

Thousands gather to watch France's 'tide of the century'

March 20 2015



An aerial view of Mont-Saint-Michel surrounded by the sea during high tide on March 20, 2015

Some 10,000 people gathered at Mont Saint-Michel in northern France on Friday to watch what has been billed as "the high tide of the century" wash around the picturesque landmark.

The exceptionally high spring tide, swollen by a "supermoon" effect

linked to the [solar eclipse](#) on Friday, was predicted to cut off the island from the mainland with a wall of water as high as a four-storey building.

But in the event the tidal surge was not as high the 14.15 metres (46 feet) predicted, and a tiny sliver of causeway no more than a few metres wide resisted the surge of water pushed by the moon's huge gravitational pull on the sea.

Saturday's [tide](#) on the long, sloping estuary of the River Couesnon could, however, go higher, although scientists said low air pressure may have lessened the phenomenon.

The bay on the coast of Normandy has some of the strongest tides in the world.

Police had difficulty holding back crowds eager to get a picture of the scene in the final minutes before the surge on Friday evening, with the tourist hotspot lit up as night fell with 60 spotlights for the occasion.

Similar surges are predicted along the coasts of Britain and the Netherlands over the weekend.

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