Kasari Area (Amami City) Tourist Map

~ TOURISM MAP ~

1 St. Michael Catholic church in Central Kasari (Angelus bell) (Kasari 3nd Ward)

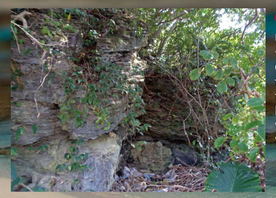
Father Chohachi Nakamura started his missionary activity in 1903, and St. Michael Catholic Church in Central Kasari was established 1915. In 1951, the church was relocated to its current address, and the main building was built in 1972. Its "Angelus Bell," lost during WWII, was found and returned to the church on December 10, 1984.

2 Site of the Oshima magistrate's office (Kasari 3nd Ward)

Amami Oshima island was occupied by Satsuma (mainland Kagoshima) in 1609, and the magistrate's office was set in Kasari. In 1613, Hogen Nizaemon was appointed as the first magistrate in Amami. Surrounded by coral stone walls, the site of the magistrate's office is large. It was the regional headquarters from which the magistrates from Satsuma ruled the Amami region for 22 years. These coral stone walls inherit the history today.

3 Monument of Kasan Tsurumatsu (Kasari 2nd Ward)

Kasan Tsurumatsu, a female weaver of *Oshima Tsumugi* pongee textile, was famous for her outstanding skill in improvisational singing. Her legend includes an episode that she saved the local residents from sugar production inspector officials from mainland Satsuma (Kagoshima) with her witty songs and a song battle with another famous singer from Ushuku Community. People built a stone monument for her after she passed away in 1880.



4 Shirida *Tofuru* grave (Kasari 2nd Ward)

Ubaru plateau is a plateau with a height of approx. 16m, located between Kasari Community and Yo Community. Shirida *Tofuru* graves is situated under the northern cliff of this plateau, consisting of more than six old tombs. Bodies were laid in state in the horizontal hollows in Ryukyu limestone. The bones were washed and placed in funerary urns. The site was used as a clan's graveyard until the 1950s.

5 Yo *Shunknekwa* Dance (Yo)

Shunkanekwa is a New Year event relating to the venomous Habu snake, in the hope of keeping the snakes away. In the previous era, children would gather at a house, spending three nights, from the New Year's to the 3rd, participating in Shimauta folk song games, play. Since 1976, a society for the preservation of *Shunkanekwa* has striven to keep this part of cultural heritage, but the decreasing number of children in the community poses an issue for the future.
(Intangible Cultural Asset of Amami City)

Administration: Amami City

Amami City HP

※ The scale below is presented as an approximate guideline.

0Km 1Km 2Km 3Km 4Km 5Km

Legend

WC Toilet · Shower · P Parking area · Rest area · Barrier-free toilet

Major Sightseeing Spots and Facilities · Kasari Branch, Amami City

Come visit all 29 communities!

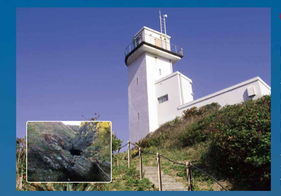
Each community has a
tourist information sign illustrating
its unique cultural & historical properties

Kasari Town, Amami City

Kasari area is surrounded by the Pacific Ocean and the East China Sea, and has small mountains with altitudes of 200m or less running north and south. On the east side, here lies a flatland where sugarcane and semi-tropical fruit fields are cultivated, and livestock is raised. Kasari Bay, one of "500 Important Wetlands in Japan," designated by the Ministry of the Environment, covers the west side. Many communities in Kasari area inherit their traditional performing arts, passing their unique culture from generation to generation through their daily lives.

6 Yo Beach and Nagahama (Yo)

Yo Community stretches to the north and the south, consisting of Ushiro, Naka Gusuku, Mae, and Araho blocks divided by the paths running to the east and the north. The shoreline is formed by a sandy beach and reef. Strangely shaped *Chinji* rock at the north is a landmark of this community. From Yo Community to the cape, beautiful scenery can be seen, with textile screw pine trees (lauhala) and a white beach, serving as a good egg-laying spot for turtles.



7 Kasarizaki lighthouse and Otomizu waterfall (Yo)

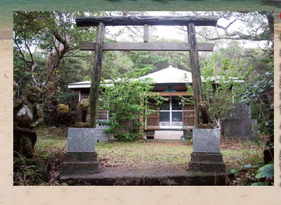
Kasarizaki (Kasari cape) Lighthouse, located at the northern tip of Amami Oshima island, is also known as Yo Misaki (cape) Lighthouse. From atop the solid rock at the edge of Kasarizaki cape, the lighthouse has been in operation since March 31, 1962, providing a navigational beacon for ships traveling northbound and southbound from the height of 67 m above sea level. A stream running along the rocky stretch to the lighthouse is a sacred purification site for the local deities.

8 Bouroudai (Sani)

The Imperial Japanese Navy had watch towers along Japan's major coastlines. From Cape Yo to Kasarizaki in Sani Community, the entire northern ocean can fit into one's field-of-view. The Imperial Japanese Navy soldiers watched ships traveling north and south from this point. A round piece of earthwork is left at the top of the mountain. Visitors can enjoy a great panoramic view, covering the ridge of Nagakumo Mountain in the south, the Pacific Ocean in the east, and the East China Sea in the west.

9 Sani August Dance (Sani)

Designated as an intangible cultural folk asset of Kagoshima Prefecture in 2011. In August of the Lunar calendar representing the beginning of a new season, the community residents visit each other's houses and dance on two occasions: *Arasetsu* (new beginning) and *Shibasashi* (purification). They dance to pray for safety, purification, and reposing the souls of ancestors. Today, the ritual is simplified and combines with a previously separate event, *Taneoroshi* (harvest festival). The dance ritual/festival finishes with Amami's traditional up-beat *Rokucho* dance.



10 Gamo Shrine area (Yani)

Gamo Shrine has a number of interesting historical and cultural assets, including a big mirror (1806), a stone monument (1725), and a Benzaiten goddess statue (by Ryosuke Yamada). The shrine deifies Gamo Zaemon, one of the defeated Heike refugee warriors who came to Amami after the battle of Dan-no-ura (1185), along with its *Iriyaterasama* deity and guardian gods. It is said that there is a sunken stone wall in the ocean near the shore, built by Gamo Zaemon.