

Mt. Inutabudake

This is the trailhead for the route that crosses the peak of Mt. Inutabudake (417 m), the highest mountain in Isen township. The route to the peak and the descent on the other side covers approximately 4 kilometers. The trail can be strenuous in parts, and there are few views of the surrounding landscape. But hikers can experience subtropical forests dominated by evergreen broadleaf trees, such as chinquapin (*Castanopsis sieboldii*) and Amami *arakashi*, a variety of Japanese blue oak (*Quercus glauca*). Many rare and endemic species of plants and animals inhabit this forest, including the Tokunoshima *ebine*, a type of wild orchid. The rare Amami rabbit was thought to have disappeared from this part of the island, but a motion-sensor camera recently captured photos of the rabbit on the slopes of this mountain.

Ancient Petroglyphs

A few rocks near the peak of the mountain are marked by petroglyphs of bows and arrows. Although no scientific dating of these carvings has been done, other areas excavated on the island have produced earthenware and other artifacts dating from the late Jomon period (10,000–300 BCE). This area is the only place in the town of Isen that is registered as part of the Natural World Heritage site that also encompasses the islands of Amami-Oshima, Iriomote, and part of Okinawa.

Safe Hiking

As with all nature walks on this island, keep an eye out for the venomous habu viper. Hikers are advised to sweep any overgrown areas on the trail with a walking stick and make noise to alert the snakes to your presence. Please leave the trail and the mountain the way you found it.