

## Press Release

### Dentaid trekkers complete the 3 volcanoes challenge in Italy

Oral health charity Dentaid's annual challenge trek proved a great success again this year. The team of 29 trekkers climbed all 3 volcanoes Mount Vesuvius, Stromboli and Etna over 5 tiring, but exhilarating days, which proved to be the experience of a lifetime for those involved.

With over £20,000 raised so far and more sponsorship money still to collect, the money raised by this event will help towards Dentaid's goals of developing major new initiatives in oral health promotion, training initiatives, advocacy and campaigning, which the charity believes are key to improving oral health within the developing world.

Luke Wordley, Chief Executive of Dentaid accompanied the group on trek and describes some of his highlights from the trip in his personal log, which can be viewed in full at [www.dentaid.org](http://www.dentaid.org).

A visit to one of the greatest and most famous archaeological sites in the world – Pompeii. *"Elvira, our Italian guide graphically brought alive to us the drama and catastrophe that had engulfed the city and its inhabitants when Mount Vesuvius "blew" one fateful day in AD79. As we walked down street after street of magnificently preserved Roman remains, it was hard to believe that this enormous ancient city had remained buried under metres of ash for almost 1700 years. While trying to imagine how the nearby volcano, which looked so dormant, had in minutes ended thousands of lives and literally buried one of the greatest cities of ancient times, it gave us fresh perspective and respect for the volcanoes we were planning to "conquer" over the coming days."*

Reaching the top of Mount Stromboli where the group enjoyed the best theatre seats in the world, as they sat on the edge of the crater looking down upon exploding lava just 300 metres below. *"The exhilaration was unbelievable as one after the other, three nearby craters would suddenly explode into action firing burning gasses or molten lava high into the air. It was the greatest natural fireworks display you could ever wish to see."*

Climbing Mount Etna. *"While a cloudless day may have allowed us the most amazing view, just hearing the continuous explosions from the crater two hundred metres away, and knowing it erupted just a couple of weeks earlier, was a memory none of us will forget... As we climbed back down through the clouds and it was amazing to see the changing flora and fauna as we came from barren "moon scape" near the summit, to the first signs of lichen clinging to volcanic rocks, to hardy plants unique to Etna, before eventually giving way to thick pine and birch woodlands."*

But it wasn't all hard work; the group relaxed in the evenings enjoying traditional Italian cuisine and on the last night, were treated to an authentic Sicilian experience where they spent time reminiscing over the past 5 days and marveling at their achievements.

*"I have the great privilege of witnessing Dentaid's work up close, occasionally traveling to our overseas projects and seeing the benefits to people we are helping overseas. That is hugely motivating but can also be intimidating and scary when we see the enormity of the challenges we face to improve oral health for millions of people overseas who need help. Occasionally, it can be pretty lonely too when you are standing in a roomful of people trying to gain support for our work or knocking on doors that often seem firmly shut. But to be with 28 people who, despite having spent a year fundraising for our charity and putting their bodies through it*

*climbing up volcanoes, were still coming up to me on the journey home with ideas for how they can support our work further, was truly humbling. Thank you for all your support and efforts."*