

Curiosity at Martian Scenic Overlook

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When the Curiosity rover climbed a ridge and the skies cleared up during martian winter, we had the chance to take this amazing panorama.

I'm really glad we did.

Curiosity is inside Gale crater, a huge basin made by an impactor about 3.8 billion years ago.

The mountains across the crater floor are actually the northern rim of the crater. They rise over a mile above the rover.

It's so clear, when we took this image, that you can even see a hill outside the crater that is 50 miles away!

I love how you can see Peace Vallis, a channel that once held a flowing river, like many others that formed lakes inside Gale crater.

This is also the first time we could look back and see everywhere we've been so far in the mission since landing in 2012. Here's the path we took.

After landing, we drove to Yellowknife Bay before we turned southwest through Darwin, Cooperstown, and the Kimberley.

The rover studied dark, windblown sand at Namib Dune.

Curiosity then weaved between the Murray Buttes, checked out Ireson Hill, and made a tricky crossing of the Bagnold Dunes before reaching the ridge where it sits today and caught this amazing view.

To aid geologists, colors in the image are white balanced so rocks appear the same color as the same rocks would on Earth.