

'Space Camp Turkey was the ultimate fun and learning experience. A combination of fun-filled days packed with scientific learning, varied cultural experience and making friends with like-minded people from across the world' - Nicholas Lucas

SCIENCE & DISCOVERY by BEN GILLILAND **METRO COSM**

space cadets



Left: The winners take command at mission control during a simulated Shuttle mission
Below: Balloon building

of that beating heart. Step outside Space Camp Turkey and you find yourself in the beating heart of Turkish industry – not very inspiring. But that is to miss the point of what makes Space Camp Turkey so special.

The US-based camps make grand claims about being international summer camps but more than 90 per cent of their students are American. Turkey, on the other hand, has lain at the crossroads of East and West for millennia which is why the Romans moved their capital there and which is why Space Camp Turkey is truly an international experience.

Among the school's 150 students were children from Jordan, Israel, Greece, Russia, Turkey, Cyprus

(the list goes on), so the Richard in Space winners found themselves, not only getting a 'bring science alive' education, but also enjoying an eye-opening multi-cultural experience. In the west, we hear so much about Middle Eastern conflicts that it is easy for our youngsters to grow up with a 'bogeyman' view of people from the region. In an environment where cultural mixing is as much enforced as encouraged, our winners found that, without exception, the other children were just like them – children interested in the opposite sex, movies and science.

For many this was just as eye-opening as the fantastic science they learned along the way.

Why space camp is awesome

By **Jasmine Gilliland** (age 11)

Hi, during the summer holidays I went to Space Camp Turkey and I would definitely call it a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity.

When you are there you get almost all the training that astronauts get before they go into space. If you get the chance to go, then there are six different simulators.

One of the best is a life-size head of the shuttle orbiter which has all the buttons that the real one has. There were seven jobs to perform in the shuttle (I was the commander) and even more in mission control.

You also get to wear space suits – without the gloves because they are the most expensive bit (I thought it would have been the gold face piece). Trying suits on is hilarious, when other people are wearing them (but not so much when you are).

Another simulator is the multi-axis trainer that spins to demonstrate the feeling of a spacecraft tumbling in space –



Me, at the helm of the Space Shuttle (as Commander of course)

it's awesome. The Manned Manoeuvring Unit (MMU) simulates the frictionless environment of space.

The Space Station Mobility Trainer is just like a hamster wheel that you are strapped into. It's a bit painful but is fun.

They used to use it to train for Skylab (America's first space station) but stopped because the astronauts hated it.

Then there is the 1/6 chair which simulates walking on the Moon (the gravity is 1/6 of that on Earth).

The zero-gravity wall is

modelled after an experiment used on shuttle mission STS-61B called ACCESS (Assembly Concept for Constructing an Erectable Space Structure) which was used to demonstrate that it was possible to assemble a space station in space.

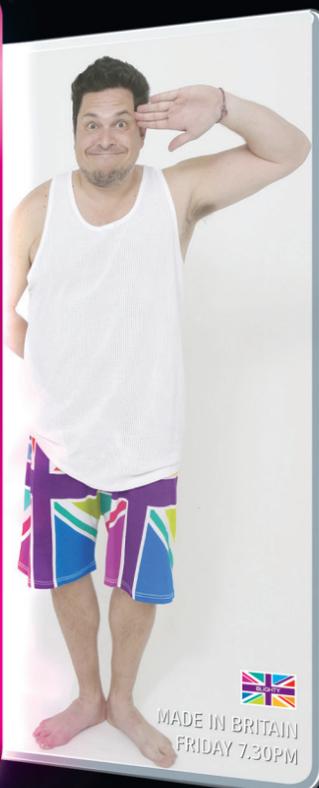
You also learn about things called hydroponics which are plants grown in space (why do astronauts give things such confusing names?).

Model rockets were loads of fun to build and to launch and some can even go 100m high.

It's not all fun and games. There are lessons, too, but, trust me, they aren't like school lessons because your counsellor makes them loads of fun. You also get to meet loads of other people from loads of different countries, which was pretty cool.

Hopefully, this will encourage all of you to be more enthusiastic about space. Bye!

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