

About the Yae Terraced Rice-Fields Region

The Yae Terraced Rice-Fields region lies to the northwest of Kagoshima City. The fields, located 400m above sea level, rest at the foot of Mount Yae (676.8m above sea level). This traditional terraced rice-field was formed through the ingenuity and efforts of the area's ancestors, and has been succeeded and maintained for generations. A beautiful work of traditional masonry, the 240 rice-fields span 12.4 hectares along the area's sloping hillsides.

The picturesque foreground features the terraced rice-fields surrounded by the lush green of Mount Yae, and the Kagoshima cityscape, Sakurajima, and Kinko Bay in the distance. The area expresses itself a number of ways throughout the seasons, rich in nature and an appeal that is both deep and vast. With spring, the sakura, rapeseed blossoms, lotus flowers, and daffodils come into full bloom, creating a vibrant scene. Next is the sight of the rice-fields flooded with water before planting begins, and the grassy green that springs up as the rice plants begin to grow, before becoming golden with the blossoming of the plant. After the harvest, the fields see lingering grey smoke, which clears by winter before the black stonework of the rice-fields is blanketed in white snow.

The region also boasts Yutaka-no-mizu, which springs forth without pause from the surrounding Mount Yae. While keeping the Yae area damp, Yutaka-no-mizu also serves as tributary for Kinko Bay and the Kotsuki River which flows through the City, making it well-loved by citizens; it was chosen as one of the Heisei Era's (1989 – present 2015) Top 100 Natural Springs.

In recent years, agricultural and rural communities have gained attention as centers of green tourism, primarily sought after by people from the city looking to relax.

The Yae Terraced Rice-Field region's beautiful rural scenery provides Kagoshima's citizens with a chance to get away from their daily lives, and relax with nature. Following the start of the Kyushu Region's Shinkansen (bullet train) operations, we expect the tourist population to increase, bringing Yae Terraced Rice-Fields to the spotlight as one of Kagoshima's tourist locales.

However, as with rural communities nationwide, the area's population is decreasing, and there are not enough people to succeed the land as their current owners grow older; the increase of unused agricultural land is becoming a hot topic in the Yae Terraced Rice-fields region as well.

The Yae Region Terraced Rice-fields Preservation Committee was established in 2002 to take action and abate the worries people had surrounding the area. Through this committee, residents of the region come together to revitalize the terraced rice-fields' ownership system, popularize agricultural experience events, maintain the pathway along which daffodils bloom, and preserve the terraced rice-fields to conserve the region's beautiful scenery.



Terraced Rice-fields in the snow



Visitors try out rice-harvesting
Citizens' Photos-Kagoshima No.126
"Your Photo" Salon
Portrait Photography Submission

◇ **Outlook Point 1 Kotsuki Lake**

31° 43'52" N 8767, 130°27'21" E 7826 , 401m above sea level

Kotsuki Lake is located in the Yae mountainside. The natural water springs forth unceasingly, spreading out to keep the tiered rice-fields moistened, as well as serving as the source for Kagoshima City's major river, the Kotsuki River. The regional council and commerce committees hold the Kotsuki Lake Festival to show thanks to the rich nature and clean water with which they are blessed. A well-loved area, the lake is also near the Yae Mountain Promenade, which has a rest area. This area is a primary tourist spot for the Yae Region.



◇ **Outlook Point 2 Kaminomaru-sen, Kaminomaru-nakasen Crossing**

31° 43'48" N 4427, 130°27'10" E 7202, 418m above sea level

Kaminomaru-sen and Kaminomaru-nakasen are the roads that help to form the landscape of the Yae region. Along with being able to overlook a majority of the rice-fields to the west of this crossing, on clear days the smoking Sakurajima, Kinko Bay, and the City are visible beyond the surrounding greenery.



◇ **Outlook Point 3 Kaminomaru-nakasen Central Area**

31° 43'40" N 2388, 130° 27'16" N 7207, 387m above sea level

Following Kaminomaru-nakasen downhill from the Crossing, one finds themselves in the Kaminomaru-nakasen Central Area. The calm babbling of a stream accompanies the lush scenery here; above the Central Area, the stonework of the terraced rice-fields, and its verdant green backdrop of Mount Yae are visible, while below are Sakurajima and the sprawling Cityscape.

