

## The History of Vesuvius

Vesuvius is a mountain-volcano on the western coast of Italy and at a distance of 12 km from Naples. Until 79 AD they considered it a simple mountain. According to Strabo, Mount Vesuvion (so he calls Vesuvius) was covered with fair fields, except its summit, which was flat, black, and covered here and there, and he concludes that the mountain had caught fire and burned, but the fire went out, because the combustible material was missing.



The eruption of Vesuvius on August 24, 79 AD. it overwhelmed the ancient Roman cities of Pompeii, Heraklion or Herakleia Campania (present-day Herculaneum), Oplontida and Stavia, as well as several other settlements. The explosion was described by Pliny the Younger, who was an eyewitness to the disaster.

Today, the areas around Mount Vesuvius are highly populated, despite the danger the residents know they are in, as the mountain's volcanic soil is particularly fertile (alluvial). Vesuvius took the form and configuration it has today after its eruption in AD 79, although subsequent eruptions caused some changes in its appearance. It has three peaks, Somma to the north, Vesuvius proper to the south and Ottagiano in between. Today, Vesuvius itself has a base circumference of 45 kilometers and the diameter of its crater is approximately 570 meters. Its height changes after each powerful eruption and is currently 1,180 meters.