



# WORLD FULL OF EXTREMES

Written by **Helena Haraštová**  
Illustrated by **Lukáš Fibrich**

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B4U Publishing

# ATACAMA

I feel like we've landed on an alien planet. Before our lungs get used to the altitude of 2,500 metres, we'll have a little trouble breathing here. But don't worry, we'll get used to it. Just look around! A rocky wasteland, as if dinosaurs had been walking on it yesterday, and those endless red sand plains, like from a sci-fi movie! It hasn't rained here in many years. What is life like in the driest place on Earth? Let's discover it together!

**DEN 11.** Copper mines bring considerable wealth to the Atacama Desert, but they also make life uncomfortable. It's not just that the air near the mine smells funny. It contains harmful and often toxic substances.



**DAY 12.** We could not miss out on the opportunity to witness the famous local **motorcycle rally**. It takes place over several days, so we must sleep in the desert. Wish us luck! Ready, set, GO!

**DAY 9:** Today a desert, once the bottom of an ocean. And thanks to this, archaeologists have found a lot of **dinosaur skeletons** here. One local species was even called Atacamatitan meaning "Atacama Desert Titan". Seriously! Isn't that hilarious?

**DAY 10.** The giant telescopes of local **astronomical observatories** can look far into space and explore its various corners. Emma, do you want to add something? What?! Where?! Shoot it, Oliver!



**DAY**  
temperature  
22 °C



### EXPLORING THE UNIVERSE

In the Atacama Desert, we sometimes feel like we're on Mars. The truth is NASA tests machines designed to explore the Red Planet here. Also dry air, high altitude, clear sky and no light pollution make the Atacama Desert the perfect place to observe space from. Using devices, scientists from all over the world can see how stars and planets formed a long time ago.

### TREACHEROUS NIGHTS IN THE DESERT

You already know that we took part in a motorcycle rally across the Atacama Desert, but what you don't know is that we got Daniel to race just by promising to spend the night in the desert and enjoy the clear starry sky. And we were lucky: the sky showed us not only the constellations, but also the Milky Way! The air temperature, however, was far from pleasant. We completely forgot about the warning that we should not be fooled by summer temperatures during the day, and at night we were shivering with cold. It was only 5 degrees Celsius! The fact that it rarely rains here does not mean that it has to be hot.

**NIGHT**  
temperature  
5 °C



### DREADED SCORPIONS



This tiny creature can cause many inconveniences. We must admit it was not his fault - unfortunately, we decided to spend the night in its hunting ground. If Emma had not had her eyes wide open watching what was going on, we would probably be solving completely different problems instead of filming a documentary. When Daniel read to us, from his cell phone later in his tent, that the red scorpion, originally from Mexico, is one of the most poisonous creatures ever, we were very shocked. The poison of this scorpion can damage nerves and muscles, and even cause breathing problems and cardiac arrest.



### SQUEALING DELICACY

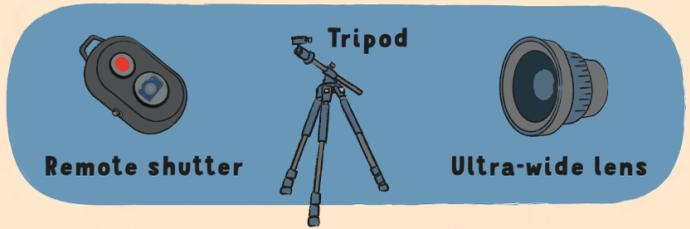
We should have known. What? A culinary betrayal of course! But we were hungry, and what the Indians roasted over the fire looked quite tempting from a distance. Well, really only from a distance. As we grew closer, it was clear to us that our hungry stomachs would have to wait a little bit longer - **roasted wild guinea pigs** would not really be one of our favourite foods.



### WHY ISN'T THERE ANY RAIN IN THE ATACAMA DESERT?

Although there is some rain in the Atacama Desert from time to time, some places in the desert have not seen rain for about 400 years. High atmospheric pressure in this region brings **dry air** to the ground and at the same time, the Atacama Desert is located in the **rain shadow** of the nearby Andes - the rain clouds from the east run out of water on the opposite side of the mountains.

