave at their own risk. In the 1960s, this was a popular tourist spot, but business dwindled in the following years, and it now appeals to the more adventurous. Although the route is relatively easy to follow, the path is frequently wet and can be slippery. There are no working lights; cavers should carry their own light source and backup.