

TOTALITY!

2008 APR

THE JOURNAL FOR ECLIPSE CHASERS

ISSUE 6

AVAILABLE FOR FREE ON THE WEB AT;
http://xjubier.free.fr/en/site_pages/Solar_Eclipses.html



Solar Eclipse Conference 2007

Photo courtesy Andrew White

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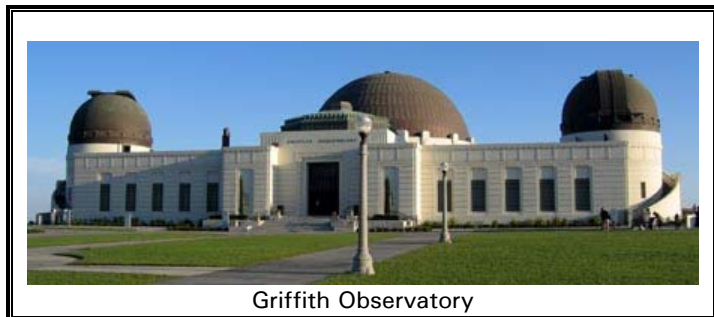
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Also Also Booking; 2010 TSE Tours

Umbraphile MAX Club

SEC2007

SOLAR ECLIPSE CONFERENCE



Griffith Observatory

SEC seems to be a fairly common acronym, used for the Securities and Exchange Commission for sports enthusiasts it is the acronym for the South East Conference, and a bit closer to our hearts it stands for the Space Environment Center, but in the context here stands it stands for "Solar Eclipse Conference." Held in "non central eclipse" years, there have now been 3 conferences held at various locations around the globe. The past conferences were all organized by Patrick and Joanne Poitevin; the first was in 2000.

The most recent was held on August 24 through 26, this 3rd SEC was held in Los Angeles, California where I attended the conference; this was MY first SEC. The first SEC was held on 2000 October 14 - 15 in Elzenveld, Antwerp, Belgium, and the second was held on 2004 August 20 - 22, at Open University, Milton Keynes, United Kingdom.

The conference was first organized as a worldwide event after Patrick had organized other similar events for the European

community. When the conference came to a close Patrick announced that they were passing the baton on to other organizers, likely to be held in 2011, but with the location still to be announced.

With my 7 TSE's and 2 ASE's under my belt, when I asked others how many they had seen, not always, but very often I heard numbers that were 10 or above, and it had me feeling somewhat like a newby, even though I consider myself an experienced observer.

For the 2007 conference, 131 individuals were registered, and of course since it was held in the USA, and on the west coast, many were from the U.S., and the greatest numbers were also from the west coast. Still, 17 countries were represented and some 30 speakers gave talks, with a wide variety of topics. The proceedings of the talks are all proprietary, meaning all works are owned by the speakers and are not available to duplicate here. However documentation of these talks are available as the proceedings of the SEC, as are the talks from the previous conferences. I highly recommend you to get a copy of these even if you are moderately interested in solar eclipses. I can however share a few photos of the speakers and brief synopsis of some of the talks. I will however pursue contacts with some of these speakers in order to give you expanded articles to enjoy in future issues.



Without a doubt, one of the best received talks was made by 22 year old Hana Druckmüllerová (CZE), pictured left, who gave a remarkable talk on the software she has developed in conjunction with her

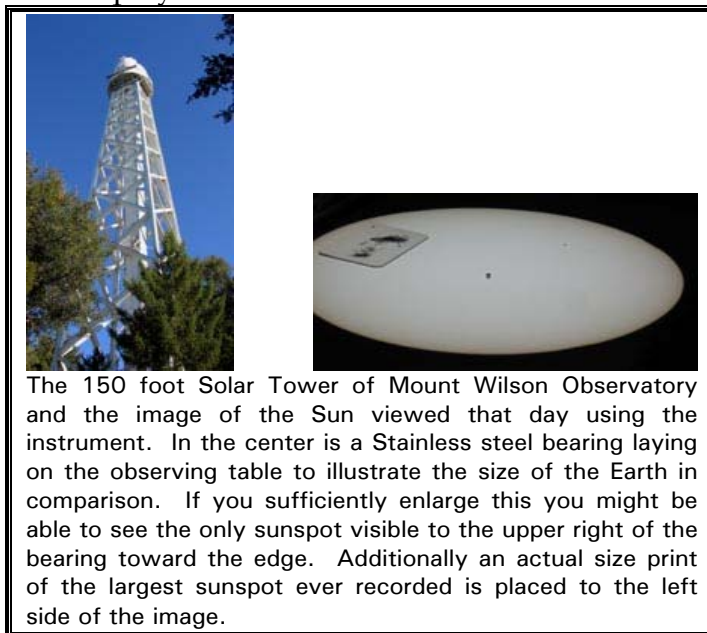
father, to process and enhance the details of the solar corona. She has taken this to a much higher level than ever seen previously. I asked her if this software was going to be available to us general eclipse photographers, and unfortunately her remarks made it clear that it was not anywhere near something that we could do with a few clicks of the mouse. Still, I will try my best to convince her that many of us would be very interested in seeing it to a speciality market, so at least us advanced eclipse photographers could have access to this remarkable tool, if only it had a user friendly interface. Many of us would love to see this a reality, and you can put me on that list.



It was a great experience to tour the Mount Wilson observatory and see the 100-inch Hooker telescope and view the Sun with the 150-foot solar

tower, and to see the Snow solar spectrometer. Special thanks to Mike Simmons (USA) and his associates for arranging this tour. I just wish we could have had a good ol' fashioned view of Jupiter with the 60 or 100-inch telescopes, which would have made the visit truly memorable. The lecture hall on Mt. Wilson reminded me much of the old Drake Municipal Observatory back in my hometown of Des Moines, Iowa, as the building for the telescope was built in the 1930's, and many of

Mt. Wilson Observatory's old photos are still on display there as well.



The 150 foot Solar Tower of Mount Wilson Observatory and the image of the Sun viewed that day using the instrument. In the center is a Stainless steel bearing laying on the observing table to illustrate the size of the Earth in comparison. If you sufficiently enlarge this you might be able to see the only sunspot visible to the upper right of the bearing toward the edge. Additionally an actual size print of the largest sunspot ever recorded is placed to the left side of the image.

Daniel Fischer (GER) gave a compelling talk on observing along the edge of eclipse paths, titled "The Quest for the Perfect Pearls," and suggested that others attempt to observe not only the total eclipse from the edge of the path of totality, but especially even annular eclipses where details of the chromosphere and extended duration Baily's Beads can be imaged. He of course cautions that great care be taken in these endeavors.

