

Overview of Activities for “Welcome *Discovery*”

The following “Welcome *Discovery*” activities will be presented by the Smithsonian’s National Air and Space Museum in cooperation with NASA. Support for the “Welcome *Discovery*” Transfer Ceremony is provided by the Boeing Co. and Lockheed Martin Corp. Because weather conditions or other circumstances could cause delays or postponement, the public is asked to check the [museum’s website](#) and social media ([Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#)) for up-to-date information.

Fly-in Day, April 17

Discovery will depart NASA’s Kennedy Space Center in Florida on the Shuttle Carrier Aircraft, a Boeing 747, in the early morning of Tuesday, April 17. It is expected to arrive in the Washington, D.C., area around midmorning and will land at Washington’s Dulles International Airport. *Discovery* will fly over parts of the Washington metropolitan area. The exact path will not be publicized in advance. Depending on weather and other circumstances, it may be possible for media organizations to identify viewing locations that day.

Spot the Shuttle

People in the Washington area, from students to office workers, are invited to participate in Spot the Shuttle activities April 17:

- Spot the Shuttle gatherings on rooftops, balconies and at outdoor restaurants are being planned.
- Snap a Shot—the public is encouraged to take photos of *Discovery* and share them through the museum’s Flickr group, on Twitter with #SpotTheShuttle, on the museum’s Facebook page and Pinterest board or share videos on YouTube.
- Register Your Name—people who spot *Discovery* may register on the museum’s website and could win a chance to sit in the VIP section at the “Welcome *Discovery*” Transfer Ceremony April 19.
- Park and View—As *Discovery* approaches, the museum will update its website constantly and make the information available to radio stations.

The best place to view the orbiter as it approaches Dulles International Airport is the parking lot of the Udvar-Hazy Center. Visitors are invited to BYOB—Bring Your Own Breakfast—and join fellow shuttle spotters in the lot. The parking lot will open early at 8 a.m.

Airport Arrival

There will be no public access to see the actual touchdown at the airport, but arrangements are being made to broadcast the arrival on the Web and through media coverage. After the shuttle arrives, it will be taken to another area of the airport, where it will be de-mated from the 747 and made ready for towing to the museum. This process will take two days.

“Welcome *Discovery*” Celebration, April 19

The parking lot will open at 8 a.m.; the Udvar-Hazy Center will open at 9 a.m. and close at 6:30 p.m. Educational activities will end at 4:30 p.m.

Discovery will officially be transferred from NASA to the National Air and Space Museum in an outdoor public ceremony at the Udvar-Hazy Center. The event will begin with *Discovery*’s arrival from adjacent Dulles Airport, onto the tow road behind the Center. A “parade” led by the U.S. Marine Drum and Bugle Corps will feature an Astronaut Escort representing *Discovery*’s missions. *Discovery* will be positioned next to *Enterprise* for the ceremony. *Enterprise*, which has been on view at the Udvar-Hazy Center since it opened in 2003, will be moved to the Intrepid Sea, Air & Space Museum in New York, on a date soon to be announced.

The ceremony will feature Smithsonian Secretary Wayne Clough, National Air and Space Museum Director J.R. “Jack” Dailey and a representative of NASA. Mezzo soprano Denyce Graves will perform the national anthem. Astronauts who participated in *Discovery*’s most historic missions will be introduced during a presentation on the orbiter’s achievements. The high point of the program will be the formal signing of the transfer document.

Following the ceremony, the public will be invited to view both *Discovery* and *Enterprise* and take photographs all afternoon.

Specialists from NASA and the museum’s Collections Division will begin repositioning *Enterprise* and *Discovery* later that afternoon. The outdoor viewing area will close at 6 p.m.

Celebration Day, April 19; noon–6:30 p.m. Educational activities until 4:30 p.m.

Both indoor and outdoor activities will take place at the Udvar-Hazy Center before and after the ceremony. NASA will present an outdoor display—Our Future in Space. Attractions inside will include spacesuit displays, photo opportunities and talks by *Discovery* astronauts. Authors will sign space-themed books and shuttle-inspired IMAX movies will be presented. Visitors will have an opportunity to sign a commemorative *Discovery* banner, which will be kept as a memento of the day.

Student Discovery Day, April 20; 10 a.m.–5:30 p.m. Educational activities until 3 p.m.

Students are specially invited to take part in the second day of the “Welcome *Discovery*” festival on Student Discovery Day. Along with the other activities planned throughout the weekend, the student day will feature astronauts and scientists presenting educational talks designed for young people. The museum’s educational efforts support the STEM initiative, focusing on Science, Technology, Education and Math.

Family Weekend, April 20 and 21; 10 a.m.–5:30 p.m. Educational activities until 3 p.m.

Among the highlights will be educational presentations about NASA’s planetary missions and NASA’s “Our Future in Space” exhibition trailer, and free screenings of the Smithsonian Channel documentary, *Space Shuttle: The Final Countdown*. Activities will also include Ask an Expert talks by curators and scientists, *Discovery* Station demonstrations, spacesuit displays, robot activities, interactive displays and the opportunity to sign an actual shuttle tire for future display.

Offsite Activities

Discovery activities will be presented in the “Moving Beyond Earth” exhibition, an interactive gallery located in the National Air and Space Museum’s building in Washington on the National Mall. Live simulcast of *Discovery*’s arrival and the “Welcome *Discovery*” ceremony are planned.

Smithsonian Channel is celebrating the arrival of *Discovery* with Space Shuttle Week, April 16–22. The television premiere of *Space Shuttle: The Final Countdown* will be broadcast April 22 at 8 p.m.

Tips for Participants

- Parking at the Udvar-Hazy Center, which is \$15 per car, is limited. Drivers are asked to allow ample time for traffic congestion. Cash payment, in the exact amount, is preferred. Carpooling is suggested.
- Casual, comfortable dress is recommended, particularly shoes designed for walking.
- For outdoor activities, especially viewing *Discovery*’s approach, binoculars are suggested.
- Mobile devices are recommended for getting up-to-date information from the museum’s website and taking part in Web-based activities.

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