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SPACE CITY SPOTLIGHT SERIES FOR DECEMBER

The New Saturn Experience at Space Center Houston

How do you get humans into space?

That was a question that pondered scientists for centuries. Saturn V, the world's largest, most powerful rocket ever built and operated became the answer to that question and safely took astronauts into space and the moon before retiring. Saturn V has just been carefully restored after a two year process and now visitors can experience the massive history-making machine and the J-2 rocket engine inside a brand new building complex at Space Center Houston. For a closer look, a miniature scale model of Saturn V is located in the Starship Gallery.

Saturn V is taller than a 36-story building and was built with three stages, three million parts and 11 engines. This legendary machine is commonly known as the Moon Rocket since it was used on lunar missions before the Skylab Space Station. There are only three of these massive rockets left in the world.

A major component of Saturn V is the J-2 rocket engine, the second largest liquid hydrogen fueled rocket engine only after the Space Shuttle. The J-2 design was unique at the time it was built because of its ability to re-start after shutting down. It would first burn for two minutes to get the spacecraft into earth orbit, then shut down. Once the spacecraft had been checked, it was re-ignited to push away from the earth.

The feature film "On Human Destiny" at the Destiny Theater in Space Center Houston will take viewers on a journey through the fascinating and challenging world of the space program. "On Human Destiny" is free with admission and is shown twice an hour. Once the film is over, visitors are directed into the Starship Gallery Timeline that highlights all of the space programs including Project Mercury with fascinating historical artifacts.

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Space Center Houston has created the interactive exhibit Kids Space Place for children who dream of experiencing the same things astronauts do in space such as walking on the moon, commanding the Space Shuttle or living on the space station. They may also design their own virtual rocket in *Build-A-Rocket* on a computer by selecting different size boosters based on the distance their rocket must fly and then it is time to launch! In *Rocket Launch*, children will enjoy pretending to pump fuel into a rocket and once the correct pressure has been reached, their rocket will soar five stories high.

Space Center Houston is open every day of the year with the exception of Christmas Day. Admission is \$18.95 for adults, \$14.95 for children ages 4-11 and Senior tickets are \$17.95. December hours are 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Mon. – Fri. and 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. on Saturdays and Sundays. Hours may vary daily during the holiday season – please visit our calendar at www.spacecenter.org. For more information please call 281.244.2105.

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