The 79 CE eruption of Vesuvius destroyed the nearby town of Pompeii. Excavations of the buried Roman city show just how dangerous volcanoes can be.

Vesuvius & Pompeii

The destruction of Pompeii has

inspired artists for centuries.





Pompeii was preserved because much of it was buried by falling ash, pumice, and rocks. This deluge lasted for hours, so many people had time to leave the city.

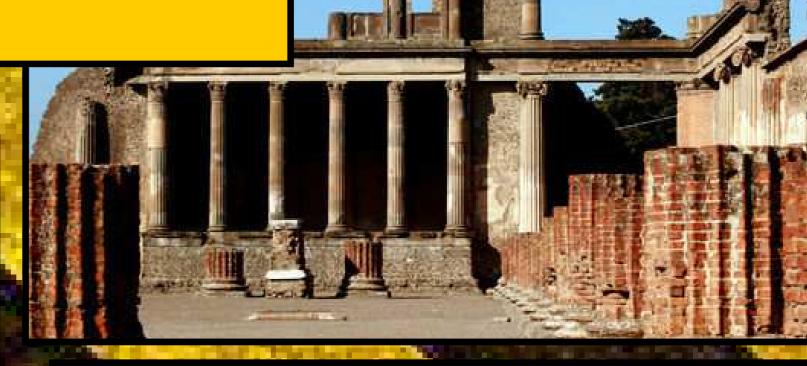


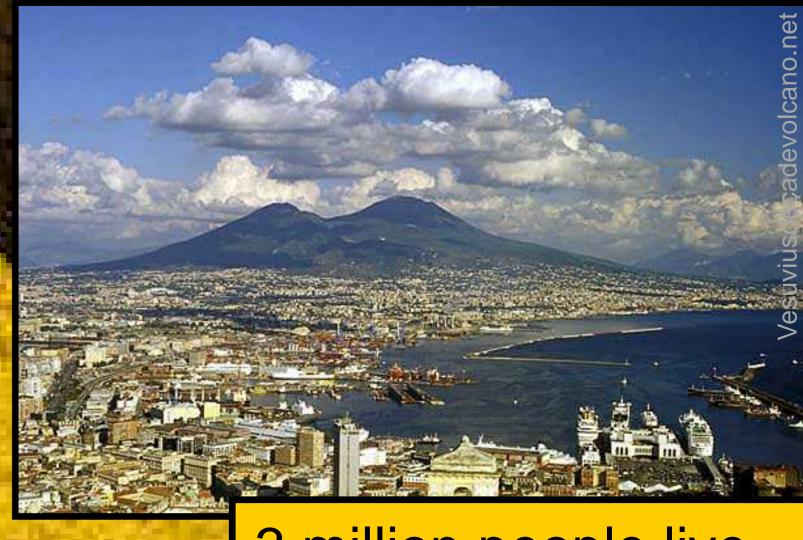
The day after the eruption began, violent pyroclastic flows ripped through Pompeii, destroying the parts of the city which hadn't yet been buried and killing anyone left behind. Unfortunately, these flows travelled beyond Pompeii,

Another city,
Herculaneum,
was even closer
to Vesuvius than
Pompeii; it too
was completely

buried.

We have a written record of what happened at Vesuvius thanks to Pliny the Elder, who died trying to rescue people from the volcano, and his nephew, Pliny the Younger. Today, we call the big eruption columns from exploding volcanoes "Plinian".





3 million people live near Vesuvius today.