### NIGHT SKY PHOTOS EASILY



- Capture something from the Earth, too, such as a forest or a rock. The contrast is worth it.
- You can achieve better visibility with wide-open apertures.
- Focus manually.
- Take a picture of the movement of the stars! When you take a photo of the night sky with a tripod and a remote shutter, the result will be impressive stellar orbits.
- If you want to photograph the Moon, do it during a full moon. If you want to capture the stars though, wait until a new moon.

We are particularly happy to be able to take you on this expedition. We managed to negotiate a rare permit to enter a strictly forbidden area, and you can be certain that you will never be allowed to visit this place in person. The Brazilian island of Ilha da Queimada Grande, also known as Snake Island, is inhabited by the highly venomous *Bothrops insularis*, commonly known as the Golden Lancehead. This will be a very dangerous trip ...

OUR  
FOURTH  
EXPEDITION

# SNAKE ISLAND



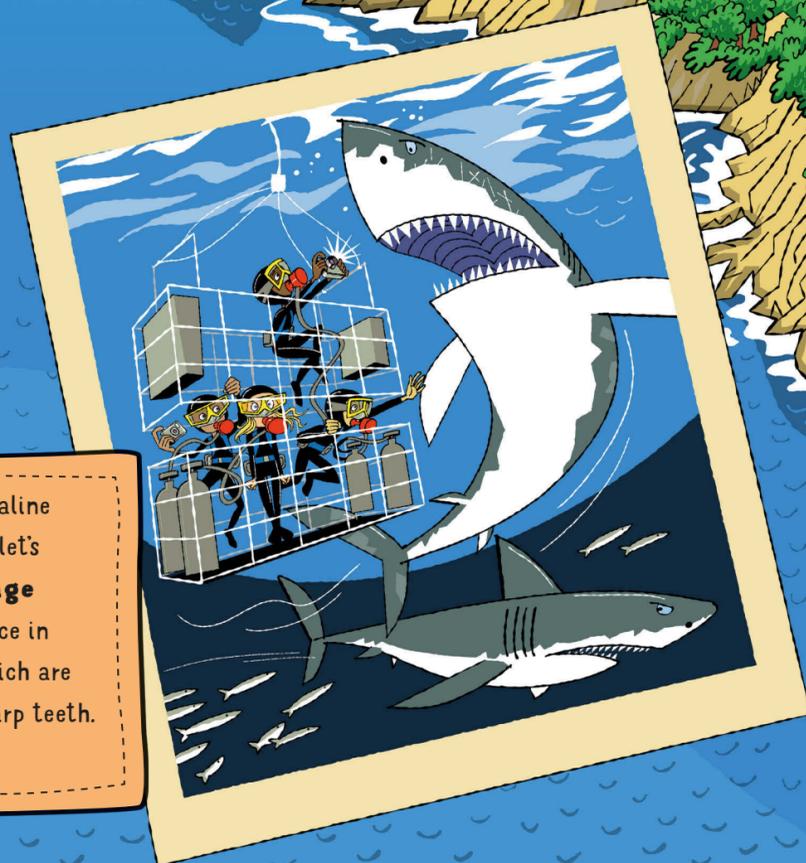
**DAY 15:** Do you see that **abandoned lighthouse?** About 100 years ago, its last keeper still lived there with his family. One day, the fishermen found them dead. The snakes got to them through an open window ...



**DAY 13:** We do not even have to look for them, just stop and listen. Hiss... hiss... hiss... **Snakes are everywhere!** We count 1 to 5 of them at each step. This is so terrifying ...



**DAY 14:** Apparently, our adrenaline levels were low yesterday – so let's go meet some sharks! While **cage diving**, we go below the surface in a giant metal cage, bars of which are said to protect us from the sharp teeth. We sure hope so!



**DAY 16:** Wow, **paragliding** over the sea is an amazing experience! You have a view like a bird and the fresh wind is amazing! God, Yuna is trying to do somersaults through the air ... It's good she is strapped.





### THE SNAKE KNOWS NO MERCY

How could the Lancehead not be dangerous when there is no predator on the island to stand up to it? This is also the reason why this barely half-metre-long snake has spread so frightfully on the island. When the sea separated this piece of land from the mainland 11,000 years ago, the Lancehead multiplied here and became **FIVE TIMES** more poisonous than their relatives on the mainland. Without timely help, the venom of this snake can kill a person within an hour.

