

Earth Burps

Hawaiian – runny lava that exits the volcano quietly and runs easily and quickly downhill. Named for the frequent eruptions of the world’s most active volcano, Hawaii’s Mauna Loa.

Peleean – hot clouds of solid fragments and ash sweep down the side of a volcano on a tide of hot gases that can race over 100 mph. Named for Mount Pelee on the Caribbean island of Martinique.

Strombolian - small lava fragments are expelled noisily and trace glowing paths in the sky before falling back near the volcano vent. Named for the Stromboli volcano on an island near Italy where boatloads of tourists watch the frequent eruptions.

Vulcanian – red hot chunks of lava are thrown up to a mile or so from the volcano, accompanied by a gas and ash plume sometimes several miles high. Named for Vulcano, a volcanic island off Sicily.

Vesuvian – very explosive eruptions that destroy part of the cone while blowing out rock and ash for many hours, even days. Named for the famous Italian volcano Mt. Vesuvius, which buried the town of nearby Pompeii in 79 AD.

Plinian – large, violent explosions that destroy large parts of the volcano while spreading showers of ash and debris over large areas. Named for Pliny the Younger who witnessed Mt. Vesuvius erupt.