

This Rock Is From Mars!



Believe it or not, someone recently paid more than \$5 million for a rock. But this is no ordinary rock. It's the largest piece of Mars ever found on Earth! It sold at an **auction** in New York City in July.

The rock is what's called a meteorite. Meteorites are space rocks that land on Earth's surface. Only about 400 meteorites from Mars have ever been found. Most can fit in the palm of your hand. But this one weighs a whopping 54 pounds.

Humans have never set foot on Mars. So studying meteorites from Mars can help researchers learn about the planet.

"Meteorites are super important," explains Julia Cartwright. She's a scientist who studies planets and other objects in

space. "They hold information about our solar system that we can't get any other way. Because this one is so big, it can tell us a lot about Mars."


Amazing Journey

The space rock broke off the surface of Mars when a large object crashed into the planet. The rock then zipped through space at speeds of at least 25,000 miles per hour. In 2023, it landed in a desert in Niger. That's a country in Africa.

Cartwright hopes the meteorite ends up in a museum.

"It would be great for people to be able to visit it, and for scientists to study it," she says.

—by Alicia Green



Mars is one of Earth's closest neighbors in the solar system.

Word to Know

auction *noun*. an event during which items are sold to the person who offers the most money for each one