Glenn Schneider's (USA) talk, "Up, Up and Away - Chasing the Umbra Into the Stratosphere (and Beyond)," gave accounts on the history of observing solar eclipses above the ground, and above the clouds. In order to get through the entire talk in 30 minutes he could barely take a breath, and had to zoom through his many photographs, but it was a very interesting retrospective.

I found Jay Anderson (CAN), "Weather and Where: Eclipse Weather for 2008, 2009 and 2010," eclipse weather forecaster extraordinaire, to be a very personable and all around fun guy to be around. Also my old friend Ralph Chou (CAN), "Eclipse Eye Safety

Update," whom I had met on my trip to the 1994 TSE near Iguassu Falls, and who gave an insightful and very informative talk into the workings of the eye and how it is affected when looking at a brilliant Sun. Ralph is a skilled speaker, and gave everyone a better understanding of what happens to the eye when it is exposed to the Sun. I spoke with Ralph in a short one-on-one discussion about how to instruct the general public on how to safely view an eclipse for a booklet I am working on.

just returned from a trip to Antarctica where he climbed Mount Vinson, the highest peak on the continent of Antarctica, in -40F degree temperatures, to observe the ASE there on 2008.02.07. [Editors note: I hope to have an eclipse chaser profile of Xavier in a future issue of **TOTALITY!**]



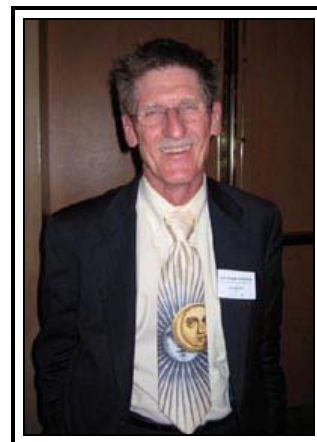
During the lunch break, SEC members take time to discuss their favourite topics, solar eclipses. From left to right (facing the camera) is Jay Pasachoff (USA), Serge Koutchmy (FRA) Xavier Jubier (FRA) and Jay Anderson (CAN).

Jay Pasachoff, the icon of eclipse chasers, likely has seen more eclipses than anybody alive today. He often will travel to see not just total, not just annular, but also partial eclipses of the Sun. He was kept busy talking with fellow eclipse acquaintances. Fred Espenak was so busy I could not even find my way to introduce myself, but it shows just how important Fred is to eclipses and eclipse chasers.

I hope I can afford to travel to the next SEC. It is always a daunting task to save enough to get to the solar eclipses I really want to see, but in the meantime, I am sure I will come across a fellow SEC or SEML contact no matter where I go for the next 3 eclipses that I hope to attend before then.

At the dinner Saturday night, a number of us randomly picked a table, and nothing could have been better. I sat with eclipse chasers from California, Australia, France and China.

If there was a drawback to the conference, it was the far-too-brief time that we had to socialize with the other eclipse chasers, at least that is for us who wanted to attend the talks. It was get up, get to the conference, get back to the hotel and collapse, then do it all again. A few individuals even ducked out of the talks to watch the show in the star theatre at Griffith. At last however I got to briefly visit with people I had not had the opportunity to do so in person before. Xavier Jubier, my friend in France who graciously posts this journal you are now reading on his web site. Xavier has



Edwin (E.C.) Krupp, pictured here with his awesome eclipse tie, is director of the Griffith Observatory, and was instrumental in giving the SEC access to the historical facility, which had just been renovated, and spared the fires of 2007 that came rather close to the facility. Dr. Krupp is an eclipse chaser with 11 TSE trips taken to date.

*With great thanks and appreciation for all your
efforts in promoting solar eclipses . . .*

Patrick & Joanne Poitevin

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Patrick & Joanne have decided to pass the baton on and let others take over the organization of the SEC, and get back to the sheer enjoyment of viewing solar eclipses. We wish you our best.

Olympic Games and a Solar Eclipse . . .

Now May Be The Time To Schedule your 2008 TSE Trip!



Eclipse trips can often be challenging trips to schedule, and the 2008 TSE trip is posing its challenges. With the eclipse only one week before the start of the Summer Olympics in Beijing which begins on 08.08.08, tour groups that have Beijing on their itineraries are being challenged by inflated prices, hotel bookings, and airfare prices that are edging their way upward as people book their flights for the Olympics and the tours they will be taking while in the country.

In my latest web search, the list of tour groups listing trips for the 2008 TSE has doubled from the previous issue of TOTALITY! A number of trips that I found have alternative locations by heading to Mongolia, and even some of the land portions of the trips are extremely reasonable, but the cost of airfare to get to Ulaanbaatar is much higher than even Beijing. A number of people are also planning on going to Novosibirsk in Russia. These are great locations, and I am envious that I cannot be several places at the same time.

Some visas you will be able to get a few days ahead of time, but some could take a couple of months, and if your trip takes you to somewhere like Ulaanbaatar, you will likely have plane changes in Russia, China or Korea, and that might mean an additional visa.

It has been announced that Spears Travel has changed a portion of their tour to no longer go to Beijing, but rather they will be meeting in Shanghai, to avoid the congestion in Beijing with all of the athletes and tour groups passing through the area. Additionally there is word that tour groups in the Hami area will be taking eclipse chasers to one location near Yiwu set up specifically for this, which has its advantages and disadvantages.

I have found it very difficult choosing a group to travel with. I have to balance my need for the lowest fares possible with the locations that I would really like to visit, along with the best expected weather location for the eclipse. There are a number of great sightseeing locations that will also be great locations for the 2009 eclipse, and then Beijing may be more doable without the Olympics getting in the way. But then, doesn't the Olympics add another level of interest in the area, with the new buildings constructed for the event, and the athletes arriving early to get ready for their events and settle down from the long trip.

Then for those of us that live in the U.S., the value of the dollar has made previously affordable trips, into very expensive ones. A trip costing €2500.EUR, in 1999 would have cost only \$2300.USD, but today it is running about \$3750.USD. My pet peeve is also that these prices do not even include the major portion of the air travel, which will add a bunch more to the cost, and then there is the cost of the visa(s) to these countries that is truly outlandish. A few months before August of 2007 I was able to find air travel to Beijing for around \$550.USD, and today it is at least double that, due in part to the weak USD and also because of the inflated prices due to the upcoming Olympics.

Decisions, decisions! In addition you almost need to be clairvoyant by planning ahead to figure out where you want to see the 2009 eclipse. If you are lucky to position yourself in the path on one of the islands to the southeast of Japan, you will have the longest duration possible for a total eclipse this century, but the availability of allowing you on one of these islands (and perhaps more important, the cost) of this trip before you can schedule your 2008 trip, is not likely, unless you decide to locate on the Asian mainland. If you have not already booked your 2008 trip, and connecting flights, you might want to consider doing so, soon!

