

Ash from erupting volcano forces Spanish islanders indoors

November 3 2021, by Emilio Morenatti



Police officers and emergency personnel look as lava flows from a volcano as it continues to erupt on the Canary island of La Palma, Spain, Tuesday, Nov. 2, 2021. A volcano on the Spanish island of La Palma that has been erupting for six weeks has spewed more ash from its main mouth a day after producing its strongest earthquake to date. Credit: AP Photo/Emilio Morenatti

Authorities on the Spanish island of La Palma are telling people who live near an erupting volcano to stay indoors because of a heavy fall of ash that has forced the cancellation of flights and school classes.

The Cumbre Vieja volcano on La Palma, which is part of Spain's Canary Islands off northwest Africa, has been spewing lava, ash and gases for more than six weeks. The eruption has alternately surged and ebbed since Sept. 19.

Local air quality is "extremely unfavorable" because of high levels of small particles in the air, emergency services belonging to the Canary Islands government said in a statement late Tuesday.

All flights to and from the island have been canceled because of the falling ash, according to Spain's national airport authority.

With flights canceled, some tourists who came on a sightseeing trip to witness the eruption had to wait in long lines for ferries to leave the island Wednesday.

Madrid resident Patricia Privado, 30, described the erupting volcano as "a spectacle of nature."

"It is worth it," she said of her trip. "To hear it roar, to see how the lava falls. You have to experience it".

León Peña, 65, said he came from the nearby island of Fuerteventura to see what he called "something unique".



Passengers line up as they try to leave boarding a ferry at the port in the Canary

island of La Palma, Spain, Wednesday, Nov. 3, 2021. Authorities on the Spanish island of La Palma are telling people who live near an erupting volcano to stay indoors due to a heavy fall of ash that has forced the cancellation of flights and school classes. Credit: AP Photo/Emilio Morenatti



Passengers line up as they try to leave boarding a ferry at the port in the Canary island of La Palma, Spain, Wednesday, Nov. 3, 2021. Authorities on the Spanish island of La Palma are telling people who live near an erupting volcano to stay indoors due to a heavy fall of ash that has forced the cancellation of flights and school classes. Credit: AP Photo/Emilio Morenatti



Lava from a volcano advances destroying a banana plantation on the Canary island of La Palma, Spain, Sunday, Oct. 31, 2021. The volcano that has been roaring on Spain's La Palma for over six weeks has destroyed the livelihoods of thousands of farmers and workers who grow and sell the Canary Islands banana. So far, lava flows have covered over 390 acres of land dedicated to the cultivation of the sweet yellow fruit that feeds 30% of the economic motor of the Atlantic island. Credit: AP Photo/Emilio Morenatti



Passengers line up as they try to leave boarding a ferry at the port in the Canary island of La Palma, Spain, Wednesday, Nov. 3, 2021. Authorities on the Spanish island of La Palma are telling people who live near an erupting volcano to stay indoors due to a heavy fall of ash that has forced the cancellation of flights and school classes. Credit: AP Photo/Emilio Morenatti



Lava from a volcano advances destroying a house as it continues to erupt on the Canary island of La Palma, Spain, Tuesday, Nov. 2, 2021. A volcano on the Spanish island of La Palma that has been erupting for six weeks has spewed more ash from its main mouth a day after producing its strongest earthquake to date. Credit: AP Photo/Emilio Morenatti

Both said they knew flight cancellations were a possibility, but they didn't let that deter them from traveling to La Palma. They also saw their trips as a way of supporting the local economy by spending money on the island.

Scientists have said the eruption could last up to three months.

Around 85,000 people live on La Palma. Most of the island is unaffected

by the eruption.

More than 7.000 people have been evacuated from their homes due to the threat from the rivers of lava.

The molten rock has covered more than 997 hectares (2,463 acres) and crushed or damaged more than 2.200 buildings.

The volcano's constant roar and numerous earthquakes have also kept locals on edge. A magnitude 5 quake was felt in the island Wednesday morning according to the National Geographical Institute.

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