



## Montserrat: the Island of the Volcano

### Description



Hi everyone. On December 12 we went to Montserrat to tour the Soufriere hills volcano. Our tour guide was Joe Phillips. He was the best tour guide ever! If you want to tour the volcano and wreckage you should choose him.

#### **WHAT IS A VOLCANO?**

To start off stating all the facts I learned I will start with telling you what a volcano is. A volcano is an opening on the earth's surface where hot rock pushes out. Magma is the name for the molten rock which is held deep in earth's surface. When magma reaches the surface of the volcano when it's erupting it is called lava. Lava can pile up or collect at the top of the volcano. This is called a dome.

#### **SOUFRIERE HILLS VOLCANO**

The Soufriere Hills volcano has been an active volcano otherwise known as a sleeping volcano. It had been inactive for 400 years until it began to push out hot rock and ash in small explosions. The volcano has cooled down today.



The volcano eruptions have caused 2/3 of the land in Montserrat uninhabitable. It also buried the country's capital, Plymouth in ash. The houses that we visited have been buried in ash. The hotel that we went to was filled so high in ash that you had to duck so you wouldn't hit your head on the ceiling! Also in one of the hotel rooms it was so buried that the toilet was just a hole in the ground! We only got to go into 3 houses because the rest were buried under ground. Some areas were buried under 30 feet of ash with the entire town covered. We drove by a three-story house, where only the top floor was visible – crazy! Montserrat has actually grown after the volcano eruptions. All the ash and lava have spilled out and expanded the island. In the picture to the right, a screen shot from my dad's phone, it looks like we are on the water in our boat, but ACTUALLY we were sitting in Joe's Cab 100 yards before we reached the beach. Crazy how much the land has expanded.

### **STEALING**

After the volcano eruption it was every man for himself. The church we went to all the benches were piled up. The cabinets were open and papers everywhere. It was kind of sad to see all the things raided. But it was hard times. The house we went to everything was gone. Every single kitchen cabinet empty. Some stuff was left, but most it was gone. In the hotel every lamp, every bed frame and mattress, everything was gone! In some rooms there was a bed frame or a lamp lying around. But that was rare.

### **DEATHS**

Very few deaths occurred. Joe told us a very sad story about his friend named Simon. Anyway here is the story: Simon needed to go get something out of his house so he took Joe's sister's car. (his house was buried.) That night Simon didn't come back. Simon and the car was never seen again... In all there was about 30 deaths.

### **ERUPTIONS**

An eruption in a volcano is caused when gases and magma collect below the surface of the volcano. They begin to build up pressure. Eventually the pressure is so strong that ash and gas are forced out of the volcano. That is what causes an eruption to happen.

### **TYPES OF VOLCANOES**

There are 3 types of volcanoes. Active, Dormant, and Extinct. Active is when the volcano can erupt anytime. The Soufriere hills volcano is an example of an Active volcano. Dormant is when a volcano has not erupted for a long time. Often hundreds of years. But they could erupt anytime. The Soufriere hills volcano used to be a dormant volcano. But due to the past eruptions it is an Active volcano. Extinct is when a volcano has not erupted for a very long time. The volcano also shows no sign of erupting.

### **FUN FACTS**

- The name volcano comes from Vulcan the Roman god of fire
- 80% of the Earth's surface has a volcanic origin
- Across the world 1 in 10 people live within the danger zone of a volcano
- Scientists who study volcanoes are called volcanologists.
- Scientists who study earthquakes are called seismologists
- Montserrat has 3 volcanoes, 1 active 2 extinct

### **SAFETY PRECAUTIONS**

These are some safety precautions you should take if you ever go to a native country with a volcano. If you live by a volcano you would know but make sure you are always doing so. But here is the #1 rule: STAY CALM

What Should I Do If The Volcanic Activity Rises?

AT SCHOOL- Follow the evacuation plan, listen to teachers

AT HOME- Follow the family evacuation plan, help your parents with younger brothers, sisters, and

older members

How Should I Stay Safe When Ash Falls?

-Stay indoors as long as you can. Only go outside if you need to.

-Always try to carry an ash mask with you

-During heavy ash fall wear your ash mask. If you don't have one cover your mouth with a clean piece of cloth.

So that's all the facts I have. Here are all the pictures of our tour.

For more information on Montserrat and the volcanoes, check out [the Montserrat Volcano Observatory](#)

Check out my gallery – Mira!

### **Category**

1. Uncategorized

### **Tags**

1. montserrat
2. volcano

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