Still Booking: 2008 Total Solar Eclipse Tours

China is a large country, and there are a lot of great scenic locations to visit. And if you can't get a spot on one of the isolated and difficult to acquire authorization to one of the Japanese Islands for the 2009 total solar eclipse, something tells me you may be returning to China in 2009. Consider touring sites in the northern part of China for 2008, and the southern regions in 2009. The 2009 eclipse will be highlighted in the next issue!

Trips to the 2008 eclipse are still available from such unique tours as a flight over Greenland and the North Pole, an icebreaker and helicopter flights to the North Pole and Novaya Zemlya, train trips across Siberia, and hiking trips and over-nighting in ger camps in Mongolia. Visits to historical sights are always available, and in China such tours of the Great Wall and the Terra Cotta Warriors are just a couple of the unique venues, and to briefly mention the fly-in tours into Russia, there should be something available for everyone. Totality occurs one week before the start of the 2008 Summer Olympics in Beijing (beginning on 08.08.08), and likely the sooner you book your flights to and from China, the more you will save, and also be likely to have a flight available. Fees are already going up as you read this, so get on it! And don't forget to pick up some Olympics souvenirs.

All Travel groups are listed in alphabetical order

A Classic Tours Collection - NEW LISTING!

<http://aclassictour.com>

Eclipse Guide > Prof. Jay Pasachoff

Eclipse Tour 2008 Siberia Russia > Main Tour > 15 day tour (from Houston)

JUL 26 to AUG 09 > 2m 18s TOTALITY from Novosibirsk

\$6988.USD (priced from 10+ participants) ex Moscow, Russia

Additionally a \$895.USD+ charge for hotel in Novosibirsk for 3 nights

Airfare from Houston \$1100.USD+ tax & fuel surcharge

Eclipse Tour 2008 Russia > Option 1 Tour > 6 day tour (from Houston)

JUL 26 to AUG 09 > 2m 18s TOTALITY from Novosibirsk

\$1990.USD (priced from 10+ participants) ex Moscow, Russia

Additionally a \$895.USD+ charge for hotel in Novosibirsk for 3 nights

Airfare from Houston \$1000.USD+ tax & fuel surcharge

Eclipse and Lake Baikal > Option 2 Tour > 8 day tour (from Houston)

JUL 26 to AUG 09 > 2m 18s TOTALITY from Novosibirsk

\$2788.USD (priced from 10+ participants) ex Moscow, Russia

Additionally a \$895.USD+ charge for hotel in Novosibirsk for 3 nights

Airfare from Houston \$1000.USD+ tax & fuel surcharge

Adventure Alternative

Solar Eclipse in Mongolia 2008 > 14-day trip

JUL24 to AUG 06 > 2m 04.8s TOTALITY @ 48° 22' N, 88° 32' E

£1300.GBP ex Byrnaul, Russia with 10 traveler minimum

<http://www.adventurealternative.com/News/105.asp>

Ancient World Tours (UK)

<http://www.ancient.co.uk/default.aspx?Page=astro2008>

Russian Eclipse Tour A > 9-day trip

JUL 26 to AUG 03

£2495.GBP

Russian Eclipse Tour B > 10-day trip

JUL 26 to AUG 04

£2995.GBP

Russian Eclipse Tour C > 9-day trip

JUL 30 to AUG 03

£1335.GBP

China Eclipse Tour A > 12-day trip

JUL 26 to AUG 06

£2495.GBP

China Eclipse Tour B > 9-day trip

JUL 27 to AUG 04

£2295.GBP

China Eclipse Tour C > 9-day trip

JUL 27 to AUG 04

£2235.GBP

China Eclipse Tour D > 11-day trip

JUL 26 to AUG 05

£2395.GBP

Astronomy Vacations by Mayhugh Travel - NEW LISTINGS!

<http://astronomyvacations.com/DiscoveryItinerary.html>

2008 Eclipse Cruise & Tour > 13-day and 16-day trips

JUL23 to AUG 07 > 2m 17.1s TOTALITY in the Arctic Ocean @ 49°N, 45° E

about \$3000.USD ex London (\$2775.USD plus port fees and taxes)

Total Solar Eclipse Over China > 10-day trip (pre & post extensions available)

JUL27 to AUG 05 > 2m+ TOTALITY near Yiwu

about \$3190.USD ex arrive Beijing / depart Shanghai

Boojum Expeditions

Mongolia / Gobi Desert & Lake Khovsgol > 7-day trip

JUL29 to AUG 04

\$2600.USD ex Ulaanbaatar > 3 additional extensions are available

<http://www.boojum.com/extras/eclipse2008.pdf>

BootsnAll Travel Network - NEW LISTING!

<http://www.bootsnall.com/>

Arctic Cruise: Baffin Island Explorer & Total Solar Eclipse > 13-day trip

JUL22 to AUG 03 – TOTALITY from Dundas Harbour

\$4500.USD depart: Iqaluit / return: Resolute

<http://www.bootsnall.com/adventures/trips-5492/arctic-cruise-baffin-island-explorer-total-solar-eclipse.html>

Civilized Adventures (CAN) thru the Calgary Center of the RASC

Silk Road Eclipse Quest > 16 day trip > TOTALITY from Hami & Yiwu

JUL 24 to AUG 08

\$4699.CAD

<http://www.civilizedadv.com/PDF/CH230708.pdf>

Black Feather

Devon Island 2008 Solar Eclipse > 15-day trips

JUL 24 to AUG 07 or JUL 26 to AUG 09 > TOTALITY from Devon Island

\$4995.CAD

http://www.blackfeather.com/hike/hike_devonisland.htm

Black Ibex Expeditions - NEW LISTINGS!

<http://www.discovermongolia.mn/>

Discover Mongolia, Tour #1 > 10-day trip

JUL 26 to AUG 04 – 2m 03s TOTALITY from Altai soum

\$1668.USD ex Ulaanbaatar

Discover Mongolia, Tour #2 > 5-day trip

JUL 30 to AUG 03 – 2m 03s TOTALITY from Altai soum

\$1069.USD ex Ulaanbaatar

http://www.discovermongolia.mn/tours/Natural_history_travel/total_solar_eclipse_2008.html

Eclipse City

<http://www.eclipse-city.com/>

Russia > 36 hour trip - Includes Airfare from FRA (Frankfurt , Germany)

JUL 31 to AUG 02 > 2m 20s TOTALITY (Novosibirsk)

€1290.Euros (see above)

<http://www.eclipse-city.com/start.php?navId=1&subNav=1&thirdNav=4>

China > 72 hour trip - Includes Airfare from FRA (Frankfurt , Germany) or LAX (Los Angeles, USA)

JUL 31 to AUG 02 > 1m 50s TOTALITY (NE of Jiayuguan)

