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Cassini's best maps of Jupiter

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South Polar Map of Jupiter

These colour maps of Jupiter were constructed from images taken by the narrow-angle camera onboard NASA's Cassini spacecraft on 11 and 12 December 2000, as the spacecraft neared Jupiter during its flyby of the giant planet. Cassini was on its way to Saturn. They are the most detailed global colour maps of Jupiter ever produced. The smallest visible features are about 120 kilometres across.

Cylindrical Map of Jupiter

The maps are composed of 36 images. Although the raw images are in just two colours, 750 nanometres (near-infrared) and 451 nanometres (blue), the map's colours are close to those the human eye would see when gazing at Jupiter.

The maps show a variety of colourful cloud features, including parallel reddish-brown and white bands, the Great Red Spot, chaotic regions with many small vortices. Many clouds appear in streaks and waves due to continual stretching and folding by Jupiter's winds and turbulence.

The round maps are polar stereographic projections that show the north or south pole in the centre of the map and the equator at the edge.

The Cassini-Huygens mission is a cooperative project of NASA, ESA and the Italian Space Agency.

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