

Portraits of moons captured by Cassini

December 13 2011, By Jia-Rui C. Cook



NASA's Cassini spacecraft obtained this unprocessed image on Dec. 12, 2011. The camera was pointing toward Saturn's moon Dione from approximately 69,989 miles (112,636 kilometers) away. Credit: NASA/JPL-Caltech/SSI

(PhysOrg.com) -- NASA's Cassini spacecraft successfully completed its closest-ever pass over Saturn's moon Dione on Monday, Dec. 12, slaloming its way through the Saturn system on its way to tomorrow's close flyby of Titan. Cassini is expected to glide about 2,200 miles

(3,600 kilometers) over the Titan surface on Dec. 13.

In the selection of the raw images obtained during the Cassini [Dione flyby](#), Dione is sometimes joined by other moons. Mimas appears just beyond the dark side of Dione in one view. In another view, Epimetheus and Pandora appear together, along with Saturn's rings.



NASA's Cassini spacecraft obtained this unprocessed image on Dec. 12, 2011. The camera was pointing toward Saturn's moon Dione from approximately 48,236 miles (77,682 kilometers) away. Credit: NASA/JPL-Caltech/SSI

This Dione encounter was intended primarily for Cassini's [composite infrared spectrometer](#) and radio science subsystem. However, the imaging team did capture views of the distinctive, wispy fractures on the

side of Dione that always trails in its orbit around Saturn. It also obtained images of a ridge called Janiculum Dorsa on the hemisphere of Dione that always leads in its orbit around Saturn. While other flybys produced more detailed views of the surface, the best resolved images from this flyby have scales ranging from about 1,100 feet (350 meters) to about 1,600 feet (500 meters) per pixel. Janiculum Dorsa will be imaged by Cassini at higher resolution in May 2012.

More information: All of Cassini's raw images can be seen at saturn.jpl.nasa.gov/photos/raw/

Provided by JPL/NASA

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