

Mount Etna Erupts, Tourists Flee as 'Code Red' Issued in Sicily

Mount Etna, the towering and restless volcano on Sicily's eastern coast, erupted Monday, spewing fiery lava and thick ash high into the sky.

Tourists and locals alike scrambled for safety as the volcano's latest outburst rattled nearby homes and blanketed the region in ash. Italy's National Institute of Geophysics and Volcanology (INGV) reported "intense and almost continuous" strombolian explosions, prompting the Volcanic Ash Advisory Centre Toulouse to issue a "code red" alert.

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Footage from the scene showed terrified hikers fleeing the eruption, while a few brave—or reckless—individuals climbed higher for a closer look at the awe-inspiring natural spectacle. Pyroclastic flows raced down the volcano's slopes, though INGV officials stated they had not crossed into the Valley of the Leo.

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Mount Etna, the highest Mediterranean island mountain and the world's most active stratovolcano, has been erupting for over 2,700 years. Its latest eruption continues to shape the landscape and serve as a living laboratory for studying Earth's dynamic processes.

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The volcano's name comes from the Greek "Aitne," meaning "I

burn," a fitting title for the fiery giant that has long inspired myths and legends, from ancient poets like Hesiod to tales of Hephaestus and the Cyclops forging weapons deep within its belly.

Authorities are closely monitoring the situation, warning locals and visitors to exercise caution as ash and lava flows continue. Emergency crews remain on high alert, prepared to respond if conditions worsen.

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