

## Italian earthquake death toll rises to 120 with 100 still trapped under the rubble as rescuers searching for their loved ones can only hear the sound of CATS

The true horror of the Italian earthquake disaster was revealed today as witnesses likened the hellish scenes to 'Dante's inferno' while shocking pictures showed how four towns were almost wiped off the map.

At least 120 people were killed, including two babies, and 100 people are believed to be trapped under rubble after the 6.2-magnitude quake struck at 3.30am local time this morning while villagers slept in their beds.

Today rescuers spoke of hearing children's screams from the rubble and locals were spotted frantically digging with their bare hands to try and save loved ones.

One man, Guido Bordo, 69, lost his sister and her husband after they were trapped inside their holiday house in the hamlet of Illica, north of hard-hit Amatrice. Before their deaths were confirmed, he had described how he could only hear the sound of cats as he scrambled to find his loved-ones beneath the rubble.

The first victim to be named by local media reports is Marisol Piermarini - an 18-month-old baby who was sleeping in her crib when the house she was staying in Arquata del Tronto collapsed. Mother Martina and father Massimiliano were on holiday with their baby when she was killed. They have been taken to hospital with 'many wounds' after being pulled from the rubble.

The tragic little girl's grandfather, Massimo Piermarini, told Ansa he desperately tried to save his family: 'They did not want me to go in because it was all in danger, but I said that I did not care at all, I had to go looking for them, but unfortunately for the girl there was nothing to do.'

The quake which devastated the mountainside towns and villages of Amatrice, Accumoli, Arquata del Tronto and Pescara del Tronto was so powerful that it even rocked buildings in the centre of Rome more than 100 miles away and was felt as far away as Croatia.

Survivors today described 'apocalyptic' scenes in towns and villages at the border of three regions - Umbria, Lazio and Marche - near the city of Perugia, which is especially

popular with British holidaymakers.

Some of the worst damage was suffered in Pescara del Tronto, a hamlet near Arquata in the Marche region where the bodies of the dead were laid out in a children's play park.

But as the desperate search for survivors continued tonight, an eight-year-old girl was pulled alive from the rubble in the town.



**Covered: In what looks like an image from Pompeii, the town of Amatrice is seen smothered in grey dust and rubble in this aerial photo**



**Dante's Inferno: Agostino Severo, a Rome resident on holiday, described Amatrice as looking like 'Dante's Inferno'. 'People crying for help, help. Rescue workers arrived after one hour... one and a half hours,' he said**



**The 6.2-magnitude quake struck at 3.30am local time this morning while villagers slept in their beds. Rescuers are pictured walking through the rubble in Amatrice**



**Catastrophic: Only a few buildings appeared to still be in tact amidst the absolute devastation in the town of Amatrice**



**Collapse: The Mayor of Amatrice described how 'the roads in and out of town are cut off. Half the town is gone - there are many dead'**



**Still standing: This red brick building is one of the only remaining structures in the historical part of the town of Amatrice**



**Strong tremors were felt in the capital Rome, more than 100 miles from the epicenter near the city of Perugia - the epicentre was between Norcia and Accumoli**





**Heartbreaking: The body of an unidentified child lies on a bench covered in a pink sheet in Arquata del Tronto, Italy**



**Victims: The bodies of three people tragically killed in the earthquake in Pescara del Tronto lie in body bags in front of rescuers**



**Distraught: Rescuers help a woman among dressed only in a sheet after she was saved from damaged buildings in Amatrice**



**Escape: An injured man covered in dust is carried out of a crumbling building on a stretcher by a team of rescue workers in Amatrice**



**Agony: A man is pulled out of the rubble with a large gash in his head following the earthquake in Amatrice**



**Saved: A man cries (left) as the injured local is delicately pulled from the rubble while another rescuer prevents bricks from sliding down on top of him**





**Carnage: An elderly man is stretchered out of a demolished building that was left with just its steel structure remaining in Amatrice**





**Secured:** The man was helped by Red Cross workers and firefighters as the gently carried him out of the rubble



**Ripped open: The bedroom interior of one resident's home in Pescara del Tronto is about the only thing that remains intact**



**In ruins: Barely any buildings remain intact in the town of Pescara del Tronto after the devastating earthquake**



**Hope: Dramatic footage showed the moment a woman was discovered trapped alive under the rubble in the town of Accumoli in Italy**



**Pulled out: A team of rescue workers help gently lift a man from a devastated**

## building in Amatrice



**Survivor: A dust-covered man trapped in the rubble of his home as he slept is pulled from a hole by rescuers in Amatrice this morning**



**Help: A team of rescue workers and local men carry a body on a stretcher out of the rubble in the central Italian town of Amatrice**



**Bloodied: An injured nun checks her mobile phone as she lies near a ladder and a blanket following an earthquake in Amatrice**



**Hurt: Pope Francis interrupted his weekly audience in St Peter's Square to express his shock. 'To hear the mayor of Amatrice say his village no longer exists and knowing that there are children among the victims, is very upsetting for me,' he said**





**Crying out: A woman stands among damaged buildings and screams in attempt for to find loved ones trapped in Amatrice**



**Reassurance: A rescue workers holds the hand of a traumatised woman after she was rescued from a collapsed building in Amatrice**



**Side by side: The historical center of the town of Amatrice was completely wiped out but the newer part of town appears to remain standing**





**Debris: This is an overhead view of Amatrice, whose historic centre has been wiped out by the powerful earthquake overnight**



**Frightened: Many children were caught up in the quake in the town of Amatrice. Residents across a broad swath of central Italy felt the temblor, which struck at 3:36 a.m. and sent people running into the streets**



