

SpaceX's Inspiration4 update: Cold pizza, zero-gravity flips and a ukulele solo

Hawthorne-based SpaceX's crew of amateur astronauts will return to Earth on Saturday evening

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This photo provided by SpaceX shows the passengers of Inspiration4 in the Dragon capsule on Friday, Sept. 17. They are, from left, Chris Sembroski, Jared Isaacman, Sian Proctor and Hayley Arceneaux. SpaceX got them into a 363-mile (585-kilometer) orbit following Wednesday night's launch from NASA's Kennedy Space Center. That's 100 miles (160 kilometers) higher than the International Space Station. (SpaceX)

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PUBLISHED: September 17, 2021 at 4:34 p.m. | UPDATED: September 17, 2021 at 4:35 p.m.





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This photo provided by SpaceX shows Hayley Arceneaux, one of the passengers of Inspiration4 in the Dragon capsule on Friday, Sept. 17. (SpaceX)

Two days into Hawthorne-based SpaceX's Inspiration4 mission, the Earth-orbiting crew of amateur astronauts provided a lively livecast update on its journey on Friday, Sept. 17, 24 hours before they're due to splash down off the Florida coast.

The event included zero-gravity tumbles, lots of high spirits, displays of artwork created in space and an interstellar ukulele solo.

During the livestream, the crew announced that the quartet was scheduled to return to Earth at 4:06 p.m. PDT Saturday, splashing down into the Atlantic Ocean off the coast of Florida.

SpaceX's Dragon capsule was scheduled to perform two burns Friday night to reduce the spacecraft's altitude to 365 kilometers, SpaceX tweeted Friday, to align the craft with its landing site.

Dragon reached as high as 590 kilometers, or 367 miles, above earth's surface before the astronauts took off their space suits, said Andy Tran, quality engineer at SpaceX, during the update.

[Dragon lifted off Wednesday](#) at NASA's Kennedy Space Center in Florida.

Aboard the history-making, fund-raising flight are the [four amateur astronauts](#): mission commander Jared Isaacman, billionaire CEO of payment processing company Shift4 Payments, who funded the trip; mission pilot Sian Proctor, a geoscientist and community college professor in Arizona; mission medical officer Hayley Arceneaux, a physician's assistant at St. Jude Children's Research Center in Memphis, TN; and mission specialist Chris Sembroski, an aerospace data engineer.

Their first meal in space was cold pizza, which the crew said, Tran relayed. And it was extraordinary, he added.

On Friday, Proctor turned the camera to the Dragon's cupola window, trying to share a view the stars and an aurora around Earth amid the dark atmosphere.

"We've been spending so much time in this cupola, the largest window flown into space," Arceneaux said. "We could see the entire perimeter of the Earth, which gives such incredible perspective; the views, I have to say, are out of this world."

Well, they literally are just that.

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The crew floated above Europe during the update, Proctor said, as Proctor showed her marker illustration of the Dragon being carried by an actual dragon off of Earth, Sembroski played his ukulele and Arceneaux turned flips in the zero-gravity environment.

The crew only had 10 minutes of connectivity to Earth on Friday, Tran said, as SpaceX can only communicate with a spacecraft travelling 17,500 mph when it is flying over a designated ground station.

They've been taking swabs of different body parts to evaluate the microbiome and how that changes in those three days in space, Arceneaux said. The crew has also been taking blood samples for research teams back on Earth to study, as well as cognitive tests.

Aside from scientific research, the mission's biggest goal is to raise \$200 million for [St. Jude Children's Research Hospital](#). Isaacman looks to the greater community to match the \$100 million he's pledging to the hospital.

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