

Astronauts to taste 'space sushi'

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US astronaut Timothy Creamer (L), Russian cosmonaut Oleg Kotov (C), and Japanese astronaut Soichi Noguchi (R) clasp hands during a press conference outside Moscow in Star City. Creamer said on Thursday he was impatient to taste "space sushi" courtesy of his Japanese crewmate after they arrive on the International Space Station (ISS) later this month.

US astronaut Timothy Creamer said on Thursday he was impatient to taste "space sushi" courtesy of his Japanese crewmate after they arrive on the International Space Station (ISS) later this month.

"We can't wait for when Soichi makes us sushi!" Creamer said, referring to Japanese astronaut Soichi Noguchi, at a press conference at the Star City cosmonaut training centre outside Moscow, the Interfax news agency reported.

Noguchi and Creamer -- a US Army colonel making his first flight to space -- as well as Russian cosmonaut Oleg Kotov will blast off on

December 21 from the Baikonur space base in Kazakhstan for a two-day voyage to the ISS in a cramped [Soyuz capsule](#).

Separately, recent ISS resident Robert Thirsk said the re-entry ride in the Soyuz had been his favourite part of his entire six-month space voyage.

"The landing was the most interesting and dynamic part of my expedition," said Thirsk, a Canadian astronaut who returned to Earth on Tuesday along with Belgian Frank De Winne and Russian Roman Romanenko.

"In the last 20 minutes before landing the shuttle shook violently and plasma fire could be seen out the window. The feeling was 10 times stronger than all of my expectations!"

Despite the fiery visuals described by Thirsk, Japan's Noguchi expressed full faith in the safety of Russia's Soyuz capsule, whose Soviet-era design has not changed since the 1960s.

"The Soyuz is a very reliable and time-tested [space](#) shuttle. I really like its design and I am sure that our flight on it will be without incident," Noguchi said, quoted by RIA-Novosti news agency.

The ISS will be manned by just two people, US astronaut Jeff Williams and Russian [cosmonaut](#) Maxim Surayev, until the three new crew members arrive on December 23.

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