

25 December



(Picture credits: *ESA/Alex Lutkus*)

Anniversary of Mars orbital insertion (2003)

Space agency/country: ESA
Mission: *Mars Express*

On this day in 2003, European and Italian Space Agencies' spacecraft entered Mars orbit at a speed of 5.07 kilometers per second. *Mars Express*—launched on 2 June 2003—was also supported by NASA, with a Goldstone 70m antenna tracking the spacecraft's movements and help it land on the Red Planet. The main goal of the mission was to search for subsurface water, and collect data that would help us better understand Mars' geology, atmosphere, and surface environment—and, possibly, potential signs of life on the planet.

For more information:

<https://mars.nasa.gov/mars-exploration/missions/express/>

https://www.esa.int/Science_Exploration/Space_Science/Mars_Express_overview