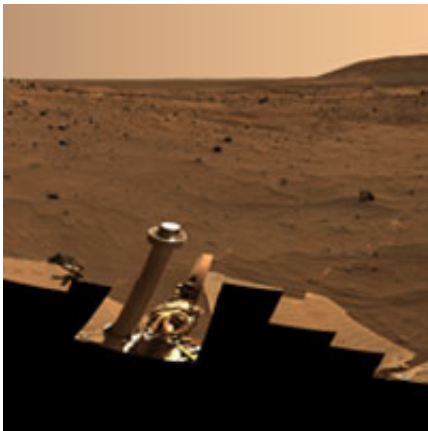


NASA Posts Panorama to Celebrate Rover's 1,000th Martian Day

October 25 2006



A part of a 360-degree view, called the "McMurdo" panorama, from Spirit.
Image credit: NASA/JPL/Cornell

NASA's long-lived Mars Exploration Rover Spirit will finish its 1,000th Martian day Thursday, continuing a successful mission originally planned for 90 Martian days.

A color 360-degree panorama released today -- produced from the most detailed imaging yet completed by either Spirit or its twin, Opportunity -- shows rugged terrain of the robot's current location amid a range of hills. The vista, dubbed the "McMurdo Panorama," comes from Spirit's panoramic camera and is available online at www.nasa.gov/mission_pages/mer/images/20061025.html .

Spirit has been examining the surroundings for several months while perched with a tilt to the north for maximum solar energy during winter in Mars' southern hemisphere. The rover team at NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory, Pasadena, Calif., plans to resume driving the rover in coming weeks as Martian spring approaches.

Spirit landed inside Mars' Gusev Crater on Jan. 3, 2004, PST (Jan. 4 Universal Time). Each Martian day is longer than an Earth day, lasting 24 hours, 39 minutes, 35 seconds. That means that in Earth days, Spirit has been on Mars about 1,026 days.

Source: NASA

Citation: NASA Posts Panorama to Celebrate Rover's 1,000th Martian Day (2006, October 25) retrieved 3 May 2024 from

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