

Nimitz Carrier Strike Group Returns to San Diego from Deployment



230628-N-KU796-1026 San Diego (June 28, 2023) U.S. Navy Sailors prepare to man the rails of the aircraft carrier USS Nimitz (CVN 68). Nimitz arrives in San Diego concluding a seven-month deployment to U.S. 3rd and 7th Fleet areas of operations (AO). Nimitz's presence in U.S. 3rd and 7th Fleet AOs reinforced the United States' commitment to fly, sail and operate wherever international law allows in support of a free and open Indo-Pacific region. (U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Samuel Osborn)

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28 June 2023

SAN DIEGO, Calif. – Ships from the Nimitz Carrier Strike Group (Nimitz CSG) returned to San Diego June 28, concluding a seven-month deployment to U.S. 3rd and 7th Fleet areas of operations (AO).

Sailors assigned to Ticonderoga-class guided-missile cruiser USS Bunker Hill (CG 52), Arleigh Burke-class guided-missile destroyer USS Decatur (DDG 73) and the embarked air wing of Carrier Air Wing (CVW) 17 returned home with the arrival of USS Nimitz (CVN 68) in San Diego. Nimitz will depart San Diego for its return to homeport in Bremerton, Washington at a later date.

Hawaii-based ships attached to Carrier Strike Group (CSG) 11, Arleigh Burke-class guided-missile destroyers USS Chung-Hoon (DDG 93) and USS Wayne E. Meyer (DDG 108), returned to homeport on June 20 and 27, respectively.

“For seven months, the Nimitz Carrier Strike Group demonstrated our ironclad commitment to partners and allies in the Indo-Pacific region,” said Rear Adm. Jennifer Couture, commander, CSG-11. “During this deployment, Sailors of every rank and rate displayed a vigorous work ethic and a humble devotion to duty and I want to thank them and their families for their sacrifice. I am humbled to serve alongside determined professionals and observe their excellence at every level. Our strike group returns home stronger, smarter, and more resilient than ever before.”

While in the U.S. 7th Fleet AO, CSG-11 conducted deterrence and presence operations; multinational exercises; integrated multi-domain training; long-range maritime strike exercises; anti-submarine warfare; information warfare operations; air defense operations; multiple ship navigation; and formation maneuvering and refueling-at-sea operations. U.S. 7th Fleet is the U.S. Navy’s largest forward-deployed numbered fleet.

Nimitz executed six port calls – Guam; Singapore; Busan, South Korea; Laem Shabang, Thailand; Sasebo, Japan and Pearl Harbor, Hawaii – and hosted two formal “Big Top” receptions in South Korea and Thailand. The aircraft carrier also embarked foreign dignitaries, military officials, ambassadors, and international media, and operated with the joint force and several nations, including Australia, Canada, France, Japan, the Philippines, Republic of Korea and Singapore. Alongside allies and partners, the Nimitz CSG’s presence in U.S. 7th Fleet reinforced the United States’ commitment to fly, sail, and operate wherever international law allows in support of a free and open Indo-Pacific region.

Nimitz – the oldest-serving U.S. commissioned aircraft carrier in the world – completed its 350,000th arrested aircraft

landing on April 22, 2023 while sailing in the South China Sea. The milestone was piloted in an F/A-18F Super Hornet from the "Fighting Redcocks" of Strike Fighter Squadron (VFA) 22 by Capt. Craig Sicola, Nimitz commanding officer, and Cmdr. Luke Edwards, commanding officer of VFA 22. Nimitz is the first active U.S. aircraft carrier to reach this milestone.

Nimitz's embarked air wing consisted of the "Fighting Redcocks" of Fighter Attack Squadron (VFA) 22, "Mighty Shrikes" of VFA-94, "Kestrels" of VFA-137, "Blue Diamonds" of VFA-146, "Sun Kings" of Carrier Airborne Early Warning Squadron (VAW) 116, "Cougars" of Electronic Attack Squadron (VAQ) 139, "Battlecats" of Helicopter Maritime Strike Squadron (HSM) 73, "Screamin' Indians" of Helicopter Sea Combat Squadron (HSC) 6 and "Providers" of Fleet Logistic Support Squadron (VRC) 30.