© AFP/Getty Images



**Frantic: A man carries a pram and children's toys among damaged buildings after the strong earthquake hit Amatrice**



**Bandaged: A man who suffered a head injury during the devastating earthquake is pictured in the town of Amatrice**





**Harrowing: A body covered with a sheet and red jacket is carried past a mound of rubble, wood and metal by four rescuers in Amatrice**



## **Collapsed: An unconscious survivor on a makeshift stretcher is carried from the what remains of a collapsed building in Amatrice**

Dramatic scenes of earthquake wake in Italy captured by drone

## **EUROPE'S DEADLIEST EARTHQUAKES AND WHY ITALY IS TORMENTED BY QUAKES**

The earthquake in Norcia occurred in a shallow fault in the Apennines, a chain of

mountains that form the backbone of Italy's 'boot'. It is well known for being a highly complex and geologically active region as it sits at a point where several tectonic plates grind against each other.

According to the US Geological Survey, this morning's earthquake occurred at a depth of 6.2 miles (10km) on a fault that runs from the northwest to the south east. The epicentre was in the mountains just 6.2 miles to the southeast of Norcia.

It was caused by the stretching of the Earth's crust as the tectonic plates beneath moved apart. Since the late Miocene a large basin has been opening up under the western Mediterranean Sea at the point where the massive Eurasian tectonic plate meets the African plate.

Here the African plate is driven under the Eurasian plate in a process known as subduction. However, due to the forces involved, the bend in the African plate as it is forced beneath its neighbour can occasionally move backwards in a process known as 'roll back'.



**This map shows how fault lines run right up the spine of Italy and where the epicentre of Wednesday's earthquake was located**



## This map shows the location of the quake's epicentre and where activity has been measured

It is similar to the effect seen when bending a piece of paper towards one end and then moving your hands – this will cause the bend to roll from one side to the other. When this happens in the tectonic plates, however, the Eurasian plate remains stuck to the African plate and stretches in a process known as 'back-arc spreading'. This is creating a region known as the Tyrrhenian basin under the sea between mainland Italy and Sardinia.

The earthquake in Norcia is thought to have been caused by the opening of the Tyrrhenian basin occurring faster than the compression between the Eurasian and African plates, causing the earth's crust to stretch.

At the location of the earthquake, the Eurasian plate moves towards the northeast with respect to the African plate at a rate of around 24mm/yr, according to the US Geological Survey.

A build up in pressure at this junction was suddenly released this morning, creating the magnitude 6.2 earthquake.

Compared to other much larger earthquakes, such as the one off the coast of Japan in 2011 which was magnitude 9.0, it occurred at a much shallower depth.

The 2011 Japanese earthquake was more than 18.6 miles down while the one under the Apennines was just a third of that.

The shallow depth of the earthquake may account for the high levels of destruction seen in Norcia.



**Unimaginable: An elderly man in a tracksuit walks on the rubble of a collapsed buildings in Amatrice. A television aerial can be seen alongside the bricks**

In 2016 a 7.0 earthquake at a depth of 6.2 miles (10km) in Kumamoto City in Japan killed 49 people, injured 3,000 and left much of the city in ruins.

There have been several earthquakes under the central Apennine region in recent years.

In September 1997 there was a magnitude 6.0 earthquake 31 miles (50km) northwest of

Norcia.

On that occasion 11 people were killed and 100 injured. Around 80,000 homes were destroyed in the Marche and Umbria regions.

In April 2009 a magnitude 6.3 earthquake occurred 28 miles (45km) to the south east of Norcia near the town of L'Aquila.

That killed at least 295 people and injured 1,000 while 55,000 people were left homeless.

Huge landslides occurred in the region and at least five aftershocks bigger than magnitude 5.0 rocked the area.

The largest recorded earthquake in the region, however, occurred 42 miles (68km) to the southwest near Avezzano in January 1915, when the area was rocked by a magnitude 6.7 shake.

**Europe is no stranger to deadly earthquakes. Here we list the most devastating:**

**28 December 1908** – Sicily and southern Italy. This magnitude 7.1 earthquake almost completely destroyed the Sicilian port city of Messina and Reggio Calabria in southern Italy. Between 75,000 and 200,000 people were killed although some estimates put the death toll at 95,000.

**11 January 1693** – Sicily. The most powerful earthquake in Italian history, this magnitude 7.4 quake destroyed at least 70 towns and cities. It caused the death of around 60,000 people.

**1 November 1755** – Lisbon, Portugal. Known as the Great Lisbon earthquake, it struck on the holiday day of All Saint's Day at around 9.40am, sparking fires and a tsunami. Geologists have estimated it had a magnitude of between 8.5 and 9. Lisbon was almost totally destroyed and it is thought that a fifth of the city's population perished. A further 10,000 are thought to have died in Morocco, bringing the death toll to an estimated 50,000.

**26 December 1939** – Erzincan, Turkey. With a recorded magnitude of 7.8, this quake caused extensive damage around Erzincan and along the Kelkit River. Around 32,700 people died.

**13 January 1915** – Abruzzi, central Italy. This magnitude 6.7 earthquake destroyed the town of Avezzano which sat directly over the epicentre. It left 32,000 people dead and caused \$60 million of damage.

**17 August 1999** – Turkey. More than 17,000 people were killed and 50,000 injured in this magnitude 7.6 earthquake. Nearly 37 seconds of strong shaking caused widespread damage in Istanbul, Izmit, Kocaeli and Sakarya.

**3 October 1914** – Burdur, Turkey. More than 17,000 houses were destroyed in this magnitude 7.0 earthquake and around 4,000 people lost their lives.

**26 November 1943** – Ladik, Turkey. A magnitude 7.6 earthquake that caused the deaths of around 4,000 people and destroyed three quarters of the homes in the Ladik-Vezirkopru area.

