

Volcanoes on Mars

Giant Volcanoes of Mars

Mars is home to some of the largest volcanoes in the solar system! The most famous is **Olympus Mons**, the tallest volcano in the solar system. It is about 13.6 miles high—that's three times taller than Mount Everest! **Tharsis Montes** is a group of three big volcanoes named **Ascraeus Mons**, **Pavonis Mons**, and **Arsia Mons**. These volcanoes are over 200 million years old, but some could be much older. Olympus Mons is about 370 miles wide, which is as large as the state of Arizona!

Discovering Mars' Volcanoes

Scientists found Mars' volcanoes by studying pictures taken by space probes and satellites. One important scientist who studied Mars was Dr. Carl Sagan, an astronomer. Astronomers are scientists who study stars, planets, and space. Investigating volcanoes on Mars helps scientists learn about how planets are made. It can also teach us about Earth's past and if life might exist on other planets.

Facts About Mars Volcanoes

Mars' volcanoes are shield volcanoes. This means they have wide, sloping sides and form from lava that spreads out gently. The lava on Mars is very runny, which lets it flow far before it cools. Scientists think these volcanoes last erupted over 2 million years ago. The geosphere of Mars, or the rocky part of the planet, is very different from Earth. Mars doesn't have moving tectonic plates, so volcanoes stay in one place and grow much larger than they do on Earth. The dry, cold air on Mars has helped preserve these ancient volcanoes, so we can still study them today.