



VOLCANO HUNTING / NAPLES

# Lava Stories

Students eye up potential eruptions on a groundbreaking new course.

By *Ed Stocker*

Photography *Piero Percoco*

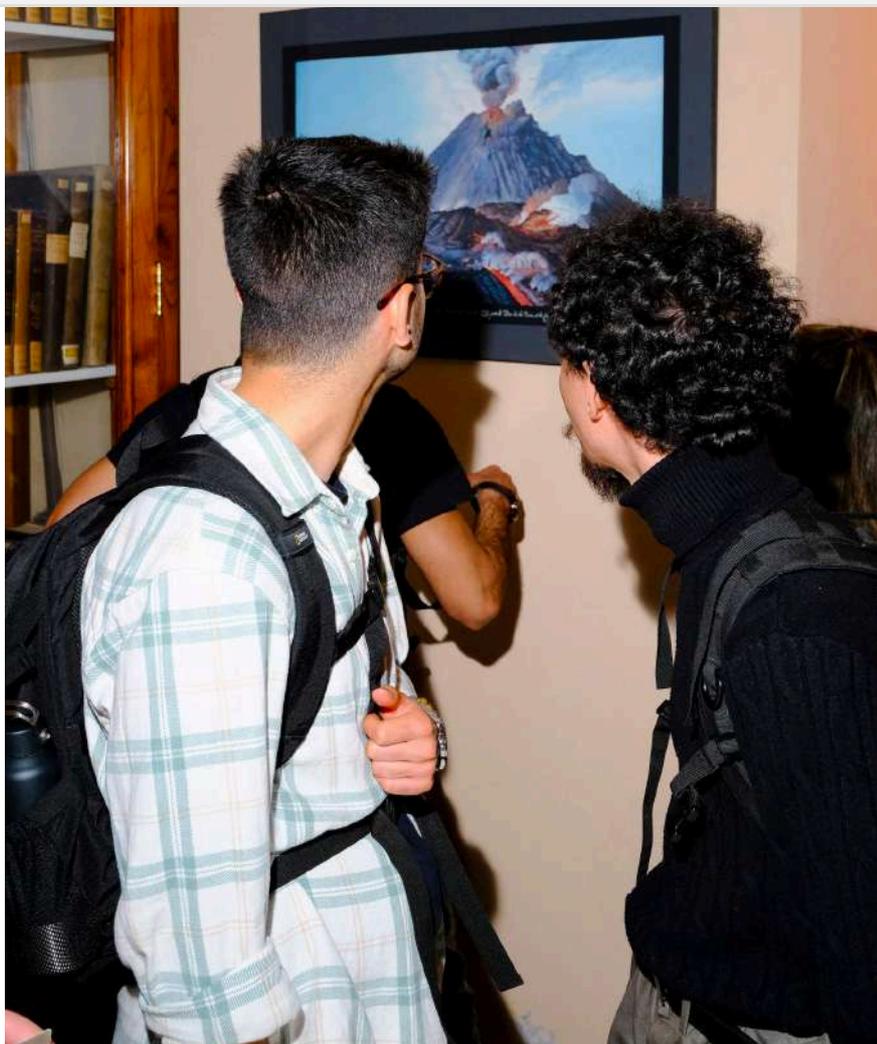
“Today the volcano is quite calm,” says Paola Petrosino, as smoky wisps of water vapour seep from rocks behind her. “It’s in a phase of dormancy but it’s active.” We’re inside Vesuvius National Park, looking down at the crater created when Vesuvius last blew its top in 1944. Petrosino is speaking to her assembled group of students. Below us, Naples sprawls to the edge of the Tyrrhenian Sea.





Studying lava flows

An intake of 15 mostly international students is being taught in English in a city that knows what it's talking about when it comes to volcanoes. Alongside Vesuvius, across the bay is the volcanic island of Ischia. To our west, we can see an area stretching for more than 12km known as the Campi Flegrei, one of the planet's most active calderas, the name given to basin-like volcanic depressions. With no visible cone at Flegrei, volcanologists are crucial to working out where the next eruption could come from – one that could consume the city of Naples.



All eyes on Vesuvius

The master's course touches on everything from geophysics to geology and equips students with the tools to become expert volcano observers, thanks to teaching by researchers from the Vesuvius Observatory, known as *ingv-ov*, the world's oldest monitoring station. The course has lured volcano enthusiasts from across the globe, from Rwanda to Iran.

Student Launcelot Deschamps picks up a rock and studies it with a pocket magnifying glass, identifying it as containing a mineral called clinopyroxene. Deschamps, who was raised on the volcanic French island of La Réunion in the Indian Ocean, says that Naples is a great place to be a young person. "After this, I would either like to do a doctorate or work at the Vesuvius Observatory," he says.

There are other students who, like Deschamps, have grown up in volcanic landscapes, such as Carmen Cano from Tenerife. But not everyone is motivated by a personal connection to such landscapes. German Dorothea Jester was a civil servant before discovering a love for geology. Nigeria's Ifeoma Aghaebita says that she got into volcanoes after watching documentaries.

Naples' three volcanoes, as well as Stromboli further south. Operating 24 hours a day all year and crammed with more than 35 screens, it's a place where every student will do work experience in the second year of their course. Some might end up working here. "The Campi Flegrei is Europe's most active caldera and in a densely populated area," says Turkish student Yigit Ercan. "Given Naples' trade and tourism, if there's an eruption here, it will affect the whole world." You know who to call. — 

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THE VIEW FROM: FATHIA ELAOUNI /  
MOROCCO

## Signal strength

Radio presenter Fathia Elaouni has turned her station into a vital public forum for challenging leaders and open debate.

By *Lucrezia Motta*  
Photography  
*Marouane Beslem*

Fathia Elaouni has a voice that often gets her recognised. The Radio 2M presenter has been on the airwaves since she was 17 years old. "I got involved in a local station in France, where I grew up, and was told I had a radio-friendly voice," she says. "What started as a hobby soon became an addiction." After working at several French stations, she moved to Morocco in the early 1990s and is now the antenna director and editor in chief of its biggest public radio station, on which she appears as a host.

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**MY CABINET: BAD ISCHL / AUSTRIA**

region’s charge as a European Capital of Culture.

By *Claudia Jacob*  
Photography *David Payr*

Stretching east of Salzburg to the Dachstein mountains, Austria’s Salzkammergut region, once renowned for salt-mining, has a new currency: culture. Under the banner town of Bad Ischl, the Salzkammergut’s 23 municipalities are one of this year’s three European Capitals of Culture; for the first time, a region, rather than a city, was awarded the coveted title. Buoyed by this vote of confidence from the EU, and with €30m in funding, it is busily reviving its artistic heritage.

“We’re using this impetus to understand how the region can be attractive...



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