

Total lunar eclipse welcomes in an exciting New Year



**Neel
ROBERTS**
YOUR UNIVERSE

2019 starts off with a Blood Moon on Sunday, Jan. 20 after supper.

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 Blood Moon.

It's the only major event for this year on our side of the world.

Start time is 07:36

p.m., peaks at 10:12 p.m. until 10:43 p.m. and finishing off just after midnight. Therefore, given the reasonable time and 31 minute maximum eclipse time, don't miss it. Southern Alberta will get a wonderful view and the Rothney Observatory near Priddis will be hosting this to the public.

Opening at 20:30, a large crowd is expected so arrive early.

It's a full facility with many telescopes, speaking facilities and lots of place to warm up.

You are welcome to bring your own visual aids or

share the many on site.

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

Lastly, unless it's a major Chinook, dress like you're going to the North Pole as the +4,000 feet altitude makes it feel like Alaska in a short time!

Sky watch for the next month:

1 Venus at it's brightest- On Sunday, Jan. 6 rising at 4:40 am in the SEE, it blazes at -4.47 magnitude right into the morning. It's the brightest object in the night sky besides the Moon.

2 Aldebaran follows Moon- On Thursday, Jan. 17 after sunset watch this planet follow our satellite overnight.

3 Jupiter & Venus Dawn rise together- On Tuesday, Jan. 22 look in the SEE at 05:00 am until sunrise as the fade into daylight.

4 Quadrantid Meteor Shower- Peaks just after New Years on Thursday, Jan. 3 after dusk going on about a week. Best viewing in the Bootes constellation (NEE) and a Moonless night you may catch up to produce some 50-100 meteors per hour

Public Events for the next month:

Monthly Open House at Calgary's Rothney Observatory near Priddis-Check out our first stargazing event for the year with a one-time, special

meeting for 2019 hosting the Total Lunar Eclipse on Sunday, Jan. 20 from 20:30 to 23:00.

There will be an array of scopes operated by University of Calgary astronomers and members of the RASC Calgary.

You will have the opportunity to look through the telescopes, indoor presentation and astronomers will be on hand to answer questions.

The entrance fee \$30 per car. For further information, contact Jennifer Howse at jhowse@phas.ucalgary.ca, (403) 931-2366. Their website <https://www.ucalgary.ca/rao/> is updated regularly.

Happy New Year and the best for 2019 and beyond!

Neel Roberts is a member of the Calgary chapter of the Royal Astronomical Society of Canada (RASC)-the nation's leading astronomy club founded in 1849 with over 5,000 members and 29 centers across Canada. Neel welcomes your questions and comments at (403)560-6574, Neel_Roberts@ptccanada.com. The members meet once a month on weekends at Calgary's Rothney Observatory near Priddis and you can check out times at <https://www.ucalgary.ca/rao/calendar>. Like them at Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/groups/272037680377/>, Twitter <https://twitter.com/CalgaryRASC> & YouTube <https://www.youtube.com/user/RASCCalgary>.