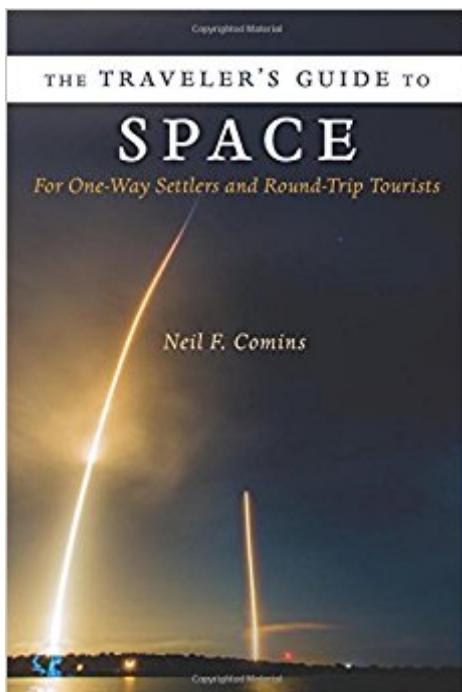


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The Traveler's Guide To Space: For One-Way Settlers And Round-Trip Tourists



Synopsis

If you have ever wondered about space travel, now you have the opportunity to understand it more fully than ever before. Traveling into space and even emigrating to nearby worlds may soon become part of the human experience. Scientists, engineers, and investors are working hard to make space tourism and colonization a reality. As astronauts can attest, extraterrestrial travel is incomparably thrilling. To make the most of the experience requires serious physical and mental adaptations in virtually every aspect of life, from eating to intimacy. Everyone who goes into space sees Earth and life on it from a profoundly different perspective than they had before liftoff. Astronomer and former NASA/ASEE scientist Neil F. Comins has written the go-to book for anyone interested in space exploration. He describes the wonders that travelers will encounter—weightlessness, unparalleled views of Earth and the cosmos, and the opportunity to walk on another world—as well as the dangers: radiation, projectiles, unbreathable atmospheres, and potential equipment failures. He also provides insights into specific trips to destinations including suborbital flights, space stations, the Moon, asteroids, comets, and Mars—the top candidate for colonization. Although many challenges are technical, Comins outlines them in clear language for all readers. He synthesizes key issues and cutting-edge research in astronomy, physics, biology, psychology, and sociology to create a complete manual for the ultimate voyage.

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Customer Reviews

There is no other book for the popular reader that addresses the many serious challenges involved

in deep space travel. Understanding these issues is essential for anyone with an interest in space exploration. The Traveler's Guide to Space does an excellent job at looking at the whole picture, from space tourists to one-way colonization; from physical to psychological challenges. (Robert Geller, University of California, Santa Barbara)The Traveler's Guide to Space takes you on an amazing adventure and gives you the perspective that only a seasoned scientist can. Neil Comins presents a thorough and timely account of the incredible sights that await any solar system traveler, as well as scientific insight into the sensations, pitfalls, and wonders both geological and astronomical that he or she will encounter along the way. (Andrew West, astronomer)Neil F. Comins has written the go-to book for anyone interested in space exploration. (Uncovered Books)This makes an excellent primer for anyone, especially astronomy enthusiasts and budding astronauts, who can't afford a ticket to space and wish to visit in spirit. (Booklist)The Traveler's Guide to Space is a delight... don't leave Earth without it. (New Scientist)Reading The Traveler's Guide to Space will help the reader have a better grasp on what is happening in current events. (Steve Canipe National Science Teachers Association)A listing of the book in Science Book News ([published weekly.) (Science Book News)Recommended. (J. Z. Kiss, UNC-Greensboro Choice)

Astronomer and former NASA/ASEE scientist Neil F. Comins has written the go-to book for anyone interested in space exploration, including potential travelers. He describes the joys and the dangers travelers will face—weightlessness, unparalleled views of Earth and the cosmos, the opportunity to walk on or jump off another world, as well as radiation, projectiles, unbreathable atmospheres, and potential equipment failures. Although many challenges to space travel are technical, Comins outlines these matters in clear language for all readers.

This book tries to be both a breezy travel guide in the general style of a Frommer's or Fodor's type guide and yet also undertakes to present some reasonably serious scientific and factual background pertaining to space travel. The result, as you can imagine, is a bit of a hodge-podge. The good news is that there is much of interest here for a flexible and patient reader. So, on the one hand we get silliness about what tours might be arranged from your Mars hotel. On the other hand we get pages and pages of detailed descriptions of the different types of asteroids and comets that venture near enough to Earth to serve as travel destinations. Happily, between these two extremes there is a very great deal that will be of interest to the general reader. We start with a discussion of travel routes to various solar destinations and the types of spacecraft that might serve as transport. How a course to a solar object is actually plotted was something I knew little about. The same was true

about matters like radiation shielding, management of acceleration for the safety of human passengers, calculation of trip durations and the like. We spend a good deal of time on the health and safety of space travel, including the effects of microgravity, low air pressure, interrupted sleep patterns and the like. The wide prevalence of emotional problems, (depression, impulsiveness, hostility, and so on), was something I'd never considered. (Lots of this work draws on what was learned about the sailors in the nuclear submarine force.) I'd never closely considered the physical, psychological and sociological adjustments that would effect a traveler, (but just consider the effect of noise, vibration, poor sleep and someone always being within six feet of you, for six months.) This general topic is where the book shines. Through all of this we bob between parts that are too light and casual and parts that are too technical, but the author never goes overboard either way, and actually does a remarkably good job of pretty much steering his narrative course between these two extremes. The final third of the book addresses what we might find, mostly on the Moon and on Mars. Lots of planetary geology here, which I really like. The emphasis is on surface features, (because that's what a tourist would visit), and this was another highlight of the book, even if you disregard the whole travel angle. We end with a bit on colonization and then some reflections on readjusting after returning to Earth, and the author offered some unexpected and interesting thoughts about the effect of space travel on a person's general state of mind. So, the author's style is a pleasing compromise between popular narrative and a more rigorous presentation, and despite a few false steps here and then I felt I was in the hands of a genial, experienced and competent tour guide. Given the challenge of what was attempted here, that's not bad. (Please note that I received a free advance copy of this book without a review requirement, or any influence regarding review content should I choose to post a review. Apart from that I have no connection at all to either the author or the publisher of this book.)

Doctor Comins is an astrophysicist, astronomer, professor of physics and astronomy at the University of Maine. He wrote a fascinating well-researched technical review of life in space. It covers all aspects of space travel that would interest a novice tourist and research scientist. Comins breaks the book into four sections, preparing for space, adjusting to space, making most of the experiences in space, and home sweet home. Numerous photographs, figures, and science and science fiction factoids support the hypothesis under discussion. The book includes an appendix on the power of ten, notes, bibliography, and index. Anyone considering a trip into space or would like to travel there vicariously, should read this book.

I loved this book. Author Neil Comins writes about what extended travel to space would be like, medically, psychologically, and socially. He writes with a very conversational tone and with a good sense of humor. Comins explains all the science as he goes along and does this in plain language. The book moves along at a quick pace, moving from topic to topic without sacrificing clarity. And read the notes. Aside from clarifying some of the information, Comins' sense of humor shows through here as well. Disclosure: I received a complimentary copy of this book via Netgalley for review purposes.

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