

Water on Mars PICTURED: ESA shares incredible IMAGES of Martian ice crater

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The European Space Agency has shared an incredible composite image showing a 50-mile wide crater on Mars that is filled with water ice all year long.

Budding future colonists hoping for a white Christmas on Mars will be somewhat disappointed as the ESA has confirmed that sitting in the Korolev crater is, in fact, a thick block of water ice, not snow. The enormous, 82-kilometer-wide, 2-kilometer-deep "ice trap" could still be good for ice skating though.

@esa A beautiful #winter wonderland... on #Mars! This ice-filled crater was imaged by our Mars Express spacecraft. Korolev crater is 82 kilometres across and found in the northern lowlands of Mars. More images: http://www.esa.int/Our Activities/Space Science/Mars Express...

Even better, the 2,200 cubic kilometers of water ice – same as the volume of Canada's Great Bear Lake – could be important for the survival of future colonists, and may even enable them to return back home, as water could be split into hydrogen and oxygen for rocket fuel.

<u>@esa</u> For those of you asking - yes it is water ice. Mars Express first detected water on <u>#Mars</u> in 2004, see our release at the time <u>https://www.</u>

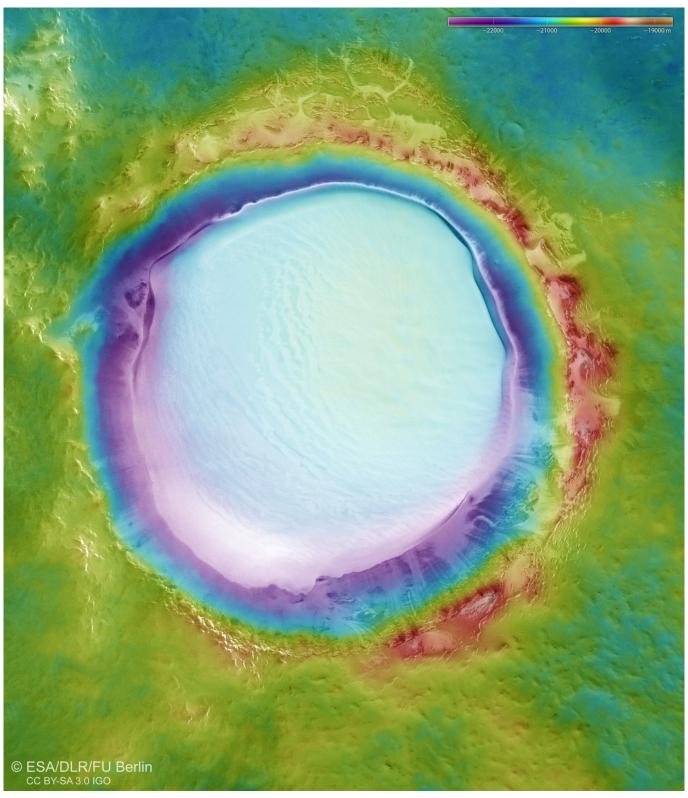


esa.int/Our Activities

/Space Science/Mars Express/Mars Express sees its first water scientific results.... More recently, the spacecraft detected liquid water under the planet's south pole, see: https://www.esa.int/Our Activities

The crater is found in the northern lowlands of Mars near the planet's north pole which is known as Olympia Undae for its wavy, dune-filled terrain. The crater's ice is protected by the topography and by a lair of cold air that shields it from the elements.





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The icy crater is named after chief rocket engineer and spacecraft designer Sergey Korolev, known as the father of Soviet space technology and the head of



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iconic space exploration missions including the Sputnik, Vostok, and Voskhod programs. A lesser known fact is that Korolev dreamt about a flight to Mars for decades and was actually working on a rocket that would have brought a man to the Red Planet – and who knows where this unfinished project might have ended if it wasn't for the Soviet visionary's untimely death in 1966.

READ MORE: Sergey Korolev: Space exploration's No. 1 constructor & total enigma