€1790.Euros (see above)

<http://www.eclipse-city.com/start.php?navId=1&subNav=1&thirdNav=3>

China > 9 day trip - Program 1A

JUL 26 to AUG 03 > 2m 00s+ TOTALITY (Barkol)

€1990.Euro > ex. Urumqi (China)

<http://www.eclipse-city.com/start.php?navId=1&subNav=1&thirdNav=1#1>

China > 11 day trip - Program 1B

JUL 24 to AUG 03 > 2m 00s+ TOTALITY (Barkol)

€2950.Euro > ex. Beijing

<http://www.eclipse-city.com/start.php?navId=1&subNav=1&thirdNav=1#2>

China > 9 day trip - Program 1C

JUL 26 to AUG 03 > 2m 00s+ TOTALITY (Barkol)

€2490.Euro > ex. Shanghai or Beijing

<http://www.eclipse-city.com/start.php?navId=1&subNav=1&thirdNav=1#3>

China > 9 day trip - Program 2

JUL 25 to AUG 02 > 1m 50s TOTALITY (Gobi Desert – NE of Jiayuguan)

€2490.Euro > ex. Beijing

<http://www.eclipse-city.com/start.php?navId=1&subNav=1&thirdNav=2>

EWP

15 Day Altai Program (Russia) > 15-day trip
JUL 21 to AUG 04 - 2m 20s TOTALITY south of Barnaul
€3000.Euro
<http://www.ewpnet.com/russia/altaieclipse.htm>

14 Day Gobi Desert (Mongolia camping trip) >14-day trip
JUL 25 to AUG 07 - 2m 03s TOTALITY
€2800.Euro from Ulaanbaatar
<http://www.ewpnet.com/mongolia/gobieclipse.htm>

Far Horizons Archaeological & Cultural Trips - NEW LISTING!

Eclipse Guide > Dr. E. C. Krupp

<http://www.farhorizon.com/>

The Silk Road of China > 22-day trip
JUL 25 to AUG 15 – Nearly 2m of TOTALITY near Hami
\$7695.USD from LAX (but does not include international airfare)
http://www.farhorizon.com/Southeast_Asia/china-silk-route_eclipse.htm

GAP Adventures - NEW LISTING!

<http://www.gapadventures.com/>

Mongolian Solar Eclipse 2008 > 14-day trip
JUL 27 to AUG 09 – 2m 05s of TOTALITY near Hoton Lake
\$1855.USD (\$1605 + \$250 for LOCAL payment) ex. Ulaanbaatar > 7 spaces available as of 2008.01.07
<http://www.gapadventures.com/tour/AMSF&itinType=dossier&yr=2008>

Houston Museum of Natural Science

thru Easton Resource Development, Inc. - NEW LISTING!

Eclipse Guide > Dr. Carolyn Sumners

Totality Over China 2008 > 13-day trip
JUL 24 to AUG 05 - 2m TOTALITY near Yiwu
\$4155.USD ex. Shanghai
http://www.hmns.org/files/education/HMNS_Eclipse_Trips_2008_and_2009.pdf

Jasmine's China Adventure Tours

<http://www.jasminechina.com/ecl2008.htm>

Eclipse Only > 7-day trip
JUL 28 to AUG 03
\$2650.USD

Eclipse Over the Silk Road > 16 day trip
JUL 19 to AUG 03
\$3995.USD

Journey's International

Mongolia Solar Eclipse > 15-day trip

JUL 25 to AUG 08 - 2m 13s TOTALITY from Hovd camp

\$4175.USD or less ex Ulaanbaatar

<http://www.journeys-intl.com/destinations/asia/mongolia/651/>

China Solar Eclipse > 14-day trip

JUL 22 to AUG 04

\$3500.USD ex Beijing

<http://www.journeys-intl.com/destinations/asia/china/606/>

Let's Travel China - NEW LISTING!

<http://www.letstravelchina.com/>

The Silk Road with 2008 Total Solar Eclipse > 16-day trip

JUL 23 to AUG 07 - 2m+ TOTALITY near Hami

\$4550.USD for land only or \$5750.USD from LAX, discounts for groups of 3 or more

<http://www.letstravelchina.com/TourView.aspx?ProductId=250>

LexCorp Cruise & Tour Marketing

2008 Total Solar Eclipse and Three Capitals of Russia > 9-day trip

JUL 25 to AUG 02

\$3850.USD > Novosibirsk

http://www.cruisemarket.com/solar_eclipse_tour.html

Menon Vacations - NEW LISTING!

<http://www.menonvacations.com/>

Solar Eclipse – Mongolia 2008/Northern China 2008 > 10-day trip

Eclipse Guides > Stephen E. Schneider / George Greenstein / Wim van Driel

JUL 27 to AUG 03 > 2m+ TOTALITY 50 kms from Ulgi

\$2695USD ex. Ulaanbaatar

Mongolia Expeditions

2008 Total Solar Eclipse in Mongolia > 8-day trip

JUL 29 to AUG 05 - 2m 07s TOTALITY

\$2486.USD

<http://www.mongolia-expeditions.com/solar-eclipse-special-tours.htm>

MWT Associates, Inc.

**Eclipse Guides > Dave Eicher, Dennis Mammana, Dr. Paul H. Knappenberger, Jr,
Dr. Michelle Thaller, Dr. Jim Manning**

Siberian Total Solar Eclipse & Grand Waterways of the Czars – 16 day trip - viewing from Novosibirsk

JUL 18 to AUG 02

\$6325 to \$10,325.USD

Request a brochure to receive a price list

DOES include round trip airfare from JFK

<http://www.melitatrips.com/siberia/index.html>

Siberia Total Eclipse and Baltic Voyage - 12 day trip – viewing from Novosibirsk

JUL 28 to AUG 09

Request a brochure to receive a price list

http://www.melitatrips.com/siberia_baltic/index.html

On The Go - NEW LISTINGS!

<http://www.russiaonthego.com/Russia-Solar-eclipse>

Russian Sunchaser - 4 day trip – viewing near Novosibirsk

JUL 30 to AUG 02

\$1219.USD ex Novosibirsk

<http://www.onthegotours.com/Russian-sunchaser-4-day>

Tsars of the Sun – 7 day trip

JUL 27 to AUG 02 – viewing near Novosibirsk

\$2059.USD ex Moscow

<http://www.onthegotours.com/Tsars-of-the-Sun-7-day>

Big Russian Eclipse - 11 day trip

JUL 23 to AUG 09 – viewing near Novosibirsk

\$2479.USD ex St. Petersburg

http://www.melitatrips.com/siberia_baltic/index.html

Phoenix Travel & ICSTARS Astronomy - NEW LISTINGS!