**1 February 1944** – Gerede, Turkey. About 50,000 homes were destroyed in this magnitude 6.5 earthquake and 2,790 people perished.

**23 November 1980** – Campania and Basilicata, southern Italy. A magnitude 6.5 earthquake that claimed the lives of 2,735 people and left 394,000 people homeless.

Agostino Severo, a Rome resident visiting Illica, said: 'We came out to the piazza, and it looked like Dante's Inferno. People crying for help, help. Rescue workers arrived after one hour... one and a half hours.'

Italian Premier Matteo Renzi said this afternoon that the death toll from the quake had risen from 73 to 120 but added: 'This is not a final toll'. Many children are among dead.

Renzi was speaking in the provincial capital of Rieti after visiting rescue crews and survivors in the hard-hit town of Amatrice and flying over other demolished towns in nearby Le Marche region.

Renzi said 34 people died in Le Marche, the rest from the other towns. He also says the identification of quake bodies was a difficult process.

This afternoon the Queen joined others from around the world in sending a message of condolence to Italy, saying she was saddened to hear of the loss of life and that her thoughts were with families affected. President Barack Obama called Italian President Sergio Mattarella and saluted the 'quick action' by first responders in Italy.



The quake's epicentre was near Norcia in Umbria, about 105 miles north east of Rome, and falling bridges and landslides meant some areas are still cut off with emergency teams only able to get there on foot.

The mayor of Accumoli, Stefano Petrucci, said this morning: 'My town isn't here anymore' as people were carried out of ruined buildings on stretchers and people desperately searched the debris for survivors or sobbed as they inspected their own ruined homes.

Photographer Emiliano Grillotti said that in Accumoli he saw over 15 people digging with their bare hands to save a family of four with two children. He said: 'I can hear one of the children screaming'.



**As the light started to fade in Amatrice, rescue workers stepped up their search operation under floodlights**



**Volunteers assist rescue emergency service personnel in front of a damaged house in the central Italian village of Amatrice**



**An exhausted volunteer rescuer leans on a wall in the collapsed village of Pescara del Tronto. Later in the day an eight-year-old girl was pulled alive from the rubble in the town**



**A pensioner is helped away from the damaged buildings in Accumoli, central Italy this afternoon**



**Rescuers used sniffer dogs as the desperate search for survivors escalated this afternoon in Amatrice**



**Volunteers formed a human chain as they lifted people from the rubble of a collapsed house in Amatrice**



**Rescuers scaled a roof in Amatrice as they continued their hunt for survivors**



**A woman was given emergency treatment as medics moved her to a waiting ambulance in Amatrice**





**Rescuers are pictured lifting a man out of the ruins of a building destroyed during the earthquake in Amatrice**



**Disaster zone: Pictures show the extent of the devastation caused by the 6.2-magnitude earthquake in Pescara del Tronto**





**Some of the worst damage was suffered in Pescara del Tronto, a hamlet near Arquata in the Marche region where the bodies of the dead were laid out in a children's play park**



**Aftermath: Dozens of rescuers have been called in to search through debris following the earthquake in Italy**



**A picture of the Virgin Mary and Baby Jesus lies on the debris of a collapsed house in Amatrice following the earthquake**



**A firefighter takes a rest in the central Italian village of Amatrice. A huge rescue mission is expected to continue into the night**



**A man walks through the rubble in the devastated town of Amatrice. Today's disaster is the biggest in the region since April 2009**





**A body is carried away on a stretcher as rescuers continue the hunt for survivors of the deadly earthquake**



**A volunteer carries a dog away from the ruins of a building in the earthquake-hit town of Amatrice in central Italy**



## Survivors of the deadly earthquake could be seen crying and comforting one another as the death toll climbed on Wednesday

Today's disaster is the biggest in the region since April 2009 when a 6.3 magnitude earthquake occurred 28 miles to the south east of Norcia near the town of L'Aquila, killing 295 people and injuring 1,000. That disaster led to lengthy recriminations over lax building controls and the failure of authorities to warn residents that a quake could be imminent.

The first victims of the devastating quake were an elderly couple whose home collapsed in Pescara del Tronto, in the Marche region, around ten miles from the epicentre. A family of four, including a eight-month-old baby and his brother, nine, were also reported dead in the town of Accumoli.

As rescue workers carried away the body of the infant, carefully covered by a small blanket, the children's grandmother blamed God: 'He took them all at once,' she wailed.



© Corbis via Getty Images

**Rescuers lift yet another body from the rubble in the earthquake-hit town of Accumuli this afternoon**



**Rescuers showed no sign of slowing up as the light started to fade in Amatrice this evening**



**Dozens of fire fighters were called in to help in the rescue effort and were on hand to lift bodies from the rubble**



**A volunteer grimaces as he carries a sledge hammer up a mound of rubble as the search operation continued**



## Rescuers kept to the grim task of lifting bodies from the scene of the disaster this afternoon

Two brothers, aged four and seven, were pulled from the rubble nearby after hiding under a bed with their grandmother as the building fell down. Some 100 people were still unaccounted for in the village of Arquata del Tronto.

A newborn baby was also found dead after being pulled from a family home in the center of Arquata del Tronto.

The quake hit during the summer when the populations of the towns and villages in the area, normally low during the rest of the year, are swelled by holidaymakers.

One person has died and a family of four including two young children, aged 8 months and 9 years, are feared dead in their collapsed house in Accumoli, according to its mayor.

Stefano Petrucci said: 'Now that daylight has come, we see that the situation is even more dreadful than we feared, with buildings collapsed, people trapped under the rubble and



no sound of life.

