










Information about the mountain	
Name of the mountain	Etna
Country	Italy
Region	Sicily
Altitude	3.335
Surface area	1.260 km ²
Surface of protected area	580,95 km ²
Name of local organization in charge of management	Parco dell'Etna
Number of municipalities	20
Institutional recognition	<p>UNESCO, 21 June 2013, registered Etna on the World Heritage List. The world heritage of Mount Etna (19.237 hectares) includes the most strictly protected area and scientifically important.</p> <p>ETNA REGIONAL PARK was established as a Regional Nature Park with Decree of the President of the Sicilian Regional Administration in May 1987.</p> <p>NATURA 2000 sites overlay property at various degrees, providing additional protection for 77% of the surface according to European Legislation.</p>
  	
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Etna Mountain

Enjoy this once in a lifetime breathtaking experience of the world’s most active volcano. The place from where poets, writers and musicians got their inspiration from whilst looking at the view of the valleys and the sea. No words can describe what you feel when you reach the top.

The volcano Etna is known to be one of the most active volcanoes in the world. It is located on the island of Sicily, in the middle of the Mediterranean. Its location and its unique volcanic soil make this mountain a particularly fertile land and the most populous of the region. The islands rich soil contains large areas cultivated with orchards, citrus groves, hazelnuts and vineyards. It is home to some of the world’s best wine, the Etna DOC wines. Etna has an altitude of approximately 3350 mt a.s.l. The visibility from the island is expansive; you can see a large part of Sicily as well as part of the continent. Its strategic position and its climate attracted conquerors from all over the ancient world. The Etna mountain territory is rich in history, art and culture. Its area is rich of historic villages, castles, monuments. Etna has inspired various literary works, among other things a lost tragedy of “Eschilio” called “Le Etnee” and a satyric drama “Il Ciclope” by “Euripide” inspired to the the Homeric figure of Polyphemus and set on the slopes of Mount Etna. It was declared a UNESCO world heritage site in 2013.

Etna is very rich of endemic flora and fauna species. Continuous eruptions change the shapes, create new surfaces and modify the whole environment. Plants start over again their slow colonization on lava flows. Moreover hundreds of volcanic caves are generated from eruptions. Etna’s caves are totally integrated with the volcanic landscape that in the past were used as shelters or pastoral purposes.



Proud Local People

There has always been a special relationship between the volcano Etna and the people that have inhabited the island. The volcano Etna despite its destructive eruptions and dangerous presence has created a rich and fertile soil scattered throughout the whole territory. The People who live in Sicily are proud of living on this fascinating island. They are proud because they live in a territory rich in art and culture, where exclusive wines and products known all over the world are born. The people that live around this mountain are truly blessed to live in such an extraordinary place, they feel lucky to be in a region that is unlike any other region of the world.

Reputation

The volcano Etna is of scientific interest to the whole world. There are more than 60 volcano-monitoring stations and there are a large number of international scientific interests. Quality produce are grown in its rich and fertile soil, which is particular to the region. The soil produces products that have characteristics that are indicative of the region they are grown in. There are a huge number of visitors even is very difficult to estimate, as there is no a real entrance to the Mount Etna. Often reference is made to the number of accesses to the crater. Etna mountain is the highest point on the island and the highest south of the Apennines. The mountainous region can be seen from most parts of Sicily and Calabria and represent a symbol for the region and the inhabitants.

Legends and Myths

For the Greeks, Etna was a mountain (Oros), considered sacred and belonged to a generation that preceded the Titans and gods of Olympus. According to the poet "Claudio" Etna kept in a secret place the remains of the giants defeated by Gods. "Encelado", the elder brother of the giants, was defeated by "Jupiter" and was buried under Mount Etna. The giants anger, occasionally, explodes destroying everything and forcing people to flee. This world at the confines of reality and imagination is found in the expressions of many writers. Even saints find their place in tales and legends. The most famous is "Sant'Agata", the legends tells that she was able to stop a dangerous lava flow with her holy mantle saving the lives of hundreds of people.

Power of Inspiration

Etna has always been a land of inspiration for a large and various number of artists. The oldest painted representation is in the "De Aetna" from "Pietro Bembo" (1496), a small treaty that blends scientific observations with classic suggestions. Goethe followed the paths of Etna making a detailed description of the places. "Guttuso" painted the Etna exalting its romantic look (Etna eruption 1983). Natural set for many cinematic works from directors like "Zeffirelli", "Visconti", "Aldrich", "Pasolini". In 2000, the images of Etna make the tour of the world thanks to the British band "Coldplay", who in the video of their single "Violet Hill" use the Sicilian volcano as a natural set.

Picturesque Landscape

Mount Etna is the tallest and the most active volcano in Europe. At 3300 metres it is the highest mountain south of the alps and dominates eastern Sicily covering an area of about 1.260 square km. It was declared a UNESCO world heritage site in 2013, describing Etna as one of the "more emblematic and active volcanoes in the world". The frequent explosive Strombolian eruptions and basaltic lava flows made a unique picturesque changing land. The landscapes vary depending from the altitude, from the bareness crater zones to the woodland, pinewood and vineyard surroundings that grow from the rich volcanic ash.

Particular Ecosystem

Etna is an extremely active volcano. This has had a great effect on the vegetation. The Plants are destroyed with each eruption. The continual changes in the forms of the relief and the substrates mean that the plants are constantly obliged to re-begin their slow growth. Etna's fauna is quite peculiar and in many aspects unique to Sicily because Etna mainly hosts new endemic species derived from European and Apennine populations isolated during glaciations in the Quaternary era. Many endangered species of vertebrates live in the rocky relief of Mount Etna's continuous colonization, as plant life is forced to start over again its slow but tenacious colonisation.

Mediterranean Cultural Identity

Etna has a strong Mediterranean cultural identity. This is because it is situated at the centre of the Mediterranean. Due to its ideal location Etna has been the meeting place of all the major Mediterranean civilizations of the past. Etna has a "multifunctional" agriculture, the result of an interaction among environmental, historical, social and economic factors related to the Mediterranean territory. In this context, farmers play the role of "guardians" of the territory and "defenders" of traditional environment and landscapes. The preservation of this mountain agriculture is a crucial condition for conserving the protected area's environment and the economy of local communities and their cultural identity.

Sustainability and Anthropogenic Environment

Due to their great naturalistic importance, the high-mountain areas of Etna have been placed under a strict protection regime, with the institution in 1987 of the Regional Park of Etna. These regulations enforce laws, which prohibit that any form of activity be performed in the above mentioned area and ensures the conservation and safeguard of all geologic emergences. Any possible environmental transformations are subject to the Park's authorization, upon a positive judgment of a scientific committee. The Park's guidelines for the realisation of new simple structures are particularly careful in setting precise constructive typologies, in compliance with Etna's territorial traditional canons.

Historic Places

The territory around Etna, because of its position, attracted conquerors from all over the ancient world. It had been first colonized by the "Siculi". "Aitna" is the name given to the mountain by the ancient Greeks from the ancient word "aitho" that means "burn". In 729 BC arrived the first Greek settlers. The coast became a battlefield between Syracuse and Athens, and during this period the defeated populations retreated towards the inland creating new residential areas, adding to the already settled "Siculi" population. The domination of these populations have left an indelible mark on the development of the territory: Castles, Churchs, Constructions, Arts, Culture and language.