

Where will you be for the April 8 total solar eclipse? There's still time to grab a spot

March 2 2024, by Stephanie Nano



People gather near Redmond, Ore., to view the sun as it nears a total eclipse by the moon, Monday, Aug. 21, 2017. The April 8, 2024 total solar eclipse in North America first hits land at Mexico's Pacific coast, cuts diagonally across the U.S. from Texas to Maine and exits in eastern Canada. Credit: AP Photo/Ted S. Warren, File

Where will you be watching the [April 8 total solar eclipse](#)? There are just a few weeks left to pick your spot to see the skies darken along a strip of North America, whether by land, sea or air.

For those who live inside the 115-mile-wide (185-kilometer-wide) [path of total darkness](#), it may be a matter of just stepping outside and donning [special eclipse glasses](#) to watch the spectacle unfold. For the millions outside the path, or those who just want to improve their chances of clear skies, it could mean hitting the road with a game plan.

The eclipse reaches Mexico's Pacific coast in the morning, cuts diagonally across the U.S. from Texas to Maine and exits in eastern Canada by late afternoon. Most of the rest of the continent will see a partial eclipse.

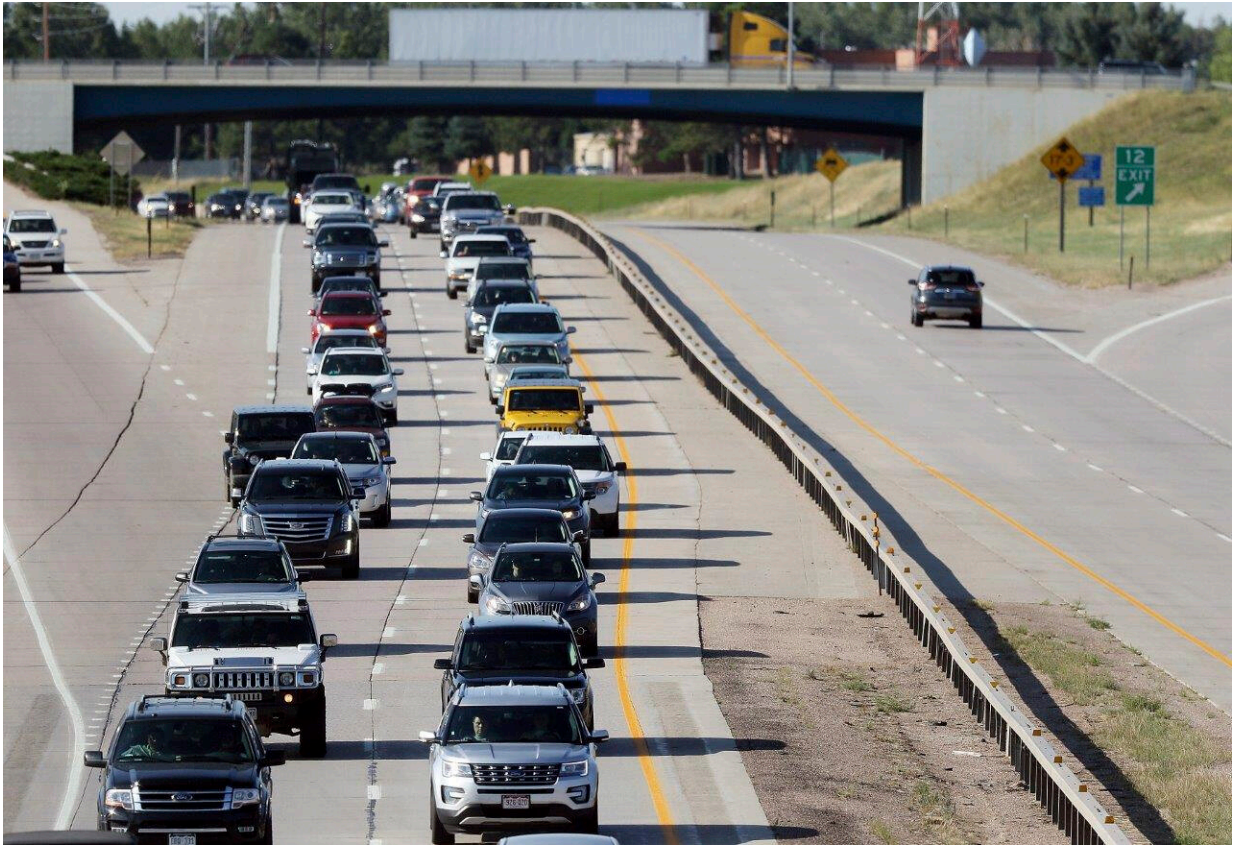
Where to watch the total solar eclipse

The weather will be key, and spring weather along the path can be dicey. Mexico and Texas offer the best odds of sunny skies, said retired Canadian meteorologist [Jay Anderson](#).