'We have a tragedy here. Four people are under the rubble, but they are not showing any sign of life. Two parents and two children.



**Hard to help: Because of the mountainous location of the villages hit by the earthquake many of the roads are inaccessible and helicopters are being used to rescue locals from towns such as Pescara del Tronto (pictured)**



**Winched to safety: An injured person is rescued via helicopter following the earthquake in Pescara del Tronto on Wednesday**



**Wiped out: An aerial view of Pescara del Tronto shows how the strength of the earthquake flattened towns**



**Apocalyptic: Streams of rescue workers climb the rubble in Pescara del Tronto as they desperately seek survivors**



**Nothing left: The whole mountainside town of Pescara del Tronto appears to be in ruins and any remaining buildings look close to collapse**



**Demolished: Rescuers have pulled dozens of people young and old from the rubble of Italy's powerful earthquake, while trying to keep some victims calm as they waited to be pulled to safety**



**Dead bodies are removed from the debris in Pescara del Tronto after it was struck by a powerful 6.2-magnitude earthquake**



**Location: A geologist in Poland says that the earthquake in central Italy was caused by the slow but constant under-surface movement of the African Plate toward Europe**

Aerial views: Rescue teams search for Italy earthquake victims

Dramatic CCTV footage captures moment earthquake hit Italy



'It is a disaster, we have no light, no telephones, the rescue services have not got here yet.'

The quake also destroyed homes and buried people under rubble in the small town of Amatrice, where many more are feared dead.

'The roads in and out of town are cut off. Half the town is gone,' said the town's mayor Sergio Pirozzi.

He added: 'There are people under the rubble... There's been a landslide and a bridge might collapse. The situation is dramatic, there are many dead. I cannot give a toll for now because rescue efforts are under way and it is very, very difficult'.

The centre of Amatrice was devastated, with entire palazzos razed to the ground. Rocks and metal tumbled on to the streets and dazed residents huddled in piazzas as aftershocks continued into the early hours.

'The whole ceiling fell but did not hit me,' marveled resident Maria Gianni. 'I just managed to put a pillow on my head and I wasn't hit luckily, just slightly injured my leg.'

Another resident said she had been woken by the shaking in time to witness the wall of her bedroom cracking open. She was able to escape into the street with her children.



**Stunned: A young couple appeared to be in shock as they surveyed the devastated town of Amatrice. The mayor of says rescue teams are trying to reach all 69 hamlets around the town in the province of Rieti, in northern Lazio**

Person trapped under rubble in quake-ravaged rural Italy

## **THE TOWN WHERE TIME STOOD STILL: CLOCK-TOWER IN ITALIAN VILLAGE HALTED AT THE MOMENT WHEN THE EARTHQUAKE STRUCK**

It's the town where time stood still. The clock on the 13-century tower in Amatrice, Italy,

poignantly stopped just after Wednesday's earthquake struck at 3.36am.

The town was one of the hardest hit in the disaster, with at least 17 dying there, from a total of over 70 lives lost.

The clock tower was one of the few structures to survive relatively intact. It lost its bell, but some of the buildings nearby completely disintegrated.





**Frozen in time: The partially damaged 13th Century bell-tower was one of the few historic buildings in the centre of Amatrice that remained standing. The clock eerily signs the time the earthquake hit the town**





**Standing still: In Amatrice the clock stopped at 3:36 am on Wednesday. The same phenomeon happended to a clock in L'Aquila (right) when an earthquake struck in 2009 at 3:32 p.m**



**An aerial photograph from the Italian Fire Brigade shows the collapsed and damaged houses in Amatrice**





**Impaled: A concrete post smashed through a car windscreen (left) in the Reatino area on Wednesday and another car (right) was buried in Pescara del Tronto**





## **Crumbled: Rescuers clear debris while searching for victims after the whole side of a building collapsed in Arquata del Tronto**

Rescuers pull man and little girl from earthquake rubble in Italy



**A video has emerged of a young girl covered in dust being carried to safety after she was pulled from the rubble in Amatrice**





**A man dressed in white appears to be in shock as he is pulled from a devastated building by rescue workers**



**Wounded: A woman with a bandage on her head stands in front of a collapsed building in the town of Amatrice**



**Trail of destruction: Rescuers and people walk along a road following an earthquake in Accumoli, where a family of four including two children died**



**Search: A sniffer dog is used to seek out any survivors under a collapsed building in Amatrice on Wednesday morning**



**In pain: An injured man is carried in a blanket after being saved from the rubble of a collapsed building in Amatrice**





**Resting: An injured man lies on a yellow stretcher after surviving the earthquake and being pulled to safety in Amatrice**



**Signs of life: The Italian Fire brigade are seen working on a collapsed and damaged house in Amatrice which appears to have been reduced to a roof**



**Tragic: Rescue workers and police officers carry a victim out of the rubble inside a blanket in the village Amatrice**

Amatrice resident is rescued after 6.2 magnitude earthquake



**Shocking: Rescuers and residents clear debris in search for victims in damaged homes after the strong earthquake**



**Aftermath: Residents of Amatrice in central Italy has been left in ruins overnight in an earthquake that shook areas up to 100 miles away, including Rome**



© AFP/Getty Images



**The devastating earthquake tore down entire streets and homes in Amatrice (pictured), close to the epicenter of the quake in central Italy**



**Support: A family huddle together under blankets along with their pet dalmatian as they recover from the shock**







**In crisis: A local woman sits on a step with her dog after surviving the quake (left).**

## An elderly woman cries with her head in her hand as the realisation of what has happened sinks in



**Huddled: A shocked woman and man are seen wrapped in blankets in front of collapsed houses in Amatrice, central Italy**