<http://www.icstars.com/index.htm>

Mongolian Total Solar Eclipse Tour 2008 – 10-day trip

JUL 26 to AUG 04

\$2795.USD ex Ulaanbaatar

<http://www.phoenix-travel.net/2008Mongolia/Itinerary.shtml>

Mongolian Total Solar Eclipse Tour 2008 – 14-day trip

JUL 23 to AUG 04

\$3495.USD ex Ulaanbaatar

<http://www.phoenix-travel.net/2008Mongolia/Itinerary14day.shtml>

Trans-Siberian Total Solar Eclipse Tour 2008 – 7-day trip

[Eclipse Guide > Michael Bakick & Jackie Beucher](#)

JUL 27 to AUG 02 > 2m 18s from Lake Ob Reservoir

\$2995.USD ex Moscow

<http://www.phoenix-travel.net/SkyWatcher/2008TranSib/Itinerary.html>

PolarCruises.com - NEW LISTING!

<http://www.polarcruises.com/>

Spitsbergen Total Solar Eclipse – 11 day trip

JUL 29 to AUG 08 - TOTALITY from aboard ship north of Kvitoya Island

\$4300.USD and up from Longyearbyen

http://www.polarcruises.com/tour.cfm?ship_id=45&tour_id=265

Ring of Fire Expeditions

[Eclipse Guide > Paul D. Maley](#)

Total Solar Eclipse in China – 7day trip

JUL 27 to AUG 3 - 3 viewing sites, 1m 50s to 2m 00s at 2 sites, and 0m 30s at Hami

\$2999.USD with extensions for Beijing, Tibet and the 2008 Olympics

4 Groups of up to 20 individuals each are scheduled

<http://www.eclipssetours.com/china.html>

Selena Travel

<http://www.selenatravel.com/>

2008 Solar Eclipse in Mongolia – 13 day trip – **CHANGES IN LISTING!**

JUL 25 to AUG 06

\$1999 to \$2199.USD ex Ulaanbaatar depending on group size

http://www.selenatravel.com/tours/mongolia/2008_total_solar_eclipse_tour.html

Sita World Tours

<http://www.eclipsetours.net>

Total Solar Eclipse Over China > 11-day trip with pre and post extensions available

Eclipse Guide > Dr. Laurence Marschall

JUL 26 to AUG 05 > 2m 01s TOTALITY near Yiwu

\$3190.USD ex arrive Beijing / leave Shanghai

<http://www.eclipsetours.net/tours/china.htm>

Sirius Travel

Mongolia > 10 day trip

JUL 26 to AUG 04 – 2m 09s TOTALITY

\$4150.USD - Also does not include Emergency Evacuation Insurance which is REQUIRED

<http://www.siriustravel.com/mongolia08/index.cfm>

Snow Lion Expeditions - NEW LISTING!

<http://www.snowlion.com/>

Solar Eclipse in the Lands of the Nomads > 17-day trip ex. Ulaanbaatar

JUL 18 to AUG 03 – 2m+ TOTALITY near Ulgii

\$5895.USD from LAX (but does not include international airfare)

<http://www.snowlion.com/trip/5130>

Solar Eclipse Trips (a division of Betchart Expeditions, Inc.)

with the Planetary Society - NEW LISTING!

<http://www.betchartexpeditions.com/>

China's Silk Road & Legendary Hunza Total Eclipse Trip – 1st Departure > 21-day trip ex. Ulaanbaatar

JUL 14 to AUG 03 > 2m+ TOTALITY in the Alti Mountains - **SOLD OUT!**

\$4990.USD (\$3995 for Land, \$995 for Domestic flights) plus \$1495.USD for LAX departures

http://www.betchartexpeditions.com/asia_china_silk_roads.htm

China's Silk Road & Legendary Hunza Total Eclipse Trip – 2nd Departure > 22-day trip ex. Ulaanbaatar

JUL 22 to AUG 12 > 2m+ TOTALITY in the Alti Mountains

Please inquire by phone 1-800-252-4910

http://www.betchartexpeditions.com/asia_china_silk_roads.htm

Tibet & Eclipse – 1st Departure > 17-day trip

JUL 18 to AUG 03 > TOTALITY - **SOLD OUT!**

\$4195.USD

http://www.betchartexpeditions.com/asia_tibet_eclipse.htm

Tibet & Eclipse – 2nd Departure > 18-day trip

JUL 17 to AUG 03 > TOTALITY

\$4495.USD

http://www.betchartexpeditions.com/asia_tibet_eclipse.htm

Spears Travel by Carlson Wagonlit

Northern China 2008 > 10-day trip

Eclipse Guide > Fred Espenak

JUL 26 to AUG 04 > 1m 54s TOTALITY 100 miles from Hami
\$3695.USD

<http://www.spearstravel.com/astromy/china08/china08itin.htm>

TravelQuest International

<http://www.tq-international.com/index.htm>

China's Silk Road Total Solar Eclipse Aboard the China Orient Express > 12 day trip

JUL 25 to AUG 05 and JUL 27 to AUG 07 > 1m 54s TOTALITY near Yiwu

The JUL 25 package of these 2 "reverse" direction trips, is SOLD OUT!

\$5290.USD ex arrive Xian / depart Urumqi and arrive Urumqi / depart Xian

<http://www.tq-international.com/ChinaOrientEx08/ChinaOrtExIntinerary.htm>

Hami, China Eclipse > 7 day trip

JUL 29 to AUG 03 > 1m 54s TOTALITY near Yiwu

\$2890.USD ex Beijing

<http://www.tq-international.com/China08Hami/ChinaHami.htm>

Grand Passage Through Siberia, Russia aboard the Trans-Siberian Express – 15 day trip

JUL 27 to AUG 10 > 2m 20s TOTALITY near Novosibirsk

\$8995.USD and up ex depart Moscow / arrive Vladivostok

<http://www.tq-international.com/Russia08GrandPass/RussiaGPitinerary.htm>

Great Cities of Russia – 11 day trip

JUL 26 to AUG 05 > 2m 20s TOTALITY near Novosibirsk

\$5190.USD ex arrive Moscow / depart St. Petersburg

<http://www.tq-international.com/Russia08NoTrain/RussiaGCNTitinerary.htm>

Great Cities of Russia aboard the Trans-Siberian Express– 13 day trip

JUL 26 to AUG 05 > 2m 20s TOTALITY near Novosibirsk

\$7995.USD and up ex depart Moscow / arrive St. Petersburg

<http://www.tq-international.com/Russia08GreatCities/RussiaGCitinerary.htm>

Novosibirsk Fly-in – 4 day trip

JUL 30 to AUG 02 > > 2m 20s TOTALITY near Novosibirsk

\$2295.USD ex Moscow

<http://www.tq-international.com/Russia08Flyin/RussiaFlyinitinerary.htm>

North Pole Voyage to Totality – 17 day trip

JUL 19 to AUG 04 > 2m 23s TOTALITY in the Kara Sea

\$22,900 to \$29,900.USD ex Helsinki, Finland **(the \$29,900 packages are SOLD OUT!)**

