

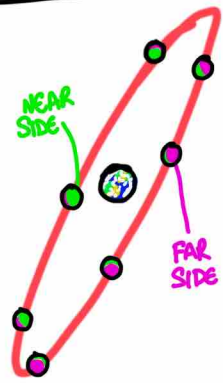
TALES FROM THE FAR SIDE

THE OTHER SIDE OF THE MOON

OUR FIRST VIEW OF THE FAR SIDE CAME IN 1959, FROM THE USSR'S LUNA 3



FROM EARTH, WE ALWAYS SEE THE SAME SIDE OF THE MOON



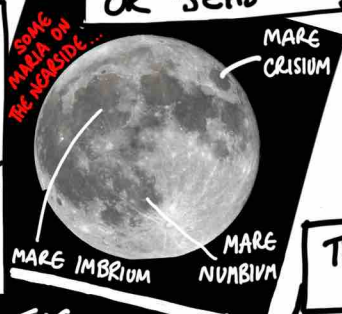
THE MOON IS TIDALLY LOCKED. DURING EVERY 27.3-DAY ORBIT AROUND EARTH, THE MOON ROTATES ONCE.

(WE CAN ACTUALLY SEE A LITTLE BIT MORE THAN HALF THE MOON; THAT'S ANOTHER STRIP!)

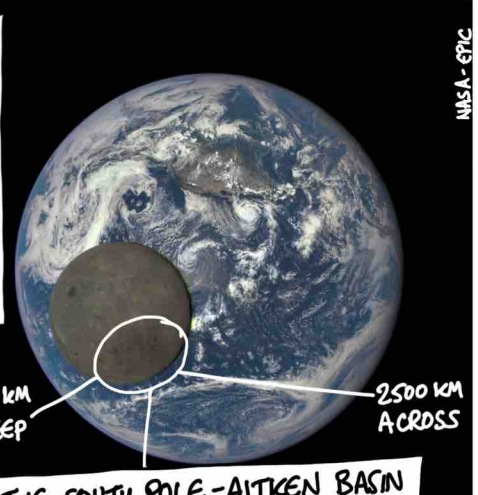


THE GRAINY IMAGES SHOWED A SURFACE WITH FEW OF THE DARK MARIA OR "SEAS"

THE SIDE FACING EARTH HAS LOTS OF MARIA. THESE ARE ANCIENT FLOWS OF BASALTIC LAVA THAT FILLED LARGE BASINS AND CRATERS.



SOMETIMES THE MOON PASSES IN FRONT OF THE EARTH AS SEEN FROM THE DISCOUR SATELLITE. WHEN THIS HAPPENS, IT'S THE FAR SIDE THAT THE CAMERAS SEE.



THIN OR THICK CRUST?

LIKE EARTH, THE MOON HAS A SOLID CRUST THAT COVERS AN OCEAN OF MOLTEN ROCK - MAGMA. THE MARIA ARE SPOTS WHERE THE MAGMA HAS REACHED THE SURFACE, & Poured OUT AS LAVA. THE THICKNESS OF THE CRUST HAS BEEN MEASURED BY THE NASA GRAIL MISSION

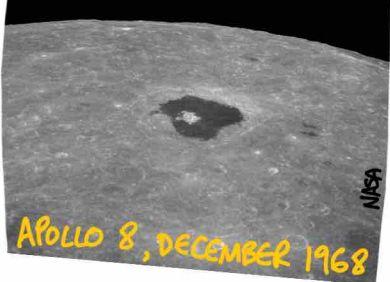
THE SOUTH POLE-AITKEN BASIN IS THE LARGEST AND DEEPEST IMPACT CRATER ON THE MOON, AND COULD BE THE LARGEST IN THE SOLAR SYSTEM. IT'S NOT CLEAR WHY IT ISN'T FULL OF LAVA.

WHEN THE FAR SIDE IS THE DARK SIDE...

THE FAR SIDE IS OFTEN CALLED THE DARK SIDE OF THE MOON, BUT IT'S JUST AS SUNNY THERE AS ON THE NEAR SIDE. A BIG DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE TWO SIDES IS EARTHSHINE, WHICH ALWAYS ILLUMINATES THE NEAR SIDE.

MARE MOSCOVENSE ("SEA OF MOSCOW") FROM THE MANNED APOLLO 16 MISSION, 1972

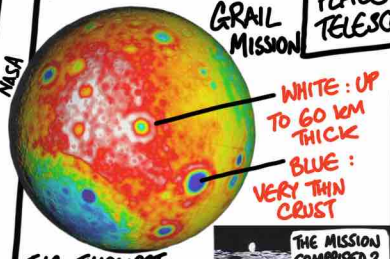
ONLY 24 PEOPLE HAVE SEEN THE FAR SIDE - 24 ASTRONAUTS ON 9 NASA APOLLO MISSIONS. (3 GOT TO TRAVEL TO THE MOON TWICE!)



* WITH APOLOGIES TO GARY LARSON!

RADIO SILENCE

BECAUSE RADIO SIGNALS FROM EARTH CAN'T REACH THE FAR SIDE OF THE MOON, IT'S A PERFECT PLACE FOR FUTURE RADIO TELESCOPES TO STUDY THE UNIVERSE.



THE THICKEST PARTS OF THE CRUST ARE ON THE FAR SIDE; THIS AGREES WITH THE MARIA FORMING WHERE THE CRUST IS THIN.



EARTH & MOON'S FAR SIDE FROM CHINA'S CHANG'E-5 PROBE. OCTOBER 28, 2014

