Mt. Kabuto Climbing Course

Kumihama Bay is a lagoon that is blocked off from the Sea of Japan by a sandbar called Shotenkyo. Mt. Kabuto is an isolated mountain made up of volcanic rocks that rise up in the center of the Kumihama Bay. Visitors are able to enjoy a unique panorama created by the magnificent Sea of Japan and its currents from here.

Mt. Kabuto looks like an island sticking out from Kumihama Bay. It is not particularly high (191.7 m), but the view from its peak is excellent thanks to its surroundings.

Quiz!
What is the winter delicacy farmed in Kumihama Bay? The answer is at the back.

Basic Course
- Start: KTR Koyama Station
  - 35 min → About 2km
  - ① Mt. Kabuto Park
  - 17 min → About 700m
  - ② Hitokui-iwa Rock (Man-eater rock)
  - 2 min → About 100m
  - ③ Kumano Shrine
  - 2 min → About 100m
  - ④ Mt. Kabuto Observatory
  - 19 min → About 900m
  - ⑤ Mt. Kabuto Park
  - Necessory 1hr 40min
  - Total distance: About 1.8km
  - KTR Koyama Station

Short Course
- Start: KTR Koyama Station
  - ① Mt. Kabuto Park
  - 19 min → About 700m
  - ② Hitokui-iwa Rock (Man-eater rock)
  - 2 min → About 100m
  - ③ Kumano Shrine
  - 2 min → About 100m
  - ④ Mt. Kabuto Observatory
  - 19 min → About 900m
  - ⑤ Mt. Kabuto Park
  - Necessory 1hr 40min
  - Total distance: About 1.8km

Optional Course
- Start: KTR Koyama Station
  - ① Kosanji Temple
  - 15 min → About 500m
  - ② Tsukunonaru Burial Mounds
  - 8 min → About 200m
  - ③ Lotus Pond
  - 16 min → About 1km
  - KTR Koyama Station
  - Necessary: 1hr 20min
  - Total distance: About 6.9km
  - (In addition to the Basic Course)

Boat tour captains will explain the history, culture, and nature of Kumihama Bay.

To preserve these beautiful natural assets, please leave stones and plants as they are. Keep out of dangerous places and do not go off-trails. What you can bring home with you are happy memories, photos and local souvenirs!
Mt. Kabuto and Kumihama’s many places of interest

1. Mt. Kabuto Park

Mt. Kabuto Park is a spacious grayery area with a campsite that commands a great view of Kumihama Bay, allowing families and groups to enjoy the outdoors.

Phone: Campsite 0772-83-1457
(Open April to November / Reservation required)

2. Hitokui-iwa Rock (Man-eater rock)

A reddish brown rock can be seen on the south side of Mt. Kabuto. This rock is known as “Hitokui-iwa Rock” (Man-eater rock). There is a legend that says a young man stopped the rock from eating a man by communicating with it, seeking its dislike and then stuffing its mouth with red clay which it hated the most. This legend has since been handed down among the local residents.

3. Kumano Shrine

It is said that a daughter of Tamba-no-Mitihimetsu-no-Mikoto* and Kawasaki-no-Masu-no-Kasuga became the empress of Emperor Shinnakou, To celebrate this, Kawasaki-no-Masu, her grandfather, built Kumano Shrine.* A royal family member who governed the Tamba region.

4. Mt. Kabuto Observatory

Mt. Kabuto Observatory is located at the top of the mountain (191.7 m). The views of Kumihama Bay, Shotenkyo Sandbar, and the Sea of Japan to the north are splendid. The name Shotenkyo Sandbar (It is a small bridge to heaven) is attributed to the fact that it looks like Amamokii bridge (It is a bridge to heaven) in that the pine trees along it are knotted in a straight line. "Ama-no-shinbashira: One of Japan’s three most scenic spots in Kyushu.

5. Kosan-ji Temple

Kosan-ji Temple is a historic temple founded by Gyoki (a Buddhist monk) in 736, Amida Nyorai, the temple’s principal image, was made by Gyoki, and the statue of Fudo Myo-in in the priest’s living quarters was made by Kobo Daishi (a famous Buddhist priest).

6. Tsukannonaru Burial Mound

Tsukannonaru Burial Mound, located near the Lotus Pond, is a round tomb containing a stone inner chamber with a horizontal passage connecting the chamber’s center to the outer wall, built in the late Kofun period; it is built on the surrounding ancient dunes.

7. Lotus Pond

Lotus Pond is a pond left in an old backwater along the Kawakamidani River, on the east side of Mt. Kabuto. Cranefish carp, common carp, catfish, as well as many plants, such as reed and lilies, can be seen there.

Kumihama Bay

Kumihama Bay is a breakwater lakegen separated from the Sea of Japan by a sandbar called Shotenkyo. Whispers and Turtles warts stay here over the winter because of the calm state of the bay, even when the Sea of Japan is made rough by the north wind in winter.

Geo-Column 1

Mt. Kabuto

Mt. Kabuto (191.7 m) is a dome-shaped mountain that looks like a samurai’s helmet. About 15 – 20 million years ago, highly viscous magma rich in silica (a material that forms quartz) was extruded and solidified.

The hard part of the rock which was formed in this process was left without erosion. It became the mountain we now call Mt. Kabuto. Many mountains in Kumihama Bay were formed in the same process. “Hitokui-iwa Rock”, or man-eater rock, is located on the south side of the mountain, and commands a fine view. It is used as the brand name of a local sake. We can guess it was named that way because the reddish part that was created due to oxidation of the metallic elements in the rock looks like a big mouth.

Every year on August 9, the Senjokias-Kankou Festival, in which the character A (a kite) is put up on the mountain, is held. The view of Shotenkyo Sandbar from the observatory at the peak is splendid.

Quiz & Answer

[Kuma] Kumihama Bay is a breakwater lakegen that is blocked off from the Sea of Japan by a sandbar called Shotenkyo. It is ideal for oyster farming because it is the habitat of abundant plankton, which is necessary for oysters to grow.

Geo-Column 2

Formation of Kumihama Bay & Shotenkyo Sandbar

The present-day map

From the Yayoi period (4th/5th century BC – 3rd century AD) to the present day, the river developed as a delta and the floodplain is still continuously being filled with sediment.

Approx. 10,000 years ago (The last interglacial period)

A large quantity of earth and sand flowed down to the lower reaches of the river, and the floodplain was filled with sediment. As a result, the plain spread 10 kilometers further from the present coastline. The slope and mean declivity of the river have developed as a flat and alluvial fan (the alluvial areas of sediment and run off by streams).

Approx. 130,000 years ago

When the sea level rose due to the warm climate, the land slope and the sediment accumulation on the lands practised. After that, the sea level dropped and the ground level rose. The surface of the sandy strata is about 20 meters high.

Approx. 6000 years ago

(During the Yayoi period; 2,400 – 13,000 years ago)

A warmer period began approximately 10,000 years ago. In three days, the sea level was a little higher than it is now. A sandbar was formed by the sand carried by coastal current and developed from the fluvial delta and Kumihama Bay.

Approx. 20,000 years ago

(At the last glacial maximum)

A large quantity of earth and sand flowed down to the lower reaches of the river, and the floodplain was filled with sediment. As a result, the plain spread 10 kilometers further from the present coastline. The slope and mean declivity of the river have developed as a flat and alluvial fan (the alluvial areas of sediment and run off by streams).

The sea level was estimated to have dropped 100 meters lower than it is now.

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