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MAGAZINE

Winter 2024



April 2024 Eclipse Camping Guide

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- Regional Camping Spotlight: Prime Camping Spots for the 2024 Eclipse
- 2024 Calendar Contest Winners
- Leave No Trace: Principle #7
- Smokey Bear Turns 80!

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COOL Tears™ and tiny campers MAGAZINE

Vol. 12 No. 1 Winter 2024



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Letter from the Editor:



Hello Tiny Camper Enthusiasts!

As we embrace the chill of winter and the warmth of our community, I find myself reflecting on the journey we've embarked upon together over the past year. It is with immense pride and gratitude that I share a milestone that marks not just our growth but the strength of our shared passion for teardrops, squaredrops, and the tiny camper lifestyle. Last year, we achieved a remarkable subscriber count of over 14,000 enthusiasts. This achievement is not just a number; it's a testament to the vibrant community we've built together, bonded by our love for the simplicity and adventure that tiny campers bring into our lives.

Thank you to each and every one of you for subscribing, engaging, and sharing your stories with us. Your support fuels our dedication to delivering content that resonates with your spirit of adventure and passion for the great outdoors. As we continue to grow, I encourage you to spread the word and invite your friends to join our community. Let's make our circle wider and our adventures richer by welcoming more tiny camper enthusiasts into our fold. The majority of teardrop campers that I meet don't know of this free, digital magazine - so I'm counting on you to help spread the word!

In the spirit of embracing change and ensuring the well-being of our dedicated staff, we've decided to publish a "winter" issue this year instead of our traditional January/February issue. This decision was made to give our team more time off during the holiday season, allowing them to recharge and spend precious moments with loved ones. We believe that this time of rest and reflection is essential, not just for our team but for all of us, as it nurtures the creativity and passion that fuel our magazine. This will be the publishing format going forward.

The Winter edition is crafted with the same dedication and love for the tiny camper community that you've come to expect from us. We've packed this issue with inspiring stories, helpful tips, and breathtaking destinations that promise to ignite your wanderlust even in the coldest months. As we venture into this new year, let's carry forward the spirit of adventure, the joy of discovery, and the bond of our community that makes our magazine truly special.

Thank you once again for being an integral part of our journey. Here's to more adventures, more stories, and an ever-growing community of tiny camper enthusiasts. Stay warm, stay inspired, make your plans for viewing the upcoming eclipse, and let's make this winter unforgettable.

Enjoy the read, and as always, camp responsibly. ■

Happy travels and stay safe
Live Tiny. Live Free.

Lisa Adams

Editor

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KITCHEN ON WHEELS

Meat & Potatoes and more Potatoes!

I love cooking any time of the year but the winter months really bring out my inner Julia Child; it's cold and dark out there and my kitchen becomes a magical place of warmth and good smells. I hope you like sweet potatoes; they've been my go-to this year. But never fear if they are not your thing, just switch them out for regular russets, yellow, or red potatoes.

I've made this first recipe several times for library functions and it is always a hit with requests for the recipe. I use venison - stew meat is great, but ground will do in a pinch. Prep a little before you head out camping and you have an easy all-in-one dutch oven meal with meat and veg or skip the meat and add cubed and marinated mushrooms (see step 2 below).

We'll cover two potato recipes, the first is Best Beef Stew with Sweet Potatoes and second is Loaded Sweet Potatoes! Enjoy! ~ Anne

Best Beef Stew Ingredients

- 1 tsp olive oil
- 1 ½ lb beef or venison stew meat (ground works too)
 - Vegan option: cube same amount of portobella or baby bella mushrooms and marinate for a minimum of 10 minutes in 3 tsp soy sauce, 1 tsp neutral oil, 1 tsp smoked paprika or liquid smoke
- ¾ cup chopped onion (medium)
- 1 cup sliced carrots
- 1 cup chopped celery
- 4 cloves garlic, finely chopped
- ½ cup dry red wine
- 8 cups broth - beef, vegetable, etc. - whatever you have
- 1 ½ cup chopped tomatoes or 1 14 oz can diced tomatoes
- 1 tsp ground pepper
- 1 tsp smoked paprika
- 2 bay leaves
- 2 - 4 large sweet potatoes, cut into 1 inch cubes. Add more or less depending on the size of your potatoes and the amount you like. I load it up!
- 2 tsp cornstarch mixed with 2 tsp room temp water
- salt OR Better Than Bouillon - more or less depending if your broth is salted or not. I skip the salt and add a heaping tablespoon of Better Than Bouillon - either beef or vegetable.

Directions

1. Heat oil in a large pot over medium heat.
2. Add meat or mushrooms and cook, stirring frequently for 4-5 minutes or until browned. Remove from the pot and hold.

3. Add onion, carrots and celery to the same pot; cook stirring occasionally until onion is translucent.
4. Add garlic and stir frequently for 1 minute.
5. Add wine and stir constantly for 3-4 minutes.
6. Add broth, tomatoes, salt or bouillon, pepper, paprika, bay, and bring to a boil. Return meat to the pan and simmer for 60-90 minutes until the meat is tender and broth has reduced OR transfer to a crock pot and cook for up to 6 hours on low.
7. Add Sweet Potatoes and cook, stirring occasionally for 20-30 minutes until tender
8. Add cornstarch mixture, stir constantly 4-5 minutes until slightly thickened.

