

## NASA unveils stunning 'farewell image' of Saturn

After more than 13 years at Saturn, and with its fate sealed, NASA's Cassini spacecraft bid farewell to the Saturnian system by firing the shutters of its wide-angle camera and capturing this last, full mosaic of Saturn and its rings two days before the spacecraft's dramatic plunge into the planet's atmosphere. | Photo Credit: [NASA/JPL-Caltech/Space Science Institute](#)

NASA has released a stunning view of the Saturn and its splendid rings and moons, captured by the Cassini spacecraft during the final leg of its 20- year-long epic journey in space.

The probe snapped a series of images that has been assembled into a new mosaic.

Cassini's wide-angle camera acquired 42 red, green and blue images, covering the planet and its main rings from one end to the other on September 13 this year.

Imaging scientists stitched these frames together to make a natural colour view.

"Cassini's scientific bounty has been truly spectacular - a vast array of new results leading to new insights and surprises, from the tiniest of ring particles to the opening of new landscapes on Titan and Enceladus, to the deep interior of Saturn itself," said Robert West, Cassini's deputy imaging team leader at NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory in the US.

The Cassini imaging team had been planning this special farewell view of Saturn for years.

"It was all too easy to get used to receiving new images from the Saturn system on a daily basis, seeing new sights, watching things change," said Elizabeth Turtle, an imaging team associate at the Johns Hopkins University Applied Physics Laboratory in the US.

"For 37 years, Voyager 1's last view of Saturn has been, for me, one of the most evocative images ever taken in the exploration of the solar system," said Carolyn Porco, former Voyager imaging team member and Cassini's imaging team leader at the Space Science Institute in the US.

"In a similar vein, this 'Farewell to Saturn' will forevermore serve as a reminder of the dramatic conclusion to that wondrous time humankind spent in intimate study of our Sun's most iconic planetary system," said Porco.

Launched in 1997, the Cassini spacecraft orbited Saturn from 2004 to 2017.

The mission made numerous dramatic discoveries, including the surprising geologic activity on Saturn's moon Enceladus and liquid methane seas on Saturn's largest moon, Titan.

Cassini ended its journey with a dramatic plunge into Saturn's atmosphere on September 15, this year, returning unique science data until it lost contact with Earth.

Tux brushing tussar, cards being exchanged like cocaine packets, billionaires mingled at Illuminating India

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