

Chat with an Astronaut at Kennedy Space Center Visitor Complex

*New and improved astronaut experiences arrive to
Kennedy Space Center Visitor Complex December 13.*

CAPE CANAVERAL (December 13, 2021) – KENNEDY SPACE CENTER – Beginning Monday, December 13, guests at [Kennedy Space Center Visitor Complex](#) can kick back with a cocktail and have a conversation with an astronaut through a series of new and improved astronaut experiences at Kennedy Space Center Visitor Complex. Every day, guests will have the chance to meet face-to-face with space pioneers during the new *Chat With An Astronaut* and the relaunched *Astronaut Encounter*.

“Our programs, events and attractions at Kennedy Space Center Visitor Complex are designed to bring our guests as close to space as possible, without ever leaving Earth,” said Therrin Protze, chief operating officer, Kennedy Space Center Visitor Complex. “Inviting astronauts to share their memorable and inspiring stories with our guests is one way we do that. There are so many experiences that are unique to us at the visitor complex, and one of the most special is the opportunity to engage directly with our national space heroes.”

Chat With An Astronaut

The new [Chat With An Astronaut](#) will feature a sit down with the Astronaut of the Day in an intimate, small-group setting. The astronaut will answer guests’ most-pressing questions as they all enjoy food and drinks together. Replacing the former Dine with an Astronaut program, Chat With An Astronaut will be offered twice daily at 10 a.m. and 2 p.m. ET.

This add-on experience includes a continental breakfast in the morning, or chef’s choice of culinary samplings in the afternoon, one alcoholic drink per adult ticket (more available for purchase), a commemorative gift and signed portrait of the astronaut. Tickets are \$50* per adult, and \$35* per child.**

This experience is indoors with social distancing practices in place. For everyone’s health and safety, astronauts will not pose for photos with guests.

Astronaut Encounter

Included with admission, the beloved [Astronaut Encounter](#) presentations will return to the Universe Theater beginning December 13. During this 40-minute experience, guests have the rare opportunity to meet veteran NASA astronauts and learn about their experiences in space as commanders, pilots, and mission and payload specialists.

The December Astronauts of the Day schedule includes:

- [Don Thomas | December 13 - 14](#)
- [Mike Baker | December 15 - 18](#)
- [Ken Cameron | December 19 - 22](#)
- [Norm Thagard | December 23 - 28](#)
- [Tony Antonelli | December 29 – January 2](#)

Bruce Melnick, veteran astronaut and director of operational excellence at Kennedy Space Center Visitor Complex is responsible for overseeing the Astronaut Encounter program.

“The opportunity to be part of the important mission to educate the next generation of space explorers is the perfect next phase of my career,” said Melnick. “I’m looking forward to sharing my passion for adventure and my experiences in space – and on Earth – with our guests as we bring exciting new programs to Kennedy Space Center Visitor Complex.”

Melnick spent more than 300 hours in space, orbiting Earth 207 times aboard space shuttle missions in 1990 and 1992. Between 1992 and 2007 Bruce held various positions of increasing responsibility with Lockheed Martin, United Space Alliance, McDonnell Douglas and the Boeing Company. He most recently served as Vice President of The Boeing Company, Space Coast Operations Division, where he was responsible for supporting many of the programs throughout Florida, including International Space Station, space shuttle and the Delta rocket family.

For more information, and to purchase tickets, visit www.kennedyspacecenter.com.

As always, the health and safety of employees and guests is the highest priority for Kennedy Space Center Visitor Complex. In accordance with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention’s (CDC) recommendations, the visitor complex continues to operate at a limited attendance, accommodating social distancing, encouraging advance daily admission purchases, and implementing increased frequency of sanitization and disinfection. The visitor complex has updated the face mask policy. All guests, including those vaccinated against COVID-19, are required to wear face coverings in all indoor locations, except when actively eating or drinking. This includes all attractions, attraction queues, show viewing areas, restaurants and buses. Guests who have been fully vaccinated against COVID-19 are not required to wear face coverings outdoors. Additional details are available at: www.kennedyspacecenter.com/info/coronavirus.

**In addition to daily admission. Price is per person, plus tax.*

***Due to the small setting of this experience, Chat With An Astronaut is not available to groups. There is a maximum of six tickets purchased per transaction.*

About Kennedy Space Center Visitor Complex

Kennedy Space Center Visitor Complex brings to life the epic story of the U.S. space program, offering a full day or more of fun, inspiration and educational activities. Currently open with limited capacity due to COVID-19, included with admission are Heroes & Legends, featuring the

U.S. Astronaut Hall of Fame[®], presented by Boeing, Space Shuttle Atlantis[®], Journey To Mars: Explorers Wanted, space films, the Rocket Garden, the all-new Planet Play and the Apollo/Saturn V Center. Only 45 minutes from Orlando, Fla., Kennedy Space Center Visitor Complex is open daily from 9 a.m. – 5 p.m. Admission is \$57 + tax for adults and \$47 + tax for children ages 3 – 11. For more information, call 877-313-2610 or visit www.KennedySpaceCenter.com.

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Media Contacts:

Lauren Eisele Walbert, Sandy Hillman Communications, lwalbert@hillmanpr.com,
443-683-0294