<http://www.tq-international.com/NorthPole2008/NPhome.htm>

North Pole Voyage to Totality – 2 day trip

Eclipse Guide > J. Kelly Beatty & Dr. Glenn Schneider

JUL 31 to AUG 01 > 2m 40s TOTALITY in an Airbus 330-200 aircraft near Svalbard

\$8880.USD to \$13,380 USD per row ex Düsseldorf, Germany and Köln/Bonn

<http://www.tq-international.com/NorthPoleFlight2008/NPFlighthome.htm>

Additional Info on the Polar Eclipse flight of 2008 from Glenn Schneider

http://nicmosis.as.arizona.edu:8000/ECLIPSE_WEB/ECLIPSE_08/TSE2008_EFLIGHT.html

Tropical Sails Corp

China > 10-day trip

JUL 25 to AUG 04 > 2m 00s TOTALITY (near Hami)

\$2288.USD

<http://www.tropicalsails.com/china.pdf>

Tusker Trail

Mongolia >13-day trip

JUL 26 to AUG 06 - 2m 03 TOTALITY

\$4380.USD > Gobi Desert Extension Available, AUG 06 to AUG 10 for \$1915 USD

<http://www.tusker.com/eclipse2008/1eclipse.htm>

Wilderness Travel

<http://www.wildernesstravel.com/>

Eclipse Guide > Alex Filippenko, PhD

Total Solar Eclipse in Mongolia > 7-day trip

JUL 27 to AUG 02 > 2m 05s TOTALITY at 6700 feet altitude

Mongolia Eclipse Camp

JUL 27 to AUG 02 - **SOLD OUT!**

Lake Hovsgol & Eclipse > 11-day trip

JUL 27 to AUG 06

\$4995.USD

The Gobi Desert & Eclipse > 13-day trip

JUL 27 to AUG 08

\$5195.USD

Altai Mountains Trek & Eclipse > 14-day trip

JUL 27 to AUG 09

\$5595.USD

Heart of Mongolia & Eclipse > 16-day trip

JUL 27 to AUG 11

\$5295.USD

Lake Baikal & Eclipse > 15-day trip

JUL 27 to AUG 10

\$6995.USD

WINCO Eclipse Tours, Inc.

Mongolia >18-day trip - Balikun / Yiwu area - **NEW LISTING!**

JUL 19 to AUG 05 – nearly 2m TOTALITY

\$5265.USD

<http://www.wincoeclipse.com/id39.htm>

Also Now Booking: 2009 Total Solar Eclipse

This eclipse may be the biggest eclipse event of the century as it will be the longest totality of the century. The longest it can possibly last is 6m 38.9s in an area of ocean where little land exists. There are a few tour groups booking some locations already, with more to come. So far I have only found a couple that are already taking reservations, and they are on mainland China, where the longest available time will be 5m 54s southwest of Shanghai. In a future issue we will look at this specific eclipse and weather expectations.

Recently we received word that eclipse observers will be limited to only 1300 individuals who will be allowed in the Tokara-Retto Islands just south of Japan where totality will be visible on land. Details will be forthcoming in May of how to sign up for the drawing.

Akuseki-jima	6m 20.3s TOTALITY, 255 individuals
Suwanose-jima	6m 16.4s TOTALITY, 310 individuals
Kodakara-jima	6m 04.9s TOTALITY, 75 individuals
Nakanoshima	5m 56.9s TOTALITY, 200 individuals
Takara-jima	5m 53.5s TOTALITY, 220 individuals
Kuchinoshima	5m 37.7s TOTALITY, 120 individuals
Hira-jima	6m 35.7s TOTALITY, 100 individuals (near Suribachi-Jima)
Suribachi-Jima	5m 17.3s TOTALITY, Also known as Iwo-Jima and is off limits

For more info see: <http://www91.sakura.ne.jp/~kay2/TSE/TSE2009japan/TSE2009japan-tokara.htm>

An article appeared in the 2008.03.15 in the Asahi Shimbun about the concerns of the islands about the tourist influx. Please review it at;

<http://www.asahi.com/english/Herald-asahi/TKY200803150116.html>

The following groups are listed as they have posted their itinerates;

A Classic Tours Collection - NEW LISTING!

<http://aclassictour.com>

Eclipse Guide > Dr. Jay Pasachoff

China including Tibet & Silk Road Route

Eclipse Tour 2008 Siberia Russia > Main Tour > 15 day tour (from Houston)

Dates & Prices TBA > TOTALITY near Shanghai & Hangzhou

Focus on Nature Tours (FONT) - NEW LISTING!

<http://www.jasminechina.com/ecl2009.htm>

Birding in the Summer – Southern Japan > 15-days

JUL 12 to JUL 26 > up to 3m+ TOTALITY on Amimi

\$2795.USD ex arrive Okinawa / depart Osaka

<http://www.focusonnature.com/JapanJul'09TotalSolarEclipseFeature.htm>

(Editor's Note: With the new information outlined above, I must wonder if this listing is still valid)

Houston Museum of Natural Science

thru Easton Resource Development, Inc. - NEW LISTING!

Totality Over China 2009 > 14-day trip

Eclipse Guide > Dr. Carolyn Sumners

JUL 10 to JUL 23 > TOTALITY from or near ShaoXing

\$3395.USD ex. Arrive Beijing, leave Shanghai

http://www.hmns.org/files/education/HMNS_Eclipse_Trips_2008_and_2009.pdf

Jasmine's China Adventure Tours

<http://www.jasminechina.com/ecl2009.htm>

Dragon River Eclipse Tour

Option 1 > 21-days

JUL 12 to AUG 01 > nearly 6m TOTALITY

\$4750.USD ex Beijing

<http://www.jasminechina.com/ecl2009.htm#option1>

Option 2 > 21-days

JUL 12 to AUG 01 > nearly 6m TOTALITY

\$4350.USD ex Beijing

<http://www.jasminechina.com/ecl2009.htm#option2>

Option 3 > 16-days

JUL 17 to AUG 01 > nearly 6m TOTALITY

\$3950.USD ex Shanghai

<http://www.jasminechina.com/ecl2009.htm#option3>

Option 4 > 16-days

JUL 12 to AUG 01 > nearly 6m TOTALITY

\$3550.USD ex Shanghai

<http://www.jasminechina.com/ecl2009.htm#option4>

Option 5 > 8-days

JUL 17 to JUL 24 > nearly 6m TOTALITY

\$1900.USD ex Shanghai

<http://www.jasminechina.com/ecl2009.htm#option1>

MWT Associates, Inc. - NEW LISTING!

