

Image: Cassini's arrival and departure

November 28 2017



Credit: NASA/JPL-Caltech/Space Science Institute

These two images illustrate just how far Cassini traveled to get to Saturn. On the left is one of the earliest images Cassini took of the ringed planet, captured during the long voyage from the inner solar system. On the right is one of Cassini's final images of Saturn, showing the site where the spacecraft would enter the atmosphere on the following day.

In the left image, taken in 2001, about six months after the spacecraft passed Jupiter for a gravity assist flyby, the best view of Saturn using the spacecraft's high-resolution (narrow-angle) camera was on the order of

what could be seen using the Earth-orbiting Hubble Space Telescope. At the end of the mission (at right), from close to Saturn, even the lower resolution (wide-angle) camera could capture just a tiny part of the planet.

The left image looks toward Saturn from 20 degrees below the [ring plane](#) and was taken on July 13, 2001 in wavelengths of infrared light centered at 727 nanometers using the Cassini spacecraft narrow-angle camera. The view at right is centered on a point 6 degrees north of the equator and was taken in visible light using the wide-angle [camera](#) on Sept. 14, 2017.

The view on the left was acquired at a distance of approximately 317 million miles (510 million kilometers) from Saturn. Image scale is about 1,900 miles (3,100 kilometers) per pixel. The view at right was acquired at a distance of approximately 360,000 miles (579,000 kilometers) from Saturn. Image scale is 22 miles (35 kilometers) per pixel.

The Cassini spacecraft ended its mission on Sept. 15, 2017.

Provided by NASA

Citation: Image: Cassini's arrival and departure (2017, November 28) retrieved 24 April 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2017-11-image-cassini-departure.html>

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