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8 U.S. Places With the Best Views of This Summer's Total Solar Eclipse

Parts of America are going to get quite the view of the epic event.

by Aly Walansky July 18, 2017 • 1:02 PM ET



This summer, there's a pretty phenomenal celestial event that will have many eyes glued to the sky: On Monday, August 21, a total solar eclipse will cross the country from central Oregon through South Carolina in a 70-mile-wide path.

This is the first total solar eclipse in mainland United States since 1979 – and people are seriously getting into the countdown. In fact, Airbnb has reported it has 20,000-plus guest arrivals already booked for the night before the eclipse at homes along the path of totality (that's when the moon's shadow fully blocks the sun's light, for the uninitiated) in cities like Nashville and Charleston, and are seeing a 25 percent increase in the number of active listings on the eclipse path from three months ago. These include options from [a downtown Nashville loft](#) to [this oyster house on a wetlands reserve](#) (so take your pick).

Eclipses are typically buzzy events, and for nature lovers, the most visited national parks in the U.S. – such as Great Smoky Mountains of Tennessee, which will be directly on the path of totality – will be even more popular come August, when the western part of the park and parts of U.S. Route 441 will witness the total eclipse. Group viewing points are being set up throughout the park, and you can [book tickets here](#). Depending on your viewing spot, the eclipse will begin around 12:30 p.m. and end around 3:00 p.m., with total eclipse around 2:30 p.m. on the big day.

Overall, here are the best places to score an epic view:

1. Jackson Hole, Wyoming

Jackson Hole falls into the path of totality, making it a top destination to experience the eclipse. Jackson Hole will experience the total eclipse for one of the longest durations possible, two to three minutes at 11:34 a.m. MST. The partial phases of the eclipse will last two to three hours depending on the specific location, starting around 10:15 a.m. River outfitter [Mad River Boat Trips](#) offers a whitewater trip down Jackson Hole, Wyoming's Wild and Scenic Snake River on the big day. [Spring Creek Ranch](#)'s unique location provides unobstructed views of the sky

for optimal viewing of the event; in partnership with local non-profit **Wyoming Stargazing**, the hotel is hosting a party with brunch buffet, cocktails, custom solar eclipse glasses, and astronomer and naturalist presentations. Guests will also have a chance to enter a silent auction for the prime time rights to the hotel's high-end telescope, with all proceeds benefiting Wyoming Stargazing.

2. Greenville, South Carolina

If you are in Greenville, visit **Furman University**, which is hosting a variety of public events on campus on the day of the eclipse including a guided viewing presentation at Paladin Stadium with thematic activities. Furman physics professor David Moffett will narrate a discussion as the eclipse unfolds. Also, at **Bob Jones University**, there will be eclipse-viewing events that include hands-on science activities, telescopes with solar filters, and informational talks by science professors. Embassy Suites by Hilton Greenville Downtown Riverplace's rooftop bar and restaurant **Up on the Roof** would be a great spot to drink, eat, and hang out with the view.

3. Nashville, Tennessee



The largest city wholly within its path, Nashville will experience the eclipse for a duration of one minute and 57 seconds. [City Winery Nashville](#) will hold a viewing party with eclipse-watching glasses and a beautiful view of the Nashville skyline, and the historically designed [Union Station Hotel](#) will be hosting a champagne brunch, among tons of offerings across the city.

4. St. Louis, Missouri

St. Louisans can expect a 70-mile swath stretching from St. Joseph in the northeast to Cape Girardeau in the southeast for 13 minutes. To celebrate the first solar eclipse in the area since 1442, [Four Seasons Hotel St. Louis](#) will offer a special package, which includes arch-view accommodations and solar-viewing glasses.

5. Blue Ridge, Georgia

Situated about 90 minutes north of Atlanta, Blue Ridge, Georgia, is all at once, outdoorsy, earthy, upscale, fresh, and historical. In Blue Ridge, plan to catch the eclipse in totality at 2:35 p.m. for 35 seconds. The town is on the southern edge of the shadow, so totality only lasts for 35 seconds. However north and east of Blue Ridge in Fannin County, in McCaysville and Morganton, the totality lasts longer. In Morganton, the partial phase start will begin at 1:05:05 p.m., with the totality phase beginning at 2:34:45 p.m. and lasting one minute and 10 seconds. In McCaysville, the partial phase start will begin at 1:04:43 p.m., with the totality phase beginning at 2:34:08 p.m. and lasting one minute and 34 seconds. After the eclipse, get back to nature with scenic ventures on the Appalachian Trail, which begins and travels through [Blue Ridge](#), or explore the Benton MacKaye Trail. Kayak the Toccoa River, boat Lake Blue Ridge, or cast a line in the county known as Georgia's trout capital.

6. Charleston, South Carolina

There's so much to enjoy come eclipse time in this picturesque town: Charleston Museum will offer eclipse glasses with museum admission, and activities for children of all ages are available in the main lobby. Located in Charleston's Historic District, [Grand Bohemian Hotel Charleston](#)'s fourth-floor rooftop bar and restaurant, *Élevé*, plans to celebrate the momentous occasion with a viewing party, aptly named Charleston Goes Dark. Guests at the [HarbourView Inn](#) can view the eclipse on the hotel's private rooftop during a guest-only viewing party, which will include eclipse-themed drinks, snacks, viewing glasses, and filter sheets for taking photos. Finally, [Belmond Charleston Place](#) also has a special luxury eclipse package that includes a dinner with a professor of astronomy the night before, plus eclipse viewing.

7. Cherokee, North Carolina

Cherokee is about two hours from Greenville, but a pretty special spot on the great eclipse tour. Cherokee people observed eclipses for millennia, and have several names for them. The oldest is "*Nvdo walosi ugisgo*," which means approximately, "the frog eats the sun or moon," referring to the traditional belief that the eclipse is caused by a giant frog swallowing the sun or moon. To scare the frog away, people made loud noises for the duration of the eclipse. The entire solar experience will last about three hours, from 1:06 p.m. to 4 p.m. EDT.

8. On the water

If you want to make your eclipse experience yet more epic, Royal Caribbean has an [eclipse cruise](#). It departs from Port Canaveral near Orlando aboard *Oasis of the Seas*. During the trip, the captain will direct the ship to the middle of the eclipse's path for prime viewing.

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