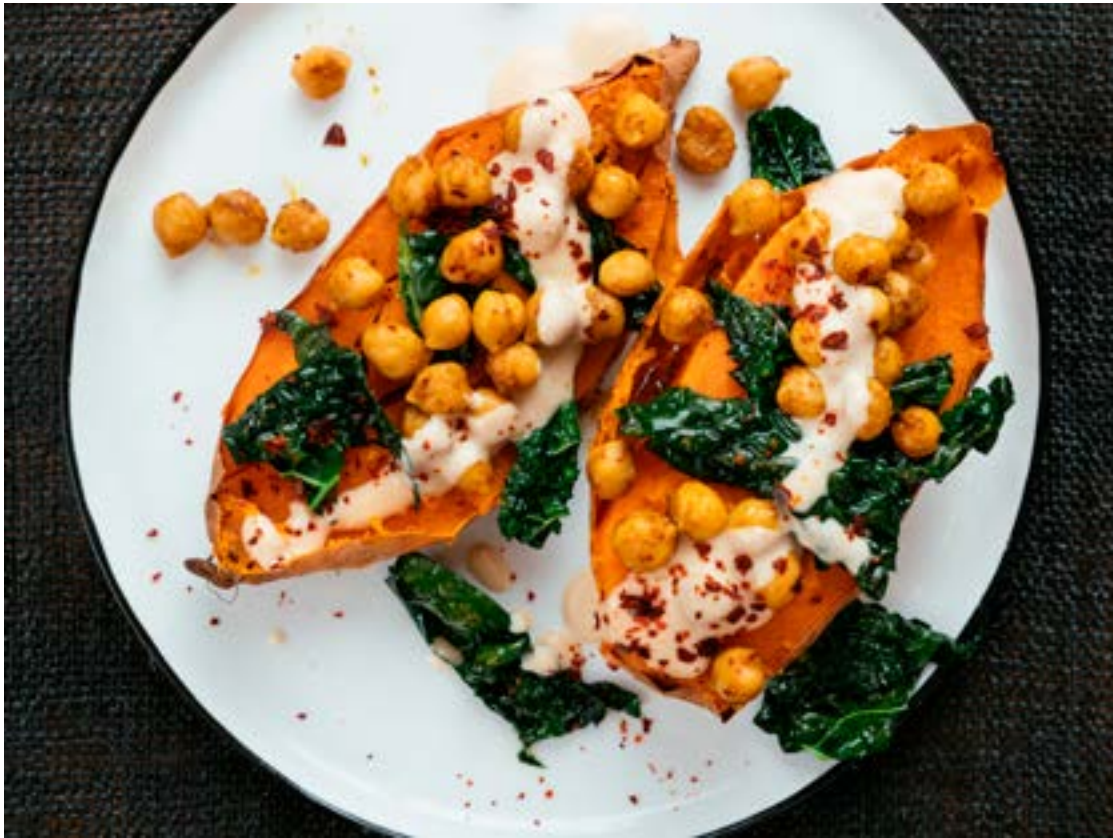


Loaded Sweet Potatoes

- Sweet potatoes - as many as you need, washed. Roast these in a campfire (wrapped in foil), bake, or airfry until soft and completely cooked. Leave the skins on.

Load up Ideas:

- Add coleslaw and pulled pork
- Add cannellini beans mixed with olive oil, garlic, chopped parsley, and brown rice
- Add chickpeas tossed with garam masala and olive oil. Add some brown rice and hummus
- Add black beans, guacamole and/or salsa.



Loaded sweet potato with chickpeas, kale, olive oil, and tahini.


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for the April 8, 2024 Solar Eclipse

By **LISA ADAMS**

Get ready for a celestial spectacle!

Mark your calendars for April 8, 2024! A breathtaking solar eclipse is set to grace the skies, and we've got the inside scoop on the best spots in the US and Canada to witness this cosmic marvel. But here's the twist - since you're a camper, you're already a step ahead of the game. Let's dive into why campers have the upper hand and where you should be heading for an unforgettable eclipse experience.

Why Campers Have the Edge

Do you remember the clogged roadways of the last full solar eclipse in 2017? While traffic is expected to clog highways again on eclipse day as millions of people flock to a thin, 115 mile wide band stretching from Mazatlán, Mexico to the rugged coasts of Newfoundland, Canada, teardrop campers can avoid the crush by arriving early at your viewing destination. Scope out camping on private land or smaller campgrounds for the best experience away from the crowds. And enjoy the perk of extra days at your campsite before or after the eclipse.

viewing location.

- **Beat the Traffic:** Remember the gridlock from the last eclipse? As a camper, you can arrive early, set up camp, and relax while others are stuck in traffic. While 32 million people live inside the path of totality, millions more are expected to travel into the totality path.
- **Stay Longer, Enjoy More:** Why rush back? Extend your stay and savor the natural beauty long after the eclipse has passed, making the experience more relaxed and enjoyable. This is key to beating the traffic in the point above!



- **Mobility Matters:** Your home on wheels lets you chase the best weather and views, away from the city lights and crowds. This mobility is crucial, especially if the weather changes unexpectedly in your planned
- **Nature's Theater:** There's something magical about watching the eclipse surrounded by nature. It's an immersive experience that goes beyond just viewing. We were in South Carolina for the 2017 eclipse. We did not experience totality,

but we did experience 98%. While we watched the sky darken, the roar of the cicadas as darkness fell in the middle of the afternoon was deafening!

- **Ready for Anything:** With your supplies and shelter on hand, you're prepared for whatever the day brings, making your experience stress-free and enjoyable. With millions of people traveling to a small space, it will be a major advantage to be less reliant on the local infrastructure, which can become overwhelmed during such events.

Prime Spots for Eclipse Chasing

Meteorologists and eclipse chasers have been crunching historical weather data for years to determine the prime spots