"There's no guarantee of sunshine anywhere—just better chances," he said.

Anderson studies [satellite data](#) for the previous 20 years to calculate how often a location has cloudy weather on any eclipse day. Besides Mexico and Texas, he said there are other promising spots on the path of totality, particularly along the Great Lakes.

The advice: If you're flexible, start paying attention to local weather about 10 days out, and make your plans on the three-day forecast. Die-hard eclipse chasers often line up more than one location and make last-minute decisions based on the best forecast, he said.



Heavy traffic moves slowly along Interstate 80 in Cheyenne, Wyo., on Monday, Aug. 21, 2017. Wyoming was one of the states in the path of the total eclipse, and thousands of people poured into the state for the view, causing massive traffic jams that are normally seen in major metropolitan areas. Credit: Blaine McCartney/The Wyoming Tribune Eagle via AP, File

How to prepare like an eclipse chaser

One veteran eclipse chaser recommends picking a location and make it a vacation so that the eclipse is "the cherry on top" and not the only highlight—just in case things don't work out.

Tom Schultz will be traveling from his retirement home in Costa Rica to watch the eclipse from his mother-in-law's house in Rochester, New York, along with other relatives.

"If we get rained out, we'll get this great family reunion," said Schultz.

Veteran Anne Marie Adkins could drive across town in San Antonio to see the total eclipse, but opted to join an astronomer-led tour to Mazatlán, Mexico, betting on clear skies there. She's been thwarted by clouds on other trips. For the 2017 U.S. eclipse, she went to Nebraska and had to scramble that day to find better skies.

"It's a gamble. You never know what you are going to get," said Adkins.

Post-eclipse traffic is a particular worry, especially in more rural areas like the Texas Hill Country. Patricia Moore, of the [Bandera visitors center](#), said last year's "ring of fire" eclipse provided a dress rehearsal for police and other first responders. Tiny Bandera—the "Cowboy Capital of the World"—expects crowds from nearby weekend music festivals.

"After the eclipse will be a challenge," she said.



Tyler Hanson, of Fort Rucker, Ala., watches the sun moments before the total eclipse, Monday, Aug. 21, 2017, in Nashville, Tenn. The April 8, 2024 total solar eclipse in North America first hits land at Mexico's Pacific coast, cuts diagonally across the U.S. from Texas to Maine and exits in eastern Canada. Credit: AP Photo/John Minchillo

Where are the eclipse watch parties?

With the eclipse falling on a Monday, cities and towns along the path have lined up a weekend full of activities and watch parties to attract visitors. There are a multitude of music festivals and gatherings planned at museums, parks, wineries and other businesses hoping to capitalize on the buzz.

[Niagara Falls](#) has a slate of events for days and is expecting July Fourth-sized crowds for the eclipse, said Sara Harvey, spokeswoman for Destination Niagara U.S..

There are multiple vantage points to watch the show from Niagara Falls State Park, and the famous Maid of the Mist tourist boats may be running, weather permitting, she said. Even if it's cloudy, visitors will get "a beautiful view of the falls," Harvey said.

In Waco, Texas, festivities will culminate on eclipse day with [science-themed activities outside Baylor's McClane stadium](#), along what's called Touchdown Alley.

It may be too late to snag a cabin on a [cruise ship](#) positioned off the Mexico coast for the eclipse, but there are other watery options including a ride on the paddle-wheeler Victorian Princess on Lake Erie from [Erie, Pennsylvania](#).

If the sky beckons, Southwest and Delta have identified flights that will fly along or near the eclipse path. A special Delta flight from Austin to Detroit quickly sold out, prompting the airline to add another from Dallas.

Looking for an different kind of place to watch the sun, moon and Earth align? The Indianapolis Motor Speedway will host NASA astronauts and other guests. Cedar Point amusement park on Lake Erie in Sandusky, Ohio, is opening for the day. And the [Little Rock Zoo in Arkansas](#) is throwing a tailgate fundraising party and inviting visitors to watch the zoo's residents react to the midday darkness.

You can also spend the day visiting the planets. In northern Maine, a [scale model of the solar system](#) is displayed along nearly 100 miles (160 kilometers) of U.S. Route 1. Retired geology professor Kevin

McCartney expects to unveil a new 23- foot-tall (7-meters-tall) roadside sun at the University of Maine at Presque Isle on eclipse day. "You won't be able to miss it," he said.

Anderson, the weather expert, said it's well worth the travel to see the "special magical moment" of a total eclipse: "It's the Taylor Swift of natural events."

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