Nimitz Returns Home from Deployment



Information Systems Technician 1st Class Jorge Franco, from Lacey, Washington, greets his wife after returning from deployment. Nimitz, part of Nimitz Carrier Strike Group, returned to its homeport Naval Base Kitsap, Bremerton, Wash., after more than 11 months following a deployment to U.S. 5th Fleet and U.S. 7th Fleet, which included freedom of navigation operations and participation in Operations Freedom's Sentinel, Inherent Resolve, and Octave Quartz. U.S. Navy / Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Sarah Christoph

BREMERTON, Wash. – Sailors assigned to aircraft carrier USS Nimitz (CVN 68) returned to the Pacific Northwest area, Mar. 4, after nearly 11-months deployed in U.S. 3rd, 5th, and 7th Fleets, USS Nimitz Public Affairs said.

Nimitz was the first carrier to embark on a deployment for the U.S. Navy after the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. The crew

walked aboard Nimitz April 1, 2020, at their homeport aboard Naval Base Kitsap, Bremerton, Washington, for what would be a 27-day restriction of movement (ROM) period. Nimitz deployed from San Diego June 8 after completing integrated training with other assets from the Nimitz Carrier Strike Group.

“It has been a long 11 months since we bid farewell to our homeport in the beautiful Pacific Northwest, and it feels great to be back,” said Capt. Max Clark, Nimitz commanding officer, and Philadelphia native. “I am so proud of the Sailors on board Nimitz. The hard work, dedication, and teamwork they demonstrated day in and day out to accomplish all missions assigned is commendable.”

“They and their families have my deepest respect and gratitude,” added Clark. “We all look forward to returning now to our families and friends here in Bremerton and the surrounding areas. It’s wonderful to be home.”

While deployed, Nimitz completed five dual carrier operations in U.S. 7th Fleet with the Ronald Reagan and Theodore Roosevelt Carrier Strike Groups and participated in the India hosted multinational Exercise Malabar 2020 with the Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force and Australian Navy in the Bay of Bengal.

“The pandemic changed a lot of things that the Navy normally does,” said Senior Chief Operations Specialist Torrence Mabry, from Youngstown, Ohio. “Fortunately, we were the ship that was able to do it. At the end of the day we did what we had to do while we were in 5th Fleet. We did what we had to do while we were in 7th Fleet. We did what we had to do around the world. Now is the time to enjoy the benefits and do the things you enjoy doing. Because you sacrificed and put your life on the line.”

In the U.S. 5th Fleet area of operation, Nimitz supported Operation Freedom’s Sentinel as part of the NATO-led Resolute

Support mission in Afghanistan, and Operation Inherent Resolve with close air support and defensive counter-air missions against the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria. The strike group provided associated and direct support to the 33-nation coalition Combined Maritime Forces (CMF) and the eight-nation coalition International Maritime Security Construct (IMSC) to ensure the free flow of commerce and maritime security in three critical waterways. Nimitz also operated off the coast of Somalia in December to support Joint Task Force –Quartz and Operation Octave Quartz during a repositioning of U.S. forces within East Africa.

“We all banded together and got through it,” said Culinary Specialist 2nd Class Tradondra King, a native of Miami. “That shows a lot. During this extremely tough time everyone found that strength and resiliency in them. We had to get this done, we had a job to do and a mission to complete. That was the way and what we had to do.”

U.S. 3rd Fleet leads naval forces in the Indo-Pacific and provides the realistic, relevant training necessary to flawlessly execute our Navy’s timeless roles of sea control and power projection. U.S. 3rd Fleet works in close coordination with other numbered Fleets to provide commanders with capable, ready assets to deploy forward and win in day-to-day competition, in crisis, and in conflict.

“We did a great thing,” said Mabry. “Nimitz pulled it off, better than any other carrier so far. We wrote the book. We set the standard high and now it’s time for everybody else to follow.”