### BIZARRE PROFESSION

Several people actually receive permission to enter Snake Island each year – scientists who study snake venom and make effective antidotes or drugs from it, mainly for heart and circulatory diseases. Obtaining the venom is a relatively dangerous process and people who do it are commonly called "snake milkers". They catch the snake, grasp it professionally and deftly hold its head, so the snake releases its venom into a prepared glass.



### BEAST FEAST

*Eat some ants!*

WRITTEN BY HUNGRY ANTEATER

**Taste giant Amazon ants** – the famous Brazilian delicacy! Would you prefer popular indigenous-style fried insect with sugar, or rather a gourmet version in melted chocolate? Go ahead, the ants are **a great source of protein**. Crunch, crunch, crunch!



### PIRATE TREASURE HUNTERS

A well-known legend states that snakes were brought here a long time ago by **greedy pirates** who hid treasure on the island and wanted to be sure that no one would steal their wealth. But we were wondering: how in the world did they think they would be able to return for the treasure when the island was full of the Lanceheads?



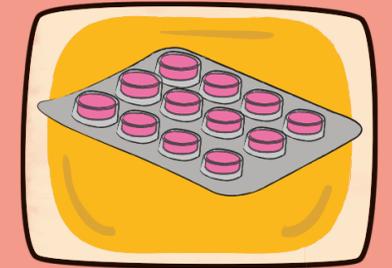
**Nutrition facts:**  
HIGHEST IN PROTEIN AND THE FINEST CHOCOLATE!



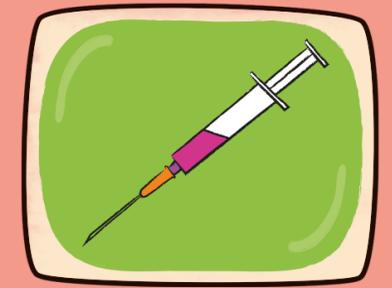
### WHAT TO DO IF YOU GET BITTEN BY A SNAKE



**Call an ambulance** immediately. Some snake bites do not significantly harm humans, but others can hit organs, cause blindness and even death.



First aid varies depending on the type of snake that attacked. Do not apply a tourniquet or suck the venom out, **try to calm the bitten person** and possibly give them pain medication.



Timely administration of an **antivenom**, which is selected according to the specific type of the snake, is a reliable cure, so don't forget its exact name.

Will there be an eruption? And if yes, how strong? Will it put us in danger? These questions popped into our heads as we landed in Sicily and the most active volcano in the world greeted us with a massive puff of smoke. This time, however, Etna only displayed harmless but breath-taking fireworks of sparks and colours. What an amazing sight! It was as if the earth itself was burning, as if hell was coming to the surface ...



The lava temperature during the eruption: 700-1200°C

**DAY 17:** This is how you take risks in the name of science! Together with **volcanologists**, we are taking samples from a fresh lava flow. Even in a protective suit, we feel the heat, with the ash particles burning our eyes. The camera glass is completely black from it ...



**DEN 20:** Bungee jumping into an active volcano? Why not! The helicopter pilot must, however, fly high enough! The 200 kilometre speed when falling is a huge adrenaline adventure it and of itself ...



**DAY 18.** Do you see those piles of garbage and full trash cans on every corner? This is the **waste crisis** that southern Italy has been struggling with for a long time. Ugh, a really fat rat just ran under our feet!



**DAY 19:** Today we had fun on extinct volcanic craters: **volcano boarding!** Wow, what a ride! Oh no, my favourite trousers! Dang volcanic gravel ...

**START**  
700 m  
18 °C

**FINISH**  
2900 m  
-7 °C

GLASSES AGAINST VOLCANIC DUST

WINTER JACKET

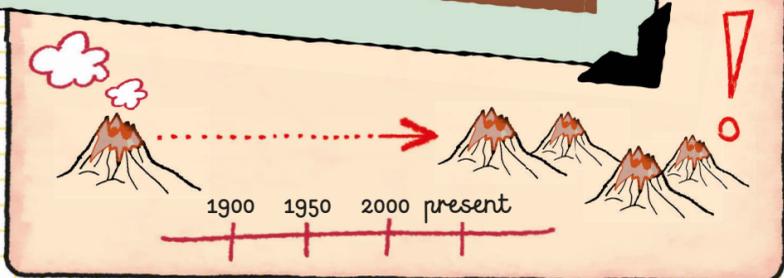
SNOWSHOES



A BIT OF A STRANGE SKEWER



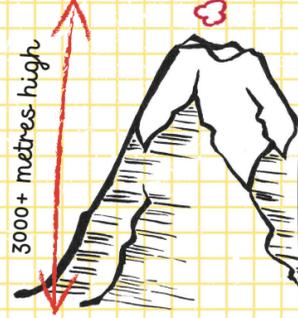
Sicilian street stalls attract you with various kinds of scents. Hmm, this smells really great! We dared to taste the local speciality, **stigghiola skewers**. It consists of lamb intestines rolled around a leek which is finally cooked on a grill. Just don't think too much about the production process – it could ruin your appetite. **Yum!**