Great Saros 136 Total Solar Eclipse – 14 day trip

JUL 13 to JUL 26 > 5m+ TOTALITY from Three Gorges Dam region on the Yangtse

Request a brochure to receive a price list

DOES include round trip airfare from major US gateways

Ring of Fire Expeditions - NEW LISTING!

Eclipse Guide > Paul D. Maley

Tour #1 – China Coast Total Solar Eclipse – 7day trip

JUL 19 to JUL 25 – 5m 52s TOTALITY southwest of Shanghai

\$2899.USD ex Shanghai, a post tour to Beijing is also available

<http://www.eclipsetours.com/china09.html>

Tour #2 – Iwo Jima Total Solar Eclipse

JUL 19 to JUL 25 – 5m 12s TOTALITY

Trip details yet to be posted at the site below;

<http://www.eclipsetours.com/iwo.html>

Sirius Travel

Option A - Tibet & China > 18 day trip

JUL 13 to JUL 30 > 5m 00s TOTALITY at 3099 meters on Mt. Emei Shan
\$4325.USD

<http://www.siriustravel.com/tibet09/itinerary.cfm>

Option B - Tibet & China > 12 day trip - **NEW LISTING!**

JUL 13 to JUL 24 > 5m 00s TOTALITY at 3099 meters on Mt. Emei Shan
\$3850.USD

<http://www.siriustravel.com/tibet09/itinerary.cfm>

Tropical Sails Corp

Eclipse 2009 China Total Solar > 14-day trip

JUL 11 to JUL 24 > nearly 6m TOTALITY near Shanghai
\$2798.USD

<http://www.tropicalsails.com/eclipse/page3.html>

Twilight Tours - NEW LISTING!

China Total Solar Eclipse Tour >14-day trip

JUL 13 to JUL 26 - 5m 50s TOTALITY (near Hangzhou)
\$2995.USD

<http://sciencecenter.net/twilighttours/200907/itinerary.pdf>

Wilderness Travel

<http://www.wildernesstravel.com/>

Eclipse Leader > Alex Filippenko, PhD

Total Solar Eclipse in Polynesia > 15-day trip

JUL 15 to JUL 29 > Almost 3 ½m TOTALITY
\$6995.USD - **SOLD OUT!**

<http://www.wildernesstravel.com/itins/evpolyne.html>

Also, Also Now Booking; 2010 Total Solar Eclipse

The eclipse of 2010 July 11 is almost entirely visible from the waters of the South Pacific Ocean, with very small interjections of reefs and tiny islands. It passes close to Tahiti, and much further totality envelopes Rapa Nui (Easter Island). Whether going to Tahiti or Rapa Nui, space may be very limited, and like the TSE of 2005, will likely sell out well in advance. An article posted to the USA Today web site last year stated that the lodging at the hotels on Rapa Nui was booked 8 years in advance¹. I have little doubt that there will be several eclipse camps set up here, but just how many will be able to get to, and with LAN Airlines only making 6 flights a week from Santiago to Rapa Nui, perhaps they will gear up for the assault.

Eclipse chasers trying to squeeze out every second will likely make a pilgrimage to the area along the northeast and eastern shores of Rapa Nui, will be poised for 4m 47s of totality, less than 2 seconds off the maximum visible along the centerline out in the ocean. But even people on the southeast side of the island, in Hanga Roa, will witness 4m 40s of totality, only 7 seconds less than the observers on the northeast shore.

Tahiti lies just outside the eclipse path, and those venturing on the seas only 120kms south will have a chance for 3m 55s of totality, with longer durations the further east you travel, and the nearby small island of Mahetia will glimpse 1m 45s of totality, and several precarious atolls to the east of Tahiti come very close to the centerline. Most tour groups are only compiling lists of individuals wanting to travel to these areas, so get on a list requesting more information. To date, the following are the only groups actively advertising their rates and are taking reservations;

Enrichment Tours - NEW LISTING!

<http://www.dennismamma.com/tours/upcoming.htm>

Mongolia >18-day trip - Balikun / Yiwu area

JUL 19 to AUG 05 – nearly 2m TOTALITY

\$5265.USD

<http://www.wincoeclipse.com/id39.htm>

Ring of Fire Expeditions - NEW LISTING!

[Eclipse Guide > Paul D. Maley](#)

Solar Eclipse Cruise in French Polynesia – 11 day trip

JUL 08 to JUL 18 – 4m 01s TOTALITY near Moorea, Society Islands

\$3526.USD and up (\$3058.USD + \$468.USD Port, fuel and gratuity surcharges) ex Papeete, Tahiti

<http://www.eclipsetours.com/tahiti.html>

¹ USA Today - http://www.usatoday.com/travel/news/2007-10-25-eclipse-travel_N.htm

UMBGRAPHILE Max CLUB

Umbraphile Max Club

Glenn Schneider > 69.1 minutes - Level 7

Jay Pasachoff > 60.9 minutes - Level 7

Friedhelm Dorst > 59.7 minutes - Level 6

Bernie Verreau > 50.6 minutes - Level 6

How many people on the Earth do you suppose have ever seen a Total Solar Eclipse (TSE)? This is a number that is likely in the millions, but even that is a fraction of the world's population. In 1991 the eclipse path took the Moon's shadow directly over Ciudad de Mexico (Mexico City), where over 8,000,000 people reside. But how many of those actually took the time to actually look at mid-eclipse, likely another fraction, hopefully a larger fraction, but still a fraction.

Most of those millions will never get to see another TSE. There will be a few, those that by chance were in a location where the path took it across the same area, but now the number decreases dramatically, and the millions now become thousands. And for those that have seen 3 or more, now you have to willfully pursue eclipses, making these people, perhaps even you, an "Eclipse Chaser."

The eclipse chaser is a relatively modern choice innovation. Indeed once orbital mechanics was discovered, mathematicians began to calculate and predict the times and places of solar eclipses, scientists set sail for distant lands from which to observe them. Today, observers still set sail in ship, but now in cruise ships, in order to observe eclipses that present themselves favorably on the oceans. But with the establishment of airlines and automobiles, anyone with the means and desire can now chase after eclipses.

1972 was perhaps when modern eclipse chasing kicked into high gear, as the SS Olympia "chased" into the Moon's shadow in the Atlantic Ocean with a boat load of viewers (which was repeated in 1973 off the coast of Africa). In recent years some eclipse chasers have taken to the air to view the eclipse out of an aircraft (and usually above the clouds) where the terrain is difficult or too costly, or weather conditions are poor otherwise. An added benefit with this type of viewing is that a jet plane can position itself several thousand feet above the ground, and with the possibility of flying in the same direction as the shadow is moving, can add a few additional seconds to the duration of the eclipse that would not have been possible on the ground.

