



## PORT COLBORNE

### MEDIA RELEASE

February 1, 2024

## **Eclipse fever hits Port Colborne: Total eclipse of the sun on the horizon in April**

**PORT COLBORNE, ON** – On April 8, 2024, residents and visitors to Port Colborne will find themselves in the direct path of totality during an historic total eclipse of the sun. This spectacular event will last for almost four minutes, starting at 2:04 p.m. and ending at 4:33 p.m., with totality occurring at 3:18 p.m.

As the moon's shadow casts its dark veil over our community, Port Colborne invites residents and visitors alike to join in a series of family-friendly events, safely view the eclipse from designated viewing areas, and immerse themselves in an incredible day of celestial fun in Port Colborne.

“The total solar eclipse presents a fantastic opportunity for our community to come together and witness a true wonder of the universe,” said Mayor William Steele. “We invite residents and visitors to join us as we safely celebrate this extraordinary event and create lasting memories in Port Colborne.”

As the skies above Port Colborne offer an opportunity to witness the grandeur of a total solar eclipse, the City will also offer a variety of fun family-friendly events for residents and visitors alike:

### **Ontario Planetarium Programming: Planetarium Show**

Visitors will have the chance to immerse themselves in the wonders of the cosmos as planetarium staff will share constellation stories, northern light insights, and so much more inside an immersive inflatable 4K planetarium. Stay tuned for sign-up details.

### **Ontario Planetarium Programming: Solar Tours**

Stargazing enthusiasts can enjoy a tour of the universe with a live presenter. Explore the powerful sun, learn about the eclipse, how the aurora works and so much more! Stay tuned for sign-up details.

### **Ontario Planetarium Programming: Telescope Tours**

Have your chance to view the eclipse using a 10-inch Dobsonian Telescope. Astronomy guides will provide hands-on telescope experiences, a chance for attendees to view sunspots and solar flares using solar filters to ensure safety. Stay tuned for sign-up details.

### **"Let's Talk Science"**

Join science experts from Brock University to spark curiosity and strengthen STEM connections. Learn about solar eclipse safety by creating a pinhole camera that can be used to

safely view the eclipse or by creating eclipse art that will project crescents during the eclipse. More details to come.

### **Port Colborne Public Library and Museum**

Join city staff at their interactive station to learn about the solar eclipse through crafts and activities, plus take advantage of their mobile library and even sign up for your very own library card.

### **FREE Community Skate Presented by City of Port Colborne**

Vale Health & Wellness Centre, 550 Elizabeth Street.

Rink 1 from 12 p.m. to 4 p.m.

Rink 2 from 12 p.m. to 4 p.m.

### **Port Colborne YMCA FREE Open Swim**

Vale Health & Wellness Centre, 550 Elizabeth Street.

Swim times to be announced.

### **Where to watch the Solar Eclipse:**

Residents are encouraged to gather with friends, family, and fellow sky gazers at prime viewing locations across Port Colborne to marvel at the breathtaking phenomenon. From the Vale Health & Wellness Centre to Sugarloaf Marina, numerous spots offer unobstructed views of the spectacular display in the sky.

- 1. Vale Health & Wellness Centre** – As a designated viewing area, the Vale Health & Wellness Centre has lots of parking and a great view of the sky. The Let's Talk Science and Ontario Planetarium Experience and telescope viewing stations will all be available at the Vale Health & Wellness Centre.
- 2. H.H. Knoll Lakeview Park** – Interested in staking a seat by the water? This signature park is an awesome place to check out the eclipse. This area will have tons of parking options and a great view of the sky to catch the historic moment.
- 3. Sugarloaf Harbour Marina** – While the City isn't encouraging boaters to launch their boats early, given the cold and unpredictable April weather, the Marina will still be an awesome place to check out the eclipse.
- 4. West Street / Downtown Port Colborne** – Grab a coffee or a snack at one of the amazing businesses along West Street while you wait for the total eclipse. With a clear view to the sky, West Street or other areas in downtown Port Colborne will make a great place to see the eclipse from.
- 5. Lock 8 Gateway Park** – Grab some takeout from one of the dozens of restaurants along Main Street and head to Lock 8 Gateway Park to watch the eclipse from the comfort of your own lawn chair. An excellent view right along the canal! There won't be any official city

programming here, but there's tons of space to stretch out and enjoy.

6. **Nickel Beach** – While the City won't have any official programming or activities in this location, Nickel Beach could be a great place to see the eclipse. We recommend Zone 2 parking lot, with a fantastic view to the sky.
7. **Centennial Cedar Bay Beach** – While the City won't have any official programming or activities in this location, Centennial Cedar Bay Beach could be another excellent place to see the eclipse. Be sure not to trespass on private property in this area.
8. **Your own front or backyard** – If you can see the sky from your own front or backyard, staying home is a good option. The city anticipates an influx of visitors and traffic to the community, so staying home could be a great option.

### **Emergency Preparedness**

The City is working closely with neighbouring municipalities and the Niagara Region in planning for such a large-scale event in our small community. Our top priority is to ensure the safety and well-being of attendees and residents alike. Our emergency response teams are planning for potential contingencies with an aim toward minimizing risks as we prepare to welcome thousands of visitors to Port Colborne. We are considering things like how we will address medical emergencies, large crowds, potential communication interruptions, and how we can effectively coordinate across agencies.

### **Quick Facts:**

- It is very dangerous to look directly at the sun at any time, but during an eclipse the temptation to have a quick glance can be very strong.
- To avoid damaging your retinas when viewing the solar eclipse:
  - Do not view the eclipse at all or use a proper method of blocking the sun's dangerous rays while viewing.
  - Use a filter that blocks all dangerous light. To do this, you must use ISO-certified eclipse glasses from a reputable vendor that meet the ISO 12312-2 international safety standard. The manufacturer's name and address must be printed on the product.
  - Do not use any viewer if it has scratched or wrinkled lenses.
- During the eclipse, it's important to avoid:
  - Ordinary sunglasses or multiple pairs of sunglasses
  - Neutral density or polarizing filters, such as those made for camera lenses
  - Smoked glass
  - Photographic or X-ray film (unexposed, exposed or developed)
  - Eclipse glasses with a binocular or telescope
  - Potato-chip bags, DVDs, and any other do-it-yourself filters

Don't miss your chance to be part of history as Port Colborne basks in the shadow of the total solar eclipse. Mark your calendars, spread the word, and prepare for an unforgettable experience!

For more information and updates on eclipse-related events, [www.portcolborne.ca/solareclipse](http://www.portcolborne.ca/solareclipse) or follow us on social media.

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