

Mt Etna's latest eruptions awe even those who study volcanos

February 23 2021



Lava flows from the Mt Etna volcano, near Catania in Sicily, southern Italy, Tuesday, Feb. 23 , 2021. The explosion started before midnight on Monday night, provoking a huge eruption plume that rose for several kilometers from the top of Etna, as reported by The National Institute of Geophysics and Volcanology, Etneo Observatory. (AP Photo/Salvatore Allegra)

Mount Etna, Europe's most active volcano, has awed even seasoned volcanologists in recent days with spectacular spurts of lava lighting up the Sicilian sky each night.

The latest eruption overnight petered out by around 0900 GMT Tuesday, according to Italy's National Institute for Geophysics and Volcanology.

For over a week, Etna has been belching lava, ash and [volcanic rocks](#) on a regular basis. The nearby Catania Airport closed temporarily, and residents of the town of Pedara said it appeared one day last week as if it were raining rocks as a thick blanket of ash covered the town.

Volcanologist Boris Behncke of the national institute's Etna observation center has followed the latest paroxysms with awe. Writing on the institute's website this week, he said that after "gifting us moments of suspense" over the previous nights, Etna finally erupted in a way "those of us who have worked in this for decades have rarely seen."

Referring to the activity overnight, he tweeted Tuesday: "Did I call the 20-21 February paroxysm of #Etna 'incredibly powerful'? Well, its successor, in the night of 22-23 February, was MUCH more powerful."

So far, there have been no reports of damage or injuries.



Smoke fills the sky during an eruption of Mt. Etna volcano, near Catania in Sicily, southern Italy, late Monday, Feb. 22, 2021. This is the fifth episode in a series of Mt. Etna eruptions which have been occurring over the past week. (AP Photo/Salvatore Allegra)



Smoke fills the sky as Mt. Etna volcano erupts, near Catania in Sicily, southern Italy, late Monday, Feb. 22, 2021. This is the fifth episode in a series of Mt. Etna eruptions which have been occurring over the past week. (AP Photo/Salvatore Allegra)



Smoke fills the sky during an eruption of Mt. Etna volcano, near Catania in Sicily, southern Italy, early Tuesday, Feb. 23, 2021. The explosion started before midnight on Monday night, provoking a huge eruption plume that rose for several kilometers from the top of Etna, as reported by The National Institute of Geophysics and Volcanology, Etneo Observatory. (AP Photo/Salvatore Allegra)



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The moon is partially seen in the sky as lava flows from the Mt Etna volcano, near Catania in Sicily, southern Italy, early Tuesday, Feb. 23 , 2021. The explosion started before midnight on Monday night, provoking a huge eruption plume that rose for several kilometers from the top of Etna, as reported by The National Institute of Geophysics and Volcanology, Etneo Observatory. (AP Photo/Salvatore Allegra)

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