

Day 2 - 26.08.2022

Welcome to Cocoa Beach!



Someone shakes me gently. I turn on my other side and bury myself in the pillow. "Get up," it sounds softly. I sighed, lifted my head and opened my eyes, but squeezed them right shut again. It was bright. The sunlight was shining into our room, making it glow brightly. I got up and changed my clothes.

It was already 9:30 a.m. Everyone was in the living room, with homemade hot dogs in their hands. That was our breakfast for today, so I took one too. Then we got into the car and drove off. Today is the first day in Coca Beach, so we will have a look at the area after Corona and see what all has changed.

But first we drove to our future hotel, where we will sleep after the start. It has a beautiful outdoor area with pool, bar and beach. On the tour, we discovered a small mural depicting the launch of a Soyuz. This was very surprising, but also nice to see, as Korolyov also developed it.

We continued to Pier 1, which is located directly on Cocoa Beach. The sun was shining strongly, the air was humid. Hard to bear for a long time. The beach is large and grey-white, the sea winds warm and humid. Seagulls fly by now and then, looking for a few crabs.

Yvonne, Tara, Arthur, Jesco and I walked onto the pier and had a quick look around, as we had to go straight on. However, we will have more time to look at the beach

later in the day. Past dollar shops, Fish&Chips restaurants, Tesla Chargers, mangrove forests and swamps, we drove straight to Titusville along the highway. It's funny how much space there is here. Everything is built and laid out on a large scale.



After about 20 min we passed the Blue Origin base, on to the Kennedy Space Center. The turn-off is marked by a big KSC logo, but it's all the more recognizable because of the ticket and vehicle control, which looks like a crawler transporter (transports the rockets to the launch site). After a few group photos we drove on and stopped at the Atlantis Museum. There was a replica of the Redstone rocket. Its 83 feet high, weighs 33 tons and flies on alcohol & liquid oxygen. It flew the first US manned/ballistic space mission with Alan Shepard. In the process, she released the first US satellite, Explorer 1, into orbit. Thus, Alan Shepard is the American Gagarin. As we drove by, we spotted a space shop with a homemade SLS rocket. It was

amazingly well built. After a short visit to the shop, we moved on.

We went to the Titusville Mall. In this mall you can find the registration for the Artemis launch. We were warmly welcomed and directed to Lynn Dotson and her colleague. Lynn works at NASA STEM-Stars and also has various tasks during the launch preparations. She also knows the head of HERC, which is a very cool coincidence. We will see her again at Banana Creek, our viewing point during the launch.



We checked in and got all the necessary information and materials regarding the launch. Among them: a badge, several magazines talking about the SLS rocket, stickers and patches + a small Orion capsule. Plus, access cards for the Kennedy Space Centre complex and more. So, we had everything we needed. Now nothing could go wrong, except for the things we aren't in control of.

Our next stop was Shiloh's bar. This grill restaurant provides a great view of the launch site 39b and the VAB. There we enjoyed a delicious and late lunch, as it was already 4pm. In between it rained heavily and thundered very loudly.

The last stop of the day was Walmart. This is a typical supermarket in the USA. There we bought supplies for the next days and especially for the launch.



This day ended with a visit to the beach in 30 degree water temperature, which was very pleasant by the way. I am already looking forward to tomorrow!