

Mt. nyiragongo essay



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Mt. Nyiragongo is a very interesting and explosive volcano, even though it isn't especially world renowned. It is on the continent of Africa, near the Uganda and Rwanda border. Though it is near those borders, the volcano is in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. The latitude and longitude of Mt. Nyiragongo is 1. 5167° S, 29. 2500° E. Those are the introductory facts to exploring Mt. Nyiragongo; it is very much more than that though. Mt. Nyiragongo is a stratovolcano, a composite-cone volcano.

It is on the African plate, where it is splitting in the middle at a divergent plate boundary. The type of lava in the enormous lava lake is melilite nephelinite, mafic lava, with low viscosity due to the low silica content. The magma is olivine melilititic formed by small-fraction partial melting at the base of the lithosphere. The rock that comes from Mt. Nyiragongo is melilite nephelinite. The volcano is 2 miles high (or 3, 470 meters), and is at a summit elevation of 11, 365 feet.

The sides are sloped up to 50 degrees near the top, and the main crater (summit) is 1. 3 miles wide (or 2 km). Mt. Nyiragongo is an immense volcano, and has an unusual composition in the magma, lava, and dried rock. In the last 130 years, Mt. Nyiragongo has been a very active volcano. It formed from quiet eruptions of fluid lava oozing out, followed by explosive eruptions, eventually building up into a gigantic volcanic mountain. It is on the spot where the African plate that is diverging in the middle, so that is one cause for the activity of the brewing lava.

Another is that it is possibly on a hot spot, due to the convection underneath the plate. Since around 1882, Mt. Nyiragongo has erupted 34 times;

sometimes having continuous eruptions for years on end! Right now it is in one of those continuous eruptions and has been since 2008, as there is a lava lake in the top of the volcano. The eruptions Mt. Nyiragongo has produced have killed thousands of people up to this point. There are many interesting facts surrounding Mt. Nyiragongo, such as the lava lake in the center. The lake is 1800° F, and 1.3 miles across!

The volcano also often spews dust, ash, and sometimes sulfur dioxide into the air, causing major health problems to the surrounding populations.

Another interesting fact is that on July 6, 2007, 76-year old Tavinder Mohindroo was on a guided tour of the volcano, and had climbed down a little ways into the crater to take pictures. Tragically, she fell 100 meters down into the caldera, and even though she caught herself on a ledge, she was dead by the time rescue workers could get to her the next day. Mt. Nyiragongo is a very interesting, but dangerous physical feature.

In conclusion, Mt. Nyiragongo is a stratovolcano with deadly power, a mesmerizing lava lake, and an explosive history. Guided tours take trips up to the summit to view inside the caldera at the bubbling lava, and to see what the volcano is really like. Local civil wars in the Democratic Republic of the Congo have prevented visitors from sightseeing here, but lately tourist companies have started to reopen at Mt Nyiragongo. This could bring more wealth to the surrounding area, which used to rely heavily on commercial dollars. Mt. Nyiragongo is foreboding, but an awesome sight to behold.