At the beginning of the twentieth century, Etna was proud of her one huge active crater – today she has four! Their formations have been accompanied by massive eruptions and it seems that Etna will continue to change her looks. Many small craters, which are not dangerous yet, are of interest to the tourists, but let's wait, some of them will grow over time ...



DESTINATION:  
~ Etna ~  
(Italy, Sicilia)

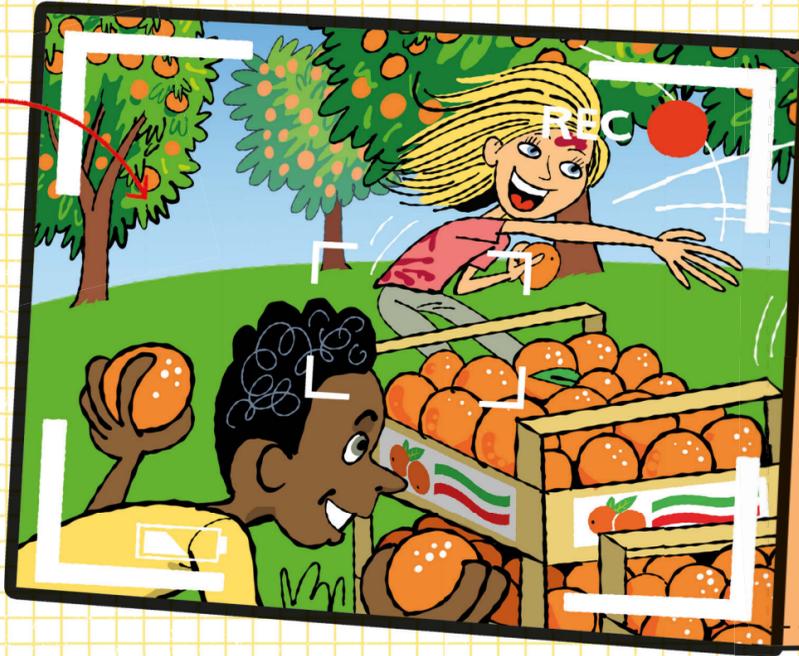


FROST ON ETNA

Etna is of course a mountain – a mountain more than 3,000 metres high. Which means that its peak is covered with snow for a significant part of the year. Never come here without winter clothes. Trainers are really a stupid idea, says Yuna! While in the lowlands you can enjoy walking in a T-shirt, here you will encounter **temperatures below zero, strong winds** and very slippery terrain. In addition, the wind constantly lifts its **volcanic dust** into the air, which burns in the eyes.

HOW DO VOLCANOES AFFECT OUR LIVES?

When a volcano erupts, various amounts of hot magma\* are released from the Earth's interior => a lava flow => can destroy the area or serve as a **fertilizer!**



TO BATTLE! PREPARE YOUR ORANGES!

The soil surrounding Mount Etna is **extremely fertile**, as the lava containing a lot of minerals often covers the slopes around the volcano. In addition to grape vines, the locals mainly grow the celebrated **Sicilian blood oranges** which they export to the whole of Europe. They also export them to the remote northern Italian town of **Ivrea**, where for centuries, they have been holding a huge orange battle every year! Unfortunately, we did not take a trip to Ivrea, so we organized our own battle in the orchard ...



\* a mixture of molten rocks, minerals and gases waiting in the depths of the planet like a time bomb!



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Planet Earth is a place of extreme temperatures, poisonous creatures, inaccessible vegetation, mysterious caves, bottomless abysses and loads more complications ... If this doesn't make you close your eyes in fear, but instead makes you dream of a proper adventure, open up this book and allow this group of four brave children, with cameras and lenses in hand, to invite you on fascinating travels at the limits of human possibility. You will get to know places where ordinary tourists never reach and also learn how to photograph and record your own adventures best.

