

MEDIA RELEASE

For Immediate Release

Total Eclipse of the Sun over Southern Quebec **WHERE WILL YOU BE ON APRIL 8, 2024?**

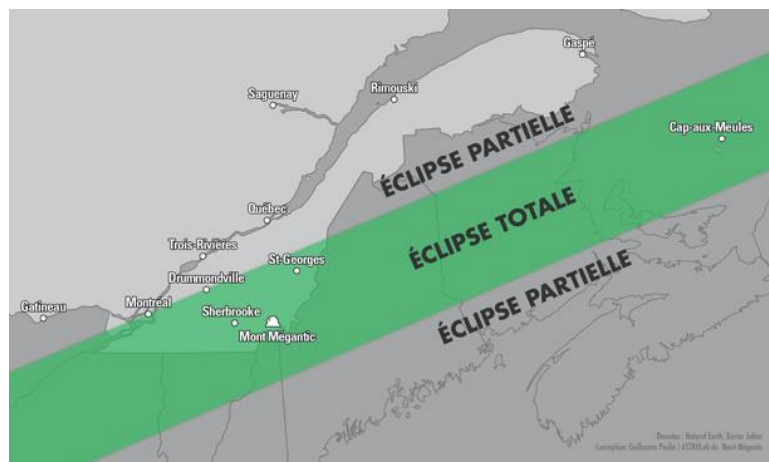
Montreal, April 4, 2023 – **One year from today**, an extremely rare afternoon solar eclipse will be visible from southern Quebec. This spectacular phenomenon occurs when the Moon passes between the Earth and the Sun. During total solar eclipses, the Sun becomes completely hidden for a brief moment.

The eclipse occurring on April 8, 2024, will be the astronomical event of the century in Quebec. It will mark the first time in more than 50 years (since 1972) that a total eclipse has been visible from anywhere in Quebec. And it will be more than 80 years (in 2106) until the next opportunity comes along. Montreal has not witnessed a total eclipse since 1932. And there has not been one in the skies above Quebec City since 1379! Not all areas of southern Quebec will experience a *total* solar eclipse in 2024. Residents of many communities (including Quebec City, Laval and Trois-Rivières) will only see a *partial* solar eclipse unless they travel a bit further south for a truly unique experience.

TOTAL SOLAR ECLIPSE

The area on Earth in which one can see a total eclipse is called the path of totality. Next year, it will cut across southern Quebec, covering a large part of Greater Montreal as well as the Montérégie, Estrie, Centre-du-Québec, Chaudière-Appalaches and Îles-de-la-Madeleine regions. The path of totality runs directly over Mont Mégantic (a hotbed of astronomy in Quebec!), the city of Sherbrooke, and the towns of Lac-Mégantic and Cap-aux-Meules. The total eclipse will last the longest in these locations — about three minutes and 30 seconds. In places on the edge of the path of totality, it will only last a few dozen seconds.

In total, several million Quebecers live along the path of totality and may have the opportunity to witness a phenomenon known to have a deep impact on observers. Whether seen from a location where the total eclipse lasts a few seconds or a few minutes, this rare event will give observers a chance to admire the solar corona while the Sun is completely hidden. The sky will become darker and the air colder, causing some animals to behave differently. Many consider this the most impressive natural phenomenon that a human being can experience. Large numbers of people in Quebec and beyond are sure to converge on the path of totality in the hope of witnessing it.



PARTIAL SOLAR ECLIPSE

Those outside the path of totality will see a *partial* solar eclipse. This is a very different phenomenon, as the Sun will only be partially hidden. Although more common and much less spectacular than a total eclipse,

partial solar eclipses are still fascinating. The brief total phase of a solar eclipse can be safely observed with the naked eye. However, **it is important to never observe the partial phase of an eclipse without eclipse glasses or other appropriate safety equipment.**

ECLIPSEQUEBEC.CA

Quebec astronomers and science communicators have been hard at work developing an eclipse information portal at eclipsequebec.ca (see below for a list of contributors). Featuring illustrations and videos, this informative online tool includes suggestions on viewing options for the 2024 eclipse (public sites, organised events, etc.).

MOBILE APP

A new bilingual mobile app for iOS and Android devices will soon be available. It can help you prepare for any solar eclipse by simulating the view from your location. On the day of an eclipse, you can also use the app to track how the event will unfold at a specific location in real time.

WHERE WILL YOU BE ON APRIL 8, 2024?

The big event is just a year away! Regroupement Éclipse Québec 2024 encourages the public to note the location of the Sun in the afternoon sky over the coming days. That way, in a year's time, you will be familiar with the best viewing locations near your school, work or home. At around 3:30 p.m., the Sun will be in the southwestern sky at about 40° above the horizon. **BE CAREFUL! Never look directly at the Sun** (except during the brief total phase of an eclipse, when the Sun is completely covered). Always observe the Sun using appropriate **safety equipment**, such as eclipse glasses. Visit eclipsequebec.ca for more information.

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REGROUPEMENT ÉCLIPSE QUÉBEC 2024



INTERVIEW REQUESTS:

Sébastien Giguère, ASTROLab du Mont-Mégantic – giguere.sebastien@sepaq.com, 819 214-9164

Olivier Hernandez, Planétarium de Montréal – Olivier.Hernandez@montreal.ca, 514 241-7990

Nathalie Ouellette, Trottier Institute for Research on Exoplanets (iREx) and Observatoire du Mont-Mégantic (OMM), Université de Montréal – Nathalie.Ouellette.2@umontreal.ca, 613 531-1762

Jasmin Robert, Fédération des Astronomes Amateurs du Québec (FAAQ) – directeur@faaq.org, 438 483-3673

Carolina Cruz-Vinaccia, Trottier Space Institute at McGill University – carolina.cruzvinaccia@mcgill.ca, 514 912-8624