

Space shuttle Enterprise to arrive in NY on Friday

April 26 2012, By DEEPTI HAJELA , Associated Press

(AP) -- Any new arrival to New York City wants to visit the sights - and the space shuttle Enterprise is no different.

Enterprise is scheduled to arrive in the city Friday, riding on top of a modified [jumbo jet](#). Its trip was to include low-altitude flyovers over parts of the city and landmarks including the Statue of Liberty and the Intrepid Sea, [Air and Space Museum](#) on Manhattan's west side.

The shuttle had been scheduled to arrive earlier in the week but NASA pushed it back because of [bad weather](#).

The shuttle prototype was housed at the Smithsonian Institution in Washington but will soon be making its home at the Intrepid, where it will be "the largest and most significant space artifact in the entire Northeast," said Susan Marenoff-Zausner, Intrepid's president.

That won't happen right away; after its fly-around, the Enterprise is heading to Kennedy Airport, where it will remain for a few weeks until it's taken off the 747 jet it rode to New York.

After that, Marenoff-Zausner said, it will be put on a barge in early June and brought up the Hudson River to the Intrepid, where it will be put on the flight deck and a pavilion over it will be completed. The museum anticipates opening the shuttle exhibit to the public in mid-July.

"When somebody comes to visit, they will not only see the shuttle itself,

but will have an engaging and interactive experience inside the pavilion," she said.

Enterprise comes to New York as part of NASA's process of wrapping up the [shuttle program](#), which ended last summer. At the Smithsonian, its place has been taken by the [shuttle Discovery](#). Shuttle Endeavor is going to Los Angeles and [shuttle Atlantis](#) is staying at Florida's [Kennedy Space Center](#).

Enterprise has never been used in an actual [space mission](#), but was a full-scale [test vehicle](#) used for flights in the atmosphere and experiments on the ground.

That doesn't make Intrepid any less excited about having it, Marenoff-Zausner said.

"This is an institution in American history," she said, adding, "This tested too many different things that without it, travel into space would never had happened."

She is confident the public will feel the same way and anticipates interest in the shuttle will increase the number of annual visitors by about 30 percent, to 1.3 million over the course of a year.

The public's interest is what drove the Intrepid to find a way to display it even though a permanent display location still has to be found, Marenoff-Zausner said.

The initial plan was to leave it at the airport for a couple of years until its permanent home was set, she said, but "we want the public to be able to experience this immediately."

In order to do that, Intrepid had to do some shuffling around of its

collection. Last week, three aircraft were taken off the flight deck and sent to the Empire State Aerosciences Museum in Glenville, N.Y.

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Citation: Space shuttle Enterprise to arrive in NY on Friday (2012, April 26) retrieved 1 May 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2012-04-space-shuttle-enterprise-ny-friday.html>

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