

Sicily's Catania airport reopens after Mount Etna eruption

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Ash plumes shot up into the sky as high as 4.5 kilometers, Italy's National Institute of Geophysics and Volcanology said.

Sicily's Catania airport reopened Friday after a temporary suspension of flights earlier in the day caused by an eruption from Mount Etna, Europe's largest active volcano.

The airport said late Friday afternoon that it had fully reopened, while

warning of some temporary delays.

Flights were suspended Friday morning after ash plumes from the nearby active volcano of Mount Etna shot up into the sky Thursday as high as 4.5 kilometers, according to Italy's National Institute of Geophysics and Volcanology (INGV).

Footage shared on social media showed the streets of Catania's city center covered in thick layers of black ash, slowing down traffic.

By Friday afternoon, the airport said it had cleared the runway and resumed departures, while limiting arrivals to two per hour.

The 3,324-meters-high (10,905 feet) volcano has erupted multiple times in recent decades.

Over the last few days, its crater had begun to spit fountains of scorching lava and releasing ash.

Italian authorities also issued a red warning for another volcano north of Sicily—Stromboli on the island of the same name—whose eruption created ash clouds.

Mount Stromboli—culminating at 920 meters and with a base reaching 2,000 meters below sea level—is known for being one of the only nearly constantly active volcanoes in the world, according to the INGV.

Millions of passengers transit through Catania airport every year, connecting them to eastern Sicily, among Italy's most popular tourist hotspots.

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