



The Alps

The Alps are one of the most famous mountain ranges in the world. They stretch for more than 1200km from France in the west to Austria and Slovenia in the east. The Alps are the source of two of Europe's main rivers, the Rhine and the Danube. The highest mountain in the Alps is Mont Blanc, which is 4810m above sea level. The Alps contain 82 mountains higher than 4000m. The Alps started to form 300 million years ago and they are still getting higher.

The Apennines

The Apennine mountain range stretches for 1200km through Italy. The range is known as the backbone of Italy. The Apennines contains 13 mountains higher than 2000m. The highest peak in the Apennines is Corno Grande in Central Italy, which is 2912m high. The Apennines started to form 20 million years ago. Its name comes from the Celtic word for mountain, ben.

The Carpathians

The Carpathians stretch for 1500km through Slovakia, Poland, Hungary, Ukraine, Romania and Serbia. The highest peak in the range is Gerlachovský štít in Slovakia, which stands at an altitude of 2655m. The Carpathians contain

several ranges known by local names, such as the Tatra Mountains on the border between Poland and Slovakia. The Tatra Mountains contain 24 peaks over 2500m. The Carpathians contain large forests, which are home to large numbers of bears and wolves.

The Caucasus

The Caucasus Mountains are an 1100km long mountain range between the Black Sea and the Caspian Sea. They form part of the border between Europe and Asia. The Caucasus Mountains are home to the highest mountain in Europe, Mount Elbrus, which is 5642m high. The Caucasus Mountains were formed by the movement of the Arabian plate into the Eurasian plate. The region around the Caucasus Mountains often gets strong earthquakes because of this movement.

The Grampians

The Grampian Mountains cover almost half of Scotland. The highest peak in the range, and in Great Britain, is Ben Nevis, which is 1343m above sea level. The Grampians are one of the oldest mountain ranges in the world. They were formed around 400 million years ago. The Grampians used to be as high as the Alps are today, but erosion by wind and rain made the mountains smaller.

The Pyrenees

The Pyrenees Mountains form the border between France and Spain. They stretch for 430km from the Atlantic Ocean to the Mediterranean Sea. The Pyrenees were formed between 100 and 150 million years ago. The highest peak in the Pyrenees is Aneto, which is 3404m above sea level. A tiny country, Andorra, is situated in the Pyrenees. Andorra is a popular place for tourists and skiers.

The Scandinavian Mountains

The Scandinavian Mountains stretch through Norway and Sweden. The highest peak is Galdhøpiggen in southern Norway, which is 2469m above sea level. Geologists think that the the Scandinavian Mountains, the Grampian Mountains and the Appalachian Mountains of North America used to be one large mountain range which broke up around 250 million years ago when the Atlantic Ocean started to form.