**Gruelling work: Locals, rescue workers and police all teamed up together to pull bodies from the rubble in Amatrice**



**Shocking: A survivor in Amatrice is helped to safety after a powerful earthquake has rocked Italy overnight killing at least 50 people and burying many more as they slept**



**Grief: An Italian sobs in the rubble outside his damaged home as people said villages and towns have been destroyed by the 6.2 magnitude earthquake**



**At least ten people have been killed after a 6.2-magnitude earthquake rocked central Italy (pictured, rescuers carry a man from the rubble in the town of Amatrice)**



**Helped to safety: A woman is carried down a ladder from her upstairs window, which has a gaping hole in the wall**





**Damaged: The mayor of Amatrice (pictured) which has been hit by a landslide following the quake, wiping much of it out**

One witness named Marco, a sanitation worker from Amatrice, told [Repubblica](#) how everything 'fell apart' in an instant.

'It was a miracle for me to survive... I just woke up when suddenly everything collapsed. Ten second were enough to destroy everything,' he said.

A witness in Configno, near Amatrice, recalled: 'It was a nightmare. We woke up at 3.35am, the furniture falling down, walls moving more than a meter. We rushed out, many are still in their underpants here, in the street. We did some bonfires in the square and went to help old people to get out from their houses.'

As daylight dawned, residents, civil protection workers and even priests began digging out with shovels, bulldozers and their bare hands, trying to reach survivors. There was a sigh of relief as a woman was pulled out alive from one building, followed by a dog.

'We need chain saws, shears to cut iron bars, and jacks to remove beams: everything, we need everything,' civil protection worker Andrea Gentili told The Associated Press.

'I don't know what to say. We are living this immense tragedy,' said the Rev. Savino D'Amelio, an Amatrice parish priest. 'We are only hoping there will be the least number of victims possible and that we all have the courage to move on.'

In Amatrice, the ANSA news agency reported two bodies had been pulled from one building. The Rev. Fabio Gammarota told ANSA another three were killed in a separate collapse.

Amatrice Mayor Pirozzi told state-run RAI radio and Sky TG24 that residents were buried under collapsed buildings, that the lights had gone out and that heavy equipment was needed to clear streets clogged with debris.

Aleandro Petrucci, the mayor of nearby Arquata del Tronto, said Pescara was one of 'two or three hamlets that have just completely disintegrated.'

Shocking images of destroyed homes in Italy earthquake



**Missing: The side of a traditional beige building is collapsed into grey rubble in the town of Amatrice**



**Turned inside out: The purple decor of one family's home is seen amongst the grey rubble as people search for signs of life in Amatrice**



**Ruins: A lamppost is seen leaning dramatically to one side next to a devastated building and rescue workers**



**Cry for help: This survivor looks into the rubble in Amatrice and was heard yelling to anyone who might be stuck inside**



**Reaction: A dust-covered man cries with his head in his hands as the shock of what has happened overnight sinks in**

Resident films tremors shaking lights in Italy earthquake



**Decimated: An Italian clutches his child's buggy as he walks over the rubble and debris left**





**Piled high: The tight streets of Amatrice have been blocked by the debris from falling buildings rocked by the quake**



**Desperate: This is all that is left of a building in Amatrice where emergency services and volunteers pull away tiles and rubble searching for victims**



**Busy: The area of Umbria is hugely popular with tourists, and some Britons have been caught up in today's chaos**



**Swathed in blankets, a heavily wounded man gazes at his destroyed hometown of Amatrice which has been cut off from the world after its roads were buried in rubble**



**Nothing left: This shop's sign is hanging off and its walls are collapsed after the quake shook the area at around 3.30am**



**Search: People caught up in the aftermath have said that they have heard many voices coming from the rubble**



**Distraught: A man stands on his damaged home after a strong earthquake hit Amatrice overnight**



**Contrast: The intact kitchen of this home lies completely undamaged - but exposed to the outside world after its wall fell away**





**Scramble: People are fighting through stone, metal and tiles to find anyone who may be trapped under the fallen buildings**



**Rush: At least ten people are believed to be dead in the incident - others are being taken away on makeshift stretchers like this one**



## **Carnage: This car was left covered in dust and rocks from a falling wall as it tore through central Italy**

Rescue teams search through rubble of collapsed home

A resident of the village told Rai that she had been woken by the shaking in time to witness the wall of her bedroom cracking open. She was able to escape into the street with her children.

A family friend of a tourist from Toronto, Canada, who was caught up in the earthquake

told MailOnline how he escaped.

Silvano Rendina was awoken and 'climbed through the window of his father's ancestral home in Pescara del Tronto when the earthquake struck'. After helping numerous townsfolk escape the rubble and after daybreak, he took photos of the utterly devastated town.

Mr Rendina eventually made it to a bar in neighbouring Tresungo, which had WiFi and bottled water for rescuers coming from Pescara del Tronto.

'He said he thought they had got out all those who were verbally responsive, but reported that there were at least three other deaths other than the elderly couple reported. He said there had to be many more trapped,' family friend Mary Pat Elliott told MailOnline.

Two bodies were recovered from rubble in Amatrice, a mountain village in neighbouring Lazio that was packed with visitors at the peak of the summer season.

Paola Mancini, 79, told local newspaper [Corriere](#) the first words she heard were 'Run, run, everyone outside.'

She was in the hospital Grifoni, in Amatrice, when the earthquake started. A nurse screamed for everyone to get out into the street.

'There were two of us in the emergency room. We got up and ran as quickly as possible. We were in the hall, where we found a doctor who calmed us as much as he could.

She was admitted into the hospital on Tuesday. This morning she was in the street along with the rest of the 14 inhabitants of the hospital.

