

# 2019 starts off with a blood moon

2019 starts off with a blood moon on Sunday, Jan. 20.

A total lunar eclipse takes place when the Earth comes between the Sun and our satellite, covering the moon with its shadow. When this happens, the moon usually turns red, hence the term “blood moon.”

It's the only major event for this year on our side of the world. It starts at 7:36 p.m., peaking from 10:12 p.m. until 10:43 p.m. and ending just after midnight.

Therefore, given the reasonable time and 31-minute maximum eclipse time, don't miss it. Southern Alberta will have a wonderful view, and the Rothney Observatory near Priddis will be hosting this to the public. Go to [www.ucalgary.ca/rao/about\\_contact\\_us](http://www.ucalgary.ca/rao/about_contact_us) for a map showing the observatory's location.

This is a clear-skies event. If the

sky is too cloudy the event will be cancelled, reads the website for the Rothney Observatory. People are asked to check [www.ucalgary.ca/rao/node/2274](http://www.ucalgary.ca/rao/node/2274) and the RAO Facebook and Twitter accounts for weather updates.

The Rothney Observatory asks that visitors dress for the weather, as the observatory is located on top of a hill and it can be windy and cold.

The observatory opens at 8:30 p.m. A large crowd is expected, so arrive early. The facility has many telescopes and lots of place to warm up. You are welcome to bring your own visual aids or use the many on site.

While it is a naked-eye object, if you want to raise the bar and take photos of it, astronomy expert Alan Dyer has a free guide called “How to Photograph the 2019 Lunar Eclipse” on his website,



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The Sky's the Limit

[amazingsky.net](http://amazingsky.net).

The last total lunar eclipse was about a year ago, and the next one isn't for over two years, on May 26, 2021, so it's worth keeping the kids up for this.

### **Sky watch**

On Thursday, Jan. 17 after sunset, watch the planet Aldebaran follow the moon overnight.

On Tuesday, Jan. 22, look in the southeast-east from 5 a.m. until sunrise as Jupiter and Venus rise

together.

### **Public event**

View the total lunar eclipse on Sunday, Jan. 20 from 8:30-11 p.m. at the Rothney Observatory near Priddis. There will be an array of telescopes operated by University of Calgary astronomers and members of RASC Calgary. You will have the opportunity to look through the telescopes, and astronomers will be on hand to answer questions. There will also be a presentation indoors. The entrance fee is \$30 per car. For further information, contact Jennifer Howse at [jhowse@phas.ucalgary.ca](mailto:jhowse@phas.ucalgary.ca) or (403) 931-2366, or visit [www.ucalgary.ca/rao](http://www.ucalgary.ca/rao).

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