Kasari Area, Amami City Tale of Yani Community

Kasarizaki
Sani 1st /2nd Wards
Yo
Yo Beach
Kusuno
Yani Wharf
Yani
Gamozaki Tourist Park
601
Kasari 1st Ward
Kasari 2nd Ward
Kasari 3rd Ward
Kawakami
Nabeguru
Ōgasari port
Ōgasari Catholic Church
Ayamaru Misaki Tourist Park
• Seawater swimming pool
• Cycad tree cluster
• Ground golf course "cycling train," kid's playground
Amami City Folk Heritage Museum
Beru
Suno
Sakibaru
Suno Dam
Tomori
Tomori Beach
Ushuku Kitchen Midden Historic Park
Ushuku
Ōse Beach
• Bird watching spot
Cycling Road
Ushuku wharf
Shiroma
Manya
Taiyogaoka Athletic Park
Kasari Bay
602
Sakibaru Beach
Sakibaru
Akakina wharf
Akakina (Sato/Nakaganeku/Sotoganeku)
Kasari Branch, Amami City
Akakina Beach
Maehida
Uttabaru
Uttabaru Beach
Maehida wharf
Kujirahama
58
Cape Itton
Kakurehama Beach
Tekebu
Kisé 3rd Ward
Kisé Wharf
Kisé 2nd Ward
Kisé 1st Ward
Amandee
Taira
Wano
82
Amami Airport
Amami Park
Wano wharf
←To Naze
Tatsugo Town
Setta
Tsuchihama
Amami City Local Produce Market and Rest Area
Kasari Town, Amami City
Kaminoko
Yoan
Yoan Beach
Myojinzaki

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.

※ The scale below is presented as an approximate guideline.

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

Amami City HP

Administration: Amami City

Legend

- Toilet
- Shower
- Parking area
- Major Sightseeing Spots and Facilities
- Rest area
- Barrier-free toilet
- Kasari Branch, Amami City

Yani (*Yan* in local dialect)

Situated at the west side of Kasari area, Gamozaki Tourist Park facing the East China Sea is a landmark of Yani Community.
From the observatory, visitors can enjoy a picturesque landscape covering the Kasari and Tatsugo areas as well as the far Tokara islands on a fine day. Yani is famous for its *taaman* potatoes (*Dolocasia gigantea*(Blume) Hook.f.). Its cultivation method using paddy fields has passed through generations, and the potato is designated as a unique community brand of Amami City.

Observatory
3 Gamo Shrine area
7 Old road to Gamozaki
To Gamozaki Tourist Park
Yani Wharf
Yani Nursery School
Yani community center
Yani elementary school
5 Banyan tree
Yani Post Office
Tenrikyo (Shintosect) church
Yani Catholic Church
6 *Kami Michi*
You are here
Stone wall 4
1 *Gusuku*
2 *Go no Chin*
Yani *taaman* potatoes 8
Gamozaki Tourist Park entrance
To Kawakami
602
To Sani →

1 *Gusuku*(*Hoo Gusuku*)

Yani Community has Yani river running northward through it.
On the southeast side of the river, there lies a mountain where *Hoo Gusuku* (fortress) and Myadera Shrine (now merged with Gamo Shrine) are situated. The locals consider this mountain as a holy mountain.
Hoo Gusuku is situated at the bottom of the mountain on an elevated platform. Excavation discovered celadon green and white porcelain pieces, indicating this is a ruin from the Medieval Ages around the 13th century.

3 Gamo Shrine area

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 *Miyaterasama* deity and guardian gods. It is said that there is a sunken stone wall in the ocean near the shore, built by Gamo Zaemon.

5 Banyan tree (Yani Elementary School)

Yani Community has some giant banyan trees. Among them, a large banyan tree- a graduation memorial tree - stands at the elementary school, a perfect place for children to climb and play in the tree house.

7 Old road to Gamozaki

In addition to the east side, the west side of the community houses big mountains, including Kamozaki, Hoobira, and Yanchiji, surrounding Yani Community. There is an old road at the bottom of these mountains. Some say it is a deity path, and others think it is a walk way to the shrine. These beliefs are based on the Heike legend of the observatory and Gamo Shrine. The mountains are considered a sacred area.
Yani Community is, thus, protected by two holy mountain areas, one on the east and the other the west.

***Go no Chin*
(Monument to the loyal dead)**

The mountain on the south side of *Hoo Gusuku* has a monument of cultivation as well as a monument to the loyal dead, *Go no Chin*, erected on it. *Go no Chin* monument has names of the young soldiers from Yani Community who died during WWII inscribed on it. The community holds a memorial service on August 15every year. The stone monument is almost rectangular in shape, resembling a stone anchor from the Medieval period. Some scholars believe it was originally one of these old stone anchors.

4 Stone wall

t is said most of the old residential houses in Yani Community had coral stone walls and banyan tree fences. Today, a stone and coral wall along the street at the center of the community, and some banyan trees reminds us of the olden-day scenery.

***Kami Michi* (Deity path)**

Yani Community has a *Kami Michi*, running from the east side of the community through the narrow path along the river, meandering west at the center of the community to the mountain road in Gamo Shrine area. The pathway consisting of narrow paths - some are wide enough to allow people to walk through and others too narrow to travel - is regarded as the community's deity path through which deity spirits travel.

8 Yani *taaman* potatoes

On the south side of the community, the Yani River meanders, forming a large curved *tabukuro*, or a paddy field. The west side of Yani Community is a deeply indented ria coastline, forming a large *tabukuro* field. Yani residents used to cultivate *taaman* potatoes at a small scale in these deep paddy fields called *yubita*. Today, its rich water resources allow the community to cultivate the potatoes at a larger scale.