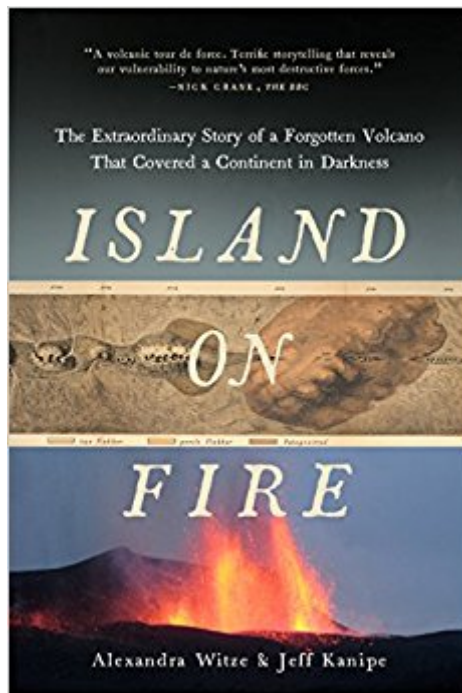




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Island On Fire: The Extraordinary Story Of A Forgotten Volcano That Changed The World



Synopsis

Can a single explosion change the course of history? An eruption at the end of the 18th century led to years of climate change while igniting famine, disease, even perhaps revolution. Laki is one of Iceland's most fearsome volcanoes. Laki is Iceland's largest volcano. Its eruption in 1783 is one of history's great, untold natural disasters. Spewing out sun-blocking ash and then a poisonous fog for eight long months, the effects of the eruption lingered across the world for years. It caused the deaths of people as far away as the Nile and created catastrophic conditions throughout Europe. Island on Fire is the story not only of a single eruption but the people whose lives it changed, the dawn of modern volcanology, as well as the history and potential of other super-volcanoes like Laki around the world. And perhaps most pertinently, in the wake of the eruption of another Icelandic volcano, Eyjafjallajökull, which closed European air space in 2010, acclaimed science writers Witze and Kanipe look at what might transpire should Laki erupt again in our lifetime.

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Customer Reviews

A misleading title. The "Island of Fire" (Iceland) and the volcano Laki, figure little in the book after the first 50 pages or so. The book is really a compendium of volcanoes around the world with eruptions that have caused great devastation and loss of life. It's an interesting topic but has little to do with Laki, supposedly the central topic of the book, or with Iceland for that matter. Interesting, but I found it difficult to read, as it jumps around the world. "Iceland" and "Laki" have only small parts to play, and the sub-title on the cover jacket, "The Extraordinary Story of a Forgotten Volcano That Changed the World" is misleading. (I wish the authors had included a pronunciation guide, Icelandic names are difficult.)

I like the intersection of natural science and human history, and bought this because I'd heard of the Laki eruption from reading about the ice core data, but had never seen a good narrative of the 1783 eruption. This fit the bill perfectly. It is quite readable and well researched. It's a timely read too, because in August 2014 the Bardarbunga volcano erupted in Iceland in a long duration high out gassing eruption, termed "the largest such eruption since 1783"! I think it's still ongoing now (Feb 2015).

Well written for a first book. As a volcanologist, I tagged all the pages with first hand accounts. Witze and Kanipe did a great job making these accounts scientifically relatable and significant. I especially enjoyed the extrapolation to modern day possibilities.

This book is packed with information about volcanoes. It starts and comes back to Iceland, but in the middle it explains a lot more about the various types of volcanoes and their potential for destruction. I read this book as background for a trip to Iceland to do geologic field work. I not only learned a lot about volcanoes and glaciers, but quite a lot about the history of Iceland as well.

Well-written and fascinating.

If you are interested in volcanos, you will find this book very interesting. Although the facts and figures do get to be a bit much, the graphic descriptions of events are very dramatic and compelling. It is well-written, has some charming personal stories, and is nicely illustrated with maps and photos that go a long way to make things clear.

A good book as it covers significant eruptions across the span of human history as well as discuss the Laki eruption. It's a safe bet that this will happen again

Very interesting into, presented in a very accessible manner. Will be enjoyed by anyone interested in the history of the planet.

Good read and great description of events. This was required for a class and I found it interesting.

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