

Yukakutei

The Yukakutei (“bower where cranes play”) observation deck on the north ridge of Yashima is considered one of the mountain’s three most scenic lookouts, along with the Shishi no Reigan and Dankorei ridges. The Yukakutei offers panoramas of the Seto Inland Sea.

Many of the area’s best-known islands are visible from the Yukakutei. Straight ahead from the lookout are Oshima, Teshima, and Shodoshima, to the left are the twin islands of Ogijima and Megijima, and beyond them lies the famous art island of Naoshima, known for its museums and outdoor displays of artworks. All these islands, as well as Yashima itself, are part of Setonaikai National Park. Yashima’s close proximity to the other islands makes it an ideal starting point for a visit to the Inland Sea.

The lookout deck is a modernist white circular platform with a round roof, supported by a single central pillar. Around the base of the pillar is a circular bench. The structure is designed not to obscure or compete with the view.

The Yukakutei is accessible on foot from the visitors’ parking lot on the south ridge or via a walking trail that leads up from the northern edge of the island, near the Nagasaki no Hana promontory. Part of the path is lined with *ubame-gashi* oak trees, which form a canopy over the walkway.

Trail to Yukakutei

The 2.4-kilometer trail to the Yukakutei lookout, which is noted for its panoramas of the Seto Inland Sea, begins near the visitors’ parking lot on the south side of Yashima. It takes roughly 30 minutes to reach the lookout, which is on Yashima’s north ridge. At Sengendo Square along the way, the trail splits into three paths, each offering different views of Yashima’s terrain.

A few hundred meters from Sengendo Square, the trails converge again and *ubame-gashi* oak trees flank the path, their curved trunks and branches forming a canopy over it. The trees naturally grow into this bowing shape as a result of the strong wind at the top of Yashima. The scenery is particularly striking in spring and summer, when the trees are at their greenest.