'It has been a long and terrible shock. We have been scared, and we remain paralysed by terror. There have been moments of panic, but the nurses have been very professional and they got us all out into the street quickly.'

She said: 'The first ambulance arrived, a man on a stretcher was injured, covered by blood and shocked. Although I lived here I didn't recognise him. He was crying and kept saying, my wife is dead because our house collapsed'.



**A mother embraces her terrified son in a blanket in Amatrice as they stand alongside other locals in the town**



**Search and rescue teams survey the rubble in Amatrice as a man walks over it with his phone in hand**



**A man covered in a blanket walks in front of the rubble appears to walk in children's shoes after escaping the earthquake**



## Residents and photographers stand next to damaged buildings after the strong earthquake hit Amatrice





**An injured woman in her night clothes is carried by rescuers amid the rubble of collapsed buildings in Amatrice**



**Collapsed houses are seen crumbling down the mountain side in Pescara del Tronto, near Arquata del Tronto municipality**



**A man is carried on a stretcher after being rescued from the rubble in the devastated town of Arquata del Tronto**

## **TRAVEL ADVICE FOR HOLIDAYMAKERS IN ITALY**

The Foreign Office has advised tourists in Italy to check with the Italian authorities for the latest information about the earthquake.

It said in a statement: 'An earthquake with a magnitude of 6.2 struck Central Italy during the early hours of 24 August.

'The earthquake was also felt in Rome. If you are in the affected area, you should follow the advice of the local authorities.

'If you are in Italy, Civil Protection have activated a hotline 800840840 for information.

'To learn more about what to do before, during, and after an earthquake visit the [Protezione Civile](#) website.'

At present airports around the affected area - Perugia and Rome - are functioning normally, but the government has requested that the Via Salaria, one of the main roads to the area, be left free of traffic to allow rescue crews to reach the area more easily.

The towns that have been most badly affected are not considered tourism destinations, while others that are - Norcia, Perugia and other towns in Umbria and northern Lazio - have felt the quake but are not badly damaged.

Good information about what to do in the event of an earthquake can also be found on the US Federal Emergency Management Agency website.

If you are inside a building when an earthquake strikes it recommends staying where you are.

It says: 'Stay where you are until the shaking stops. Do not run outside. Do not get in a doorway as this does not provide protection from falling or flying objects, and you may not be able to remain standing.

'Drop down onto your hands and knees so the earthquake doesn't knock you down. Cover your head and neck with your arms to protect yourself from falling debris and... crawl for additional cover under a sturdy desk or table.'

Alternatively, it's a good idea to seek an inside corner of a room 'away from windows and objects that could fall on you'.

If you're in bed, Fema's advice is to stay there as moving around in the dark could be more dangerous.

If the quake strikes while you're outside try and move away from buildings and street lights and drop down onto the ground.

Drivers, meanwhile, are advised to stop and remain in their vehicles - and avoid stopping near buildings, trees, utility wires or bridges.

Source: [www.ready.gov/earthquakes](http://www.ready.gov/earthquakes)



© Silvano Rendina



**A family friend of a tourist from Toronto, Canada, has told he was caught up in the earthquake while visiting his father's ancestral home in Pescara del Tronto**

**(pictured)**



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**Silvano Rendina, from Canada, was awoken and 'climbed through the window of his father's ancestral home in Pescara del Tronto when the earthquake struck'. He took these photos after helping numerous townsfolk escape the rubble**

People walk through the earthquake wreckage in Italy



Sergio Pirozzi, Amatrice's mayor, said access to the village had been blocked, making it impossible for emergency services to get through 'We can hear voices under the rubble.'

And the head of the local Red Cross described how a collapsed bridge was slowing the relief effort, because help can only arrive on foot.

Italian Red Cross spokesman Tommaso Della Longa told MailOnline: 'The first priority in the first hours after the earthquake is mobilising the emergency services teams.

'Now the teams are in the field and they are working to find survivors.

'The logistics aren't so easy because there aren't so many big roads. It's a lot of small roads and small towns and village and groups of small houses in the mountains.

'It's a challenge but we are trying to manage it.'

Ryan Sloan, a lawyer based in Glasgow, described the moment the earthquake woke him in Rome as the 'most terrifying moment' of his life.

He said: 'Woke up as felt like someone violently rocking bed.'

Sarah Conrad, who works for YouTube in London and is visiting the Italian capital, said she was woken up in the early hours and also felt aftershocks.

She tweeted: 'Pretty sure I was just woken up by an £earthquake in £rome.

'I thought someone snuck into my hotel room & was jumping on the bed. Both scary!'

Paul O' Halloran, whose Twitter profile said he was in Rome said: 'Just got woke up by an earthquake! Bed and window shutters moving!'

Toby Shaw, from Hampshire, tweeted: 'I'm really hoping that I've just experienced an

earthquake in Rome, otherwise I'm not sure I want to know what it was that shook the room.'

Rubble and damage after 6.2-magnitude earthquake strikes Italy



**Rescuers desperately dug through collapsed buildings to reach those who were trapped underneath collapsed buildings in Amatrice**



**Lights out: Many locals described how their towns were plunged into darkness when the earthquake struck. Members of the Protezione Civile (Civil Protection) are seen here in Amatrice**



**Many buildings in center of Amatrice were razed by the 6.1 magnitude quake, which struck at around 3.30am (local time)**



**Emergency workers help an elderly, wounded man to safety in Amatrice, where many are believed to be trapped underneath the rubble**



**Traumatized locals try to keep warm in the early morning after the strong quake shook the town of Amatrice and much of central Italy**



## **The shallow quake centered in near the city of Rieti but shockwaves traveled as far as Rome 100 miles away**

Amatrice is famous in Italy as a beauty spot and is a popular holiday destination for Romans seeking cool mountain air at the height of the summer.

