

Practicing Taichi at 8,202 feet high

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Due to a health reason, Lina Takacs has been studying [Taichi](#) since last August on a recommendation from her doctor. Normally she takes a private lesson on Sundays for an hour. She has learned Chen Style Silk Reeling, Chen Style 18 Form, and [Tai Chi](#) Chih. She tries to practice a few times throughout the week. Sometimes, she takes three short practices in a day. Mostly she practices in the bathroom, which has a large mirror to help her monitor her own movements and postures. Sometimes, she watches a teaching video on line or listens to the class instruction which she recorded on her iPhone.



Lina Takacs practice Single Hand Silk Reeling

Lina is Director of [International Scope in Education](#), a non-profit organization focusing on international culture exchange and education in St. Louis, MO. In April, she led a small group of people who are interested in Italian culture from St. Louis to Italy. Before she left for the trip, she promised her teacher that she would practice while away.

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[Mount Etna](#) is located on the East Sicilian Coast line. It is the largest active volcano in Europe, currently

standing 10,922 ft high. It is the highest mountain in Italy south of the Alps. Etna covers an area of 460 sq miles. This makes it the largest active volcano in Italy, Actually, Mount Etna is one of the most active volcanoes in the world and is in an almost constant state of activity and has been designated a **Decade Volcano** by the United Nations.



Lina Takacs at Mt. Etna (1)

On 8th April 2010, an ash eruption occurred at the summit of Mt Etna. The eruptions were preceded by a series of earthquakes at the Pernicana fault on 2nd April. Fortunately, there was no damage or injury from this eruption.



Lina Takacs at Mt. Etna (2)

Lina and her group flew into in Palermo in the morning of April 9th, and toured Sicily that day. They drove, stopped and admired natural and man-made wonders, ate lunch in random restaurants. They did that for several days, and never heard a word about the ash eruption of April 8th... They stayed near Giarre, on the slopes of Mount Etna, in an unforgettable place called "Il Ciliegio dell'Etna", "The Cherry Orchard of the Etna".



Lina Takacs at Mt. Etna (3)

On April 14th, they left for an excursion to the craters. There, everything was operating normally and they took the cable cars as high as possible and reached Rifugio Sapienza. They then walked between the walls of packed snow that had not yet melted. It was surprising for them to discover the volcano mountain top can be extremely cold. Glaciers were everywhere. The temperature was frigid. It was also spiritual. So she decided to practice Tai Chi there.



Lina Takacs at Mt. Etna (4)

It was mighty cold. But for a moment, “Taichi wrapped me around,” and she did not feel the bitter coldness. She did not think that her form was all correct. But she might have created a recorder in *the Guinness Book of World Records* as the first person practicing Taichi at 8,202 feet high. And she is pleased that she kept her promise to her teacher.

Are you keeping the promise you have to your teacher or yourself?



Lina Takacs at Mt. Etna (5)



Violet Li

St. Louis Tai Chi Examiner