

# Astronauts aim for icy homecoming after months in space

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This image provided by NASA on Feb. 25, 2018, shows from bottom to top: Russia's Alexander Misurkin, NASA's Mark Vande Hei, middle, and NASA's Joe Acaba posing for a photograph at the International Space Station. The three

astronauts are headed back to Earth on Tuesday, Feb. 27, following a nearly six-month mission at the International Space Station. Misurkin, Vande Hei and Acaba moved into the orbiting lab in September. They are targeting a Kazakhstan touchdown for their Russian capsule. (NASA via AP)

Three astronauts face a bitterly cold homecoming after nearly six months aboard the International Space Station.

The two Americans and one Russian entered their attached Soyuz capsule Tuesday for the ride back to Earth. They're aiming for a touchdown Wednesday morning local time in Kazakhstan. Snow and freezing rain are complicating the travel of recovery crews.

Joe Acaba, Mark Vande Hei (VAN-duh-HI) and Alexander Misurkin flew to the orbiting lab last September. Their mission was highlighted by robot-arm renovations, schoolteacher pep talks and heavenly greetings from Pope Francis.

Acaba is the first astronaut of Puerto Rican heritage and a former teacher. He teamed up with another educator-astronaut, who's launching in three weeks, to perform the science lessons prepared by Christa McAuliffe 32 years ago. She died aboard space shuttle Challenger.

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