The first quake struck shortly after 3.30 am (0130 GMT), according to the United States Geological Survey, and a 5.4 magnitude aftershock followed an hour later.

USGS's PAGER system, which predicts the impact of earthquakes, issued a red alert - suggesting significant casualties and damage based on previous quake data.

A resident of the Rieti region, which is between Rome and the epicentre of the quake, told the Rainews24 channel that she and most of her neighbours had come out onto the street after feeling 'very strong shaking'.

Italy is often shaken by earthquakes, usually centred on the mountainous spine of the boot-shaped country.

Another quake hit the northern Emilia Romagna region in May 2012, when two violent shocks 10 days apart left 23 people dead and 14,000 others homeless.

First images of the damage in Amatrice showed cars caked in rubble and the debris of collapsed buildings sprawled across the streets.

*It was so strong... It seemed the bed was walking across the room by itself with us on it*

#### **Lina Mercantini of Umbria, central Italy**

Mayor Nicola Alemanno said no deaths have been reported deaths in Norcia, adding: 'The anti-seismic structures of the town have held.

'There is damage to the historic heritage and buildings, but we do not have any serious injuries.'

A resident of the Rieti region, which is between Rome and the epicentre of the quake, told the Rainews24 channel that she and most of her neighbours had come out onto the street after feeling 'very strong shaking'.

A 6.2-magnitude earthquake leaves streets covered with rubble





**A family of four were also reported dead in the town of Accumoli - just four miles from where the source of the quake (pictured, a rescue worker inspects the damage in Amatrice)**





## **Together: A sports team rests on the ground under white blankets after the town of Amatrice was struck**

Strong shockwaves were felt as far as the capital Rome, more than 100 miles from where the 'shallow' quake first struck at around 3.30am local time.

There have already been 'reports of victims in the quake zone', according to Italian Fire Department spokesman Luca Cari.

The worst hit towns were believed to be Accumoli, Amatrice, Posta and Arquata del Tronto.

Prime Minister Matteo Renzi's office said rescue teams were being sent to the worst-hit areas. He has cancelled a planned trip to France for a meeting with European Socialist leaders and other engagements to oversee the response to the disaster.

Meanwhile, Pope Francis interrupted his weekly audience in St Peter's Square to express his shock.

'To hear the mayor of Amatrice say his village no longer exists and knowing that there are children among the victims, is very upsetting for me,' he said.

'I cannot fail to express my heartfelt sorrow and spiritual closeness to all those present in the zones afflicted.

Francis added: 'I want to assure all the people of Accumoli, Amatrice, the diocese of Rieti, Ascoli Piceno and all the people of Lazio, Umbria and Le Marche of the prayers and close solidarity of the entire church.'

'It was so strong... It seemed the bed was walking across the room by itself with us on it,' said Lina Mercantini of Umbria, central Italy.

Olga Urbani, in the nearby town of Scheggino, said: 'Dear God, it was awful. The walls creaked and all the books fell off the shelves.'

The quake is believed to have damaged buildings across the central region while residents in Rome reported their houses 'swaying'.

**Shocking before and after pictures of the area show the devastation caused by the earthquake**





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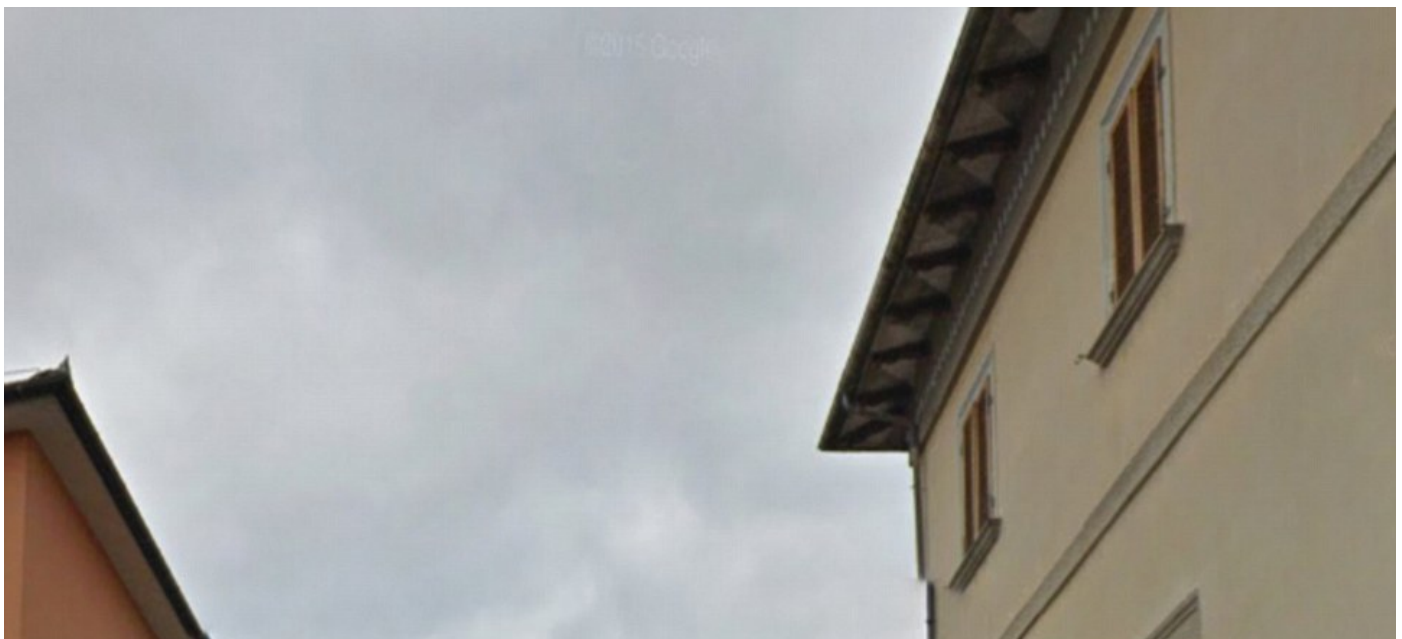
**A clock building was once a key feature in the town of Amatrice (left). It is now one of the only remaining structures in a once idyllic street (right)**

