

Dark Shadows

Successfully viewing a total solar eclipse is, as they say in real estate, all about location—and the best settings combine accessibility, length of eclipse, and ideal weather prospects.

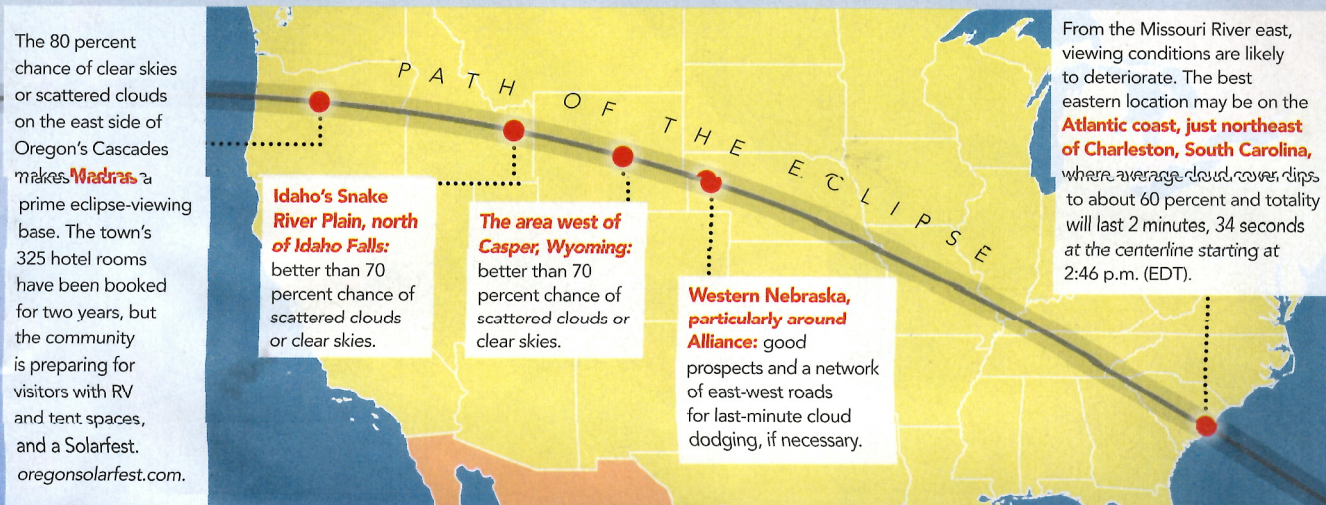
Start with the *Road Atlas for the Total Solar Eclipse of 2017*, authored by NASA's eclipse expert, Fred Espenak. Available on his website, eclipsewise.com, the atlas contains detailed road maps of the entire eclipse path that will help you pinpoint the best viewing options.

Although hotels in the best locations have been sold out for months for August 20 and 21, some tour operators specializing in celestial events still have space.

Retired Canadian meteorologist Jay Anderson recommends following weather forecasts in the 24 hours leading up to the eclipse to fine-tune your planned location as needed.

During the partial phases of the eclipse, you'll need to protect your eyes from the bright rays of the sun. You can order over the Internet some inexpensive glasses with protective filters, and such glasses will also likely be available on eclipse day at prime viewing locations. Once the total eclipse begins, you can remove them.

"Totality itself is perfectly safe to view without eye protection—no filters are needed," says Espenak, a veteran of 27 solar eclipse stakeouts over the past 46 years.



Enthusiasts prepare for the total solar eclipse that transpired on December 4, 2002, in South Australia's outback. Note the protective glasses the man in the foreground is wearing; during totality, it's safe to view an eclipse without such glasses.

Sun Spots

eclipse2017.nasa.gov
eclipse.gsfc.nasa.gov/eclipse.html
eclipsewise.com
eclipsophile.com