

Why Build a Naval Base Here?

Building a naval base in the center of Kyushu, far from any port, may seem impractical, but there were compelling reasons for choosing this location.

The area was secluded, yet had open spaces shielded by the surrounding hills. The ground surface of volcanic rock provided a solid foundation for constructing a runway, and the site's consistent headwinds benefited takeoffs and landings.

A Strategic Advantage

Hitoyoshi Naval Air Base's central location relative to the coastal naval bases around Kyushu made it an ideal hub for communications, a crucial supply depot for fuel and other necessities, and a potential site for weapons manufacture. Its distance from the sea also provided a strategic advantage: it was beyond the firing range of the largest guns on the newest U.S. battleships, which typically had a maximum range of 30 to 40 kilometers.