



Journey to the Centre of the Volcano

The **billboards** read 'July 5, are you ready?'. Well, we were all ready on July 5, everyone except for the mayor of Tampon. One month late the Cité du Volcan finally opened its doors.

Our adventure started on Sunday. My wife, Stephanie, invited her parents, aunts, uncles and cousins to spend the afternoon in La Plaine des Cafres, to have a great lunch and to visit Reunion's newest tourist attraction. Along with my daughters, there were twelve of us in the group. Quite a tribe! We ate at 'Ti Resto Lontan'. A local restaurant serving the finest of Reunionese cuisine. As a rougail saucisse connoisseur, I can tell you it was very **tasty**. I'm glad we'd booked a table, because the restaurant staff were constantly sending away waves of tourists looking for a bite to eat before exploring the new museum.

At two we arrived at the museum, and face to face with a massive queue. There were at least a hundred people in front of us. A hoard of locals and tourists reaching from the main entrance, through the car-park, and arriving at the road. To queue or not to queue, that is the question.

After two hours, we made it inside. The **lobby** was spacious, modern and clean, **albeit** packed full of people. Looking around, I saw the gift shop and various **signage** for the souvenirs, all translated into English. Brilliant, I only found one translation mistake!

The museum itself was just great. My eldest daughter is 7, she had a great time playing with the numerous touch-screen games and activities. Stephanie's cousins are teenagers, and they enjoyed reading about how the two volcanoes formed our island all those years ago. There were local fables, a 270° cinema, samples of lava rock, quizzes. The staff were friendly, informative and helpful. Even the security guards. I've heard the Cité du Volcan being compared to Futuroscope in France, I have to say that's not true. Futuroscope doesn't have Gran Mèr Kal.

The cherry on top had to be the 4D cinema. Now I've seen 3D movies before, and haven't been all that impressed. The cinema at Cité du Volcan, however, was a marvel. You go into a small cinema, with maybe 30 seats, put on your 3D glasses and experience the film. I won't spoil the surprises that the film **has up its sleeve**, but they are sure to make you jump!

So, **was it worth it?** Ninety minutes' drive, two hours' queue for one hour's visit? Yes it was. I highly recommend the Cité du Volcan. Even to locals. Now everyone can **journey** into the centre of the volcano!

Vocabulary

Billboard - Panneau publicitaire

Tasty - gouteux

Lobby - la billetterie

Albeit - bien que

Signage - panneaux

The cherry on top - la cerise sur le gateau

To have something up ones sleeve - avoir des surprises en réserve

It is worth it - ça vaut la peine

Journey - voyage

