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Take Off for the Liftoff on Florida's Space Coast!

*Space enthusiasts and general interest visitors alike
can pack their bags for one-of-a kind, space-related vacation experiences*

SPACE COAST, Fla. – The countdown to a memorable vacation begins with a trip to Florida's Space Coast. Located just 35 miles east (56 km) of Orlando, visitors are sure to have a blast with a variety of space-related activities to enjoy. This exciting destination offers visitors the opportunity to explore some of the most significant aspects of our nation's treasured space history and see history in the making at the same time.

Kennedy Space Center (KSC) is the center of America's space program, making the region the only place in the country where visitors can see a live space shuttle launch. Guests can explore launches of shuttles carrying astronauts or enjoy additional unique viewing opportunities with one of many unmanned rocket launches as well.

At the **Kennedy Space Center Visitor Complex**, the nation's space history can be further explored at the Rocket Garden, showcasing historic NASA rockets; the Apollo/Saturn V Center, featuring rockets and equipment from the Apollo missions to the moon, and the Astronaut Hall of Fame, where the sights, sounds and experiences of famed astronauts are captured and the world's largest collection of personal astronaut memorabilia is located. Guests can also enjoy two IMAX theaters; tour a life-size replica of a space shuttle; train in spaceflight simulators and get a first-hand encounter with the Shuttle Launch Experience, an attraction designed by astronauts which gives guests the feeling they are actually taking off in a Shuttle. It's the only place on Earth providing these unique vacation experiences. Additionally, each day, guests get the rare opportunity to meet veteran astronauts from NASA's Astronaut Corps.

Guests also can enjoy a series of tours offering insider views of the space program from launch preparation to liftoff, including panoramic views of Kennedy Space Center, space shuttle launch pads and rocket launch pads at Cape Canaveral Air Force Station.

Other points of interest include a Children's Play Zone, where "junior astronauts" can liftoff in spacecraft; climb a moon rock wall; crawl through rocket tunnels and slide to the surface of the moon, and the NASA Art Gallery, where more than 200 pieces of space-related works of art are exhibited by world-renowned artists including Andy Warhol, Annie Leibovitz and Robert Rauschenberg.

More than 1.5 million guests come each year to experience the one-of-a kind vacation opportunity the KSC Visitor Complex exclusively provides.

The **U.S. Space Walk of Fame Museum** is the first and only walk in the nation which honors America's astronauts as well as the men and women behind the scenes of the space program. It features shuttle launch memorabilia and an outdoor park comprised of monuments dedicated to U.S. space missions - most notably is the intricate Apollo monument which took 10 years to construct. Guests will enjoy unique finds like x-rays of boots that went to the moon and actual pieces from a shuttle. Best of all, visitors have the rare opportunity to actually touch the showcased items, including consoles from past shuttles.

“Visitors can spend one day or several days enjoying all the space-related facets of our destination,” said Rob Varley, executive director, Space Coast Office of Tourism. “Vacations aren’t limited to one experience here, they can encompass everything from viewing a manned space shuttle launch to seeing an unmanned rocket launch to touching real mission artifacts. Either way, these are unique opportunities only this destination can provide.”

Whether a space enthusiast or a traveler looking for a unique travel experience, Florida’s Space Coast unlocks the door to a variety of vacation experiences that can’t be duplicated anywhere else.

Located 35 miles (56 km) east of Orlando, Florida’s Space Coast is home to Orlando’s closest beaches. A family-friendly destination with more than 10,000 guest rooms, the area is an ideal, value getaway, offering adventure, history and nature. With 72 miles (110 km) of beaches, the longest stretch in the state, and 250 square miles of wildlife refuge, the Space Coast is one of the largest intact eco-systems in Florida. Home to NASA’s Kennedy Space Center, it is the only place in the country where one can watch a live shuttle launch, and after the shuttle program ends will continue to offer viewing opportunities for unmanned rocket launches. Encompassing Cocoa Beach, Melbourne Beach, Palm Bay and Titusville, the Space Coast also is noted for surfing, its numerous history and art museums, and a popular cruise port, Port Canaveral. For more information, contact the Space Coast Office of Tourism at (877) 572-3224 or visit www.space-coast.com. Visit www.spacecoastlaunches.com to learn about remaining shuttle and upcoming rocket launches.

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