



Magellan Deployment

The Martin Marietta-built Magellan spacecraft was deployed from the Space Shuttle Atlantis more than six hours after liftoff on May 4, 1989. About 90 minutes later, the spacecraft separated from its Inertial Upper Stage booster and began its 795-million-mile, 15-month trip to Venus.

Magellan will orbit Venus for 243 days, mapping the planet in great detail. Aboard Magellan is a synthetic aperture radar, an instrument that will pierce the thick, poisonous clouds of the planet and provide photographic quality images of the Venusian surface for the first time.

Built for the National Aeronautics and Space Administration's Jet Propulsion Laboratory, Pasadena, Calif., Magellan marks the United States' return to interplanetary exploration after more than ten years.

MARTIN MARIETTA

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