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## EARTH: Danger in Paradise - the hidden hazards of volcano geotourism

Alexandria, VA – Beautiful views and exotic thrills draw millions of tourists to volcanic sites each year. Previously frequented by smaller numbers of experienced hikers and trained tour guides, today's volcanic sites are plagued by throngs of novice hikers, who are often ill-prepared and uneducated about the risks of volcano geotourism. These groups of vacation-goers often display a lackadaisical attitude about safety that can put their lives at risk.

The most obvious hazard is exposure to lava, but other hidden dangers put tourists at even more risk, including unexpected eruptions, sudden landslides and scalding hot springs. The risks are not only inherent in the volcanic landscape — the volcanic atmosphere is equally as deadly. Volcanic gases are hot, toxic and often undetectable. Large volumes can be emitted and carried by winds to areas that may have had breathable air just moments before.

How can we overcome the challenges associated with the wide range of volcano types, varying local environments and numerous language barriers in order to make these beautiful wonders safely accessible? Read the full story online now at <http://www.earthmagazine.org/article/danger-paradise-hidden-hazards-volcano-geotourism>.

Volcano geotourism getting you excited for some more geoscience news? Read more articles in the April issue of EARTH Magazine available online now at [www.earthmagazine.org](http://www.earthmagazine.org). Probe the limits of the solar system with the two Voyager spacecraft; learn what caused Mercury's odd spin; and learn how geoscientists help manage risks associated with wastewater disposal all in this month's issue of EARTH.

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The American Geosciences Institute is a nonprofit federation of 50 geoscientific and professional associations that represents more than 250,000 geologists, geophysicists and other earth scientists. Founded in 1948, AGI provides information services to geoscientists, serves as a voice of shared interests in the profession, plays a major role in strengthening geoscience education, and strives to increase public awareness of the vital role the geosciences play in society's use of resources, resiliency to natural hazards, and interaction with the environment.