This brings us to the record holders of which we have knowledge about. Sheridan Williams is posting eclipse chaser info on his web site in a spreadsheet format¹. To date he is reporting on 136 individuals. Of these, only 24 people have seen 10 or more TSE's, and only 3 have seen 20 or more TSE's. We introduce here, the Umbraphile Max Club, and the most prolific observers of the Total Solar Eclipse (as of the last TSE on 2006.03.18);

Here I should note that in 1973, a cooperative effort by 8 scientists and while doing flight tests with the O01 Concorde prototype, a flight was made during the TSE of June 30. The supersonic aircraft was traveling at Mach 2.05 and an altitude of 17,000 meters, and observations were made of the TSE for 74 minutes, with extended 2nd contact to a duration of 7 minutes, and 3rd contact to 12 minutes². So it has taken what is likely to be 4 decades for today's eclipse chasers to make up for that one fantastic event.

¹ Sheridan Williams' Total Eclipse Web Site <http://www.clock-tower.com/eclipse.htm>

² Nature, <http://www.nature.com/nature/journal/v246/n5428/abs/246072a0.html>

TOUR GROUPS LISTINGS > DISCLAIMER & ADVICE PAGE

At **TOTALITY!**, we have done a GOOGLE web search to find travel agents that are presently booking eclipse tours. Because they are listed here is in no way an endorsement for the veracity of any agent or agencies. We present these brief overviews for your convenience and to be a reference for your further examination to help you find the package that best fits your travel desires and prices. Please use the links to review all of the accompanying details about each trip.

Nearly ALL packages do NOT include airfare to and from your country of origin if other than the country you reside in, and visas are also extra, unless noted otherwise. Meals are sometimes included and sometimes not, please read these itineraries carefully. All prices listed are usually the starting price, single supplements (one person/per room) prices are usually notably higher, and I encourage anyone traveling alone to find a travel buddy so higher costs can be avoided. A good travel buddy will also watch your back, just like a diving buddy, and keep strangers at a distance when you are making an ATM withdrawal abroad.

Additional trip extensions are also often available. More listings will be added when they become available and be indicated with a **NEW LISTING!** value on the previous pages.

There is a distinction between tour groups that specialize in eclipse and astronomical tours, and tour groups that are including the eclipse into either their regular tours, or perhaps have modeled a tour to take advantage of the eclipse in a region they often cover in their tours. As a rule, even the eclipse/astronomy tour groups frequently contract out to local tours groups familiar with the sites of the host country. The difference is when a tour group engages an experienced eclipse guide, the day of the eclipse, and even a couple of days leading up to the eclipse, is all about doing anything within reason to get everyone to a location where the Sun will be visible at the time of totality, even if it means racing to find a hole in the clouds (heaven forbid), even if it means moving the tour hundreds of miles in an attempt to view totality. That is why they call it “Eclipse Chasing.” Also, the eclipse guide can monitor the weather patterns, as well as to describe the events of a total solar eclipse to first time eclipse chasers (FTEC’s). No matter what, plan to have a great sight seeing trip, and even if it is cloudy, you will still have had a fascinating tour.

If your group does NOT have an “eclipse leader,” and if you have eclipse experience, you may need to step up to be sure that on eclipse day, the focus is getting to and giving ample time for the experienced eclipse chasers to set up equipment. It is important to have a lot of time to set up and align your equipment, with plenty of time to spare.

In most cases expect there to be a fee for a visa to the country or countries you will be visiting, and some can be a fairly hefty sum, in addition to requiring acquire it months ahead of time, so the more countries, the more fees, and these are usually not included in your basic tour price. And almost always, the tour cost does NOT include your international airfare. Often your tour company can arrange your international flights, but with careful work, you may find better fees if you book yourself, it may however be difficult matching your arrival and departure times with that of the tour. In some cases, if you land in one country in order to get to another, even that short time in the airport, may require another visa.

Eclipse Specialty Tour Group Web Sites . . .

Eclipse City

<http://www.eclipse-city.com/>

Far Horizons

<http://www.farhorizon.com/2006-solar-eclipse.htm>

Mayhugh Travel – Astronomy Vacations

<http://astronomyvacations.com/>

MWT Associates (Astronomical Tours)

<http://www.melitatrips.com/>

Ring of Fire Expeditions

<http://www.eclipsetours.com>

Sirius Travel

<http://www.siriustravel.com/>

Sita World Tours - Solar Eclipse Tours

<http://www.eclipsetours.net/>

Spears Travel

<http://www.spearstravel.com/astronomy/>

TravelQuest International

<http://www.tq-international.com/index.htm>

Travel Wizard

<http://www.travelwizardtravel.com/astro.htm>

Winco Eclipse Tours, Inc.

<http://www.wincoeclipsetours.com>

Other Useful Eclipse Web Sites . . .

NASA Eclipse Home Page

<http://eclipse.gsfc.nasa.gov/eclipse.html> - **NEW WEB PAGE!**

Fred Espenak's Web Site

<http://www.mreclipse.com/>

Jay Anderson – Eclipse Weather Predictions

<http://home.cc.umanitoba.ca/~jander/>

Xavier Jubier's Google Earth Eclipse Maps

http://xjubier.free.fr/en/site_pages/SolarEclipsesGoogleMaps.html

IAU Solar Eclipse Working Group

<http://www.eclipses.info/>

Jay Pasachoff – Past Eclipse Expeditions

<http://www.williams.edu/Astronomy/eclipse/>

Sheridan Williams' Web Site

<http://www.clock-tower.com/>

Eclipses Online – HMNAO, CCLRC

<http://www.eclipse.org.uk/>

Glenn Schneider: Umbraphile - **NEW LISTING!**

<http://nicmosis.as.arizona.edu:8000/UMBGRAPHILLIA.html>

Bill Kramer's – Where Are the Eclipse Chasers - **NEW LISTING!**

<http://www.eclipse-chasers.com/where.htm>

Dan McGlaun's – Eclipse2017.org - **NEW LISTING**

<http://www.eclipse2017.org/>

Acknowledgments . . .

Some materials in this publication, used with permission from . . .

Fred Espenak

Jay Anderson

Xavier M. Jubier

And with additional thanks to . . .

Jay Pasachoff

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Larry A. Stevens
5114 Walnut, West Des Moines, IA 50265-2828.

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Some future issues will occasionally use photos that have been posted to web sites that are saved at 72 dpi, and likely will not be as sharp as others posted at 128 dpi.

Please send any correspondence, suggestions or submissions to TOTALITYnewzine@aol.com.

Photo submissions can also be sent to the TOTALITYnewzine@aol.com, please format @128dpi.