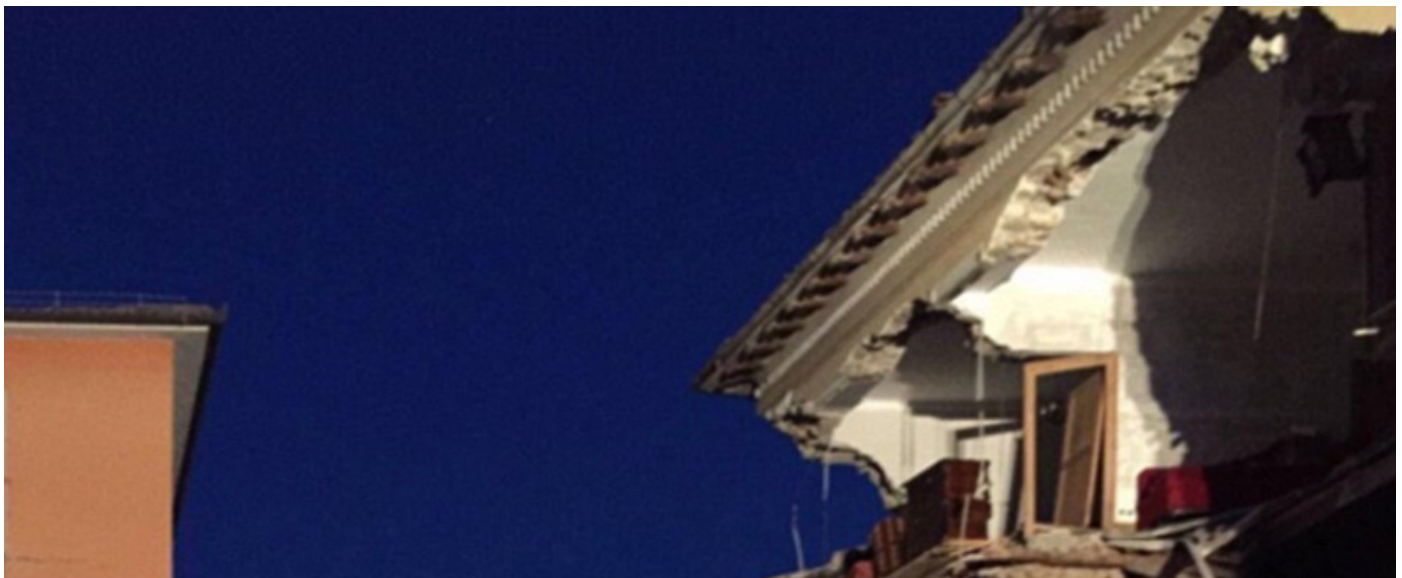




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**The neatly stacked pile of tires outside a garage in Accumoli (left) are now scattered across the road (right)**









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**A once quiet and picturesque street is seen with locals going about their daily lives (left) before the earthquake. On Wednesday the beautiful balcony of the building collapsed into a pile of rubble (right)**





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**A town square in Amatrice featuring cobbled pavement, hanging flower baskets and a peach coloured traditional Italian building (left) is now utterly devastated and left in ruins (right)**





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**The same town square in Amatrice is seen here from a different angle. In the left picture the building is intact but in the right image half of it has crumbled to the ground**





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**A once delightful Italian street in Amatrice filled with terracotta-coloured buildings (left) now appears as a mass of grey rubble (right)**







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**In the town of Arquata del Tronto an old building (left) is now in ruins after half of its front collapsed onto the street (right)**





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**A whole building (left) appears to have vanished (right) into a mass of grey rubble in the town of Arquata del Tronto**





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**The Vai Della Marina building and junction of SR260 (left), in the village of Accumoli has been destroyed in the quake (right)**

## **THE EARTHQUAKE HIT SOME OF ITALY'S MOST BEAUTIFUL AREAS**

The earthquake struck in the regions of Umbria, Marche and Lazio.

Umbria – sometimes called the 'Green Heart of Italy' - is known for its truffles, wine, abbeys, art, monuments and beautiful forests.

It's also home to the tallest man-made waterfall in Italy - the 272ft Roman-built Cascata delle Marmore – and Lake Trasimeno.

It's sometimes touted as 'the new Tuscany' and is extremely popular with tourists.

Marche, which borders the Adriatic Sea, is quieter than Umbria and is famous for its beautiful beaches, coves and cliffs – and twisty roads across its hilly heart.

It's popular not only as a seaside destination, but for driving and hiking trips.

Lazio is the Italian region that surrounds Rome and is far less known to British visitors than the likes of Tuscany and Umbria.

Amatrice, in Lazio, which has been badly hit by the earthquake, is famous in Italy as a beauty spot and is a popular holiday destination for Romans seeking cool mountain air at the height of the summer.

The town of Amatrice is famed as the birthplace of one of the most famous Roman dishes: spaghetti all'amatriciana, a pasta dish made with bacon-like bits of cured pork jowl, pecorino cheese and tomato.

The quake also struck just 30 miles from the historic town of Assisi.