



StenniSphere



Students view Science on a Sphere, an interactive exhibit at StenniSphere visitor center.

StenniSphere, the visitor center at NASA's John C. Stennis Space Center, features adventures in space exploration through 14,000 square feet of informative displays and exhibits from NASA and other agencies.

Visitors to StenniSphere board shuttles for a 25-minute narrated tour, beginning at the Launch Pad station at the Hancock County Welcome Center at Interstate 10 Exit 2 in south Mississippi. At the Launch Pad is a 30-foot-tall lunar lander used as a trainer by Apollo astronauts. Its base features the autograph and bootprints of Fred Haise, an Apollo 13 astronaut and Mississippi native. From the Launch Pad, tours proceed to the site of America's largest rocket engine test complex for an up-close view of the massive test stands and perhaps the shake, rattle and roar of a rocket engine as it is being tested.

Once at StenniSphere, visitors find numerous exhibits, such as one that highlights the career of the center's namesake, the late Mississippi Sen. John C. Stennis.

Exhibits

- Science on a Sphere – StenniSphere's newest exhibit is one of its most-colorful and offers an interactive, fun way to learn about Earth, other planets and so much more
- Moon Rock – collected by the Apollo 15 crew that explored the lunar surface in August 1971, the StenniSphere fragment is estimated to be more than 3 billion years old
- Apollo 4 Command Module – the unmanned module launched Nov. 9, 1967, to test the thermal protection system during re-entry
- Test Control Center – a mock-up of a Stennis Space Center test control center allows StenniSphere visitors to "test" a space shuttle main engine and "launch" a rocket
- Space Shuttle Cockpit – visitors help the computerized shuttle crew land the space shuttle

- International Space Station – a full-scale mockup shows the habitation and laboratory module of the orbiting space station
- Swamp to Space – presents the history of the center and information on the local environment
- Evolution of Space Flight – a pictorial history highlights America’s space program
- Needlepoint Mission Patches – features hand-stitched replicas of NASA mission patches
- The Naval Meteorology and Oceanography Command – offers a weather center, a representation of the ocean floor and information on Earth’s oceans
- Caring for the Gulf Together – shows how Stennis agencies support preservation of the Gulf of Mexico
- NASA’s Technology: an Investment in America’s Future – reviews how space exploration has led to technological advances for everyday life
- Touching Tomorrow ... Today – education exhibit highlights the importance of sharing tomorrow’s vision with today’s young people and educators.



A pair of visitors conduct a simulated rocket engine test at one of StenniSphere’s interactive exhibits.

Outdoor Exhibits

- Space shuttle main engine
- Learjet Model 28 airplane equipped with remote sensors that gather detailed images of Earth
- Full-scale Nomad buoy, like those used to measure weather and ocean conditions
- Scale model of the Saturn V rocket that took America’s astronauts to the moon
- F-1 engine that powered the first stage of the Saturn V rocket
- Solid Rocket Booster that helps power the space shuttle into orbit
- A full-size Jupiter-C rocket, the kind that put the first U.S. satellite into orbit

Programs

At the museum, space-themed videos play throughout the day. Keep up with the latest scientific discoveries with “Science Bulletins,” broadcast by the American Museum of Natural History in New York City. Experiments on how the environment of space affects the human body are conducted live at the “Experimentation Station.”

Astro Camp

Inspire a future astronaut, engineer or scientist at Stennis Space Center’s Astro Camp. Weeklong day camps are held each summer for children ages 7-9, 10-12 and 13-15. One-day Astro Camp Saturday missions are held during the school year for ages 7-15. For dates, costs and other details, call 1-800-237-1821 (Option 4) or visit <http://www1.ssc.nasa.gov/public/visitors/>.

Additional Features

The RockeTeria, a space-themed 1960s-style restaurant, offers a full menu of local favorites for visitors to enjoy. The Space Odyssey Gift Shop offers the “right stuff” souvenirs or gifts.

Time and Location

StenniSphere conducts tours from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Wednesday through Saturday, except major holidays, with the last tour leaving the Launch Pad at 2 p.m. Group tours may be booked to visit Tuesday through Saturday. (To make reservations, call 1-800-237-1821.) Free tours of Stennis Space Center begin at the Launch Pad tour stop, located at the Hancock County Welcome Center at Interstate 10 Exit 2, just 45 miles east of New Orleans and 45 minutes from Gulfport. (Visitors 18 and older must present a valid identification with photograph, such as a driver’s license or passport.)

For more information or to make reservations for groups, call StenniSphere at (228) 688-2370 or (800) 237-1821 (Option 1) in Mississippi and Louisiana, or visit: <http://www1.ssc.nasa.gov/public/visitors/>.

National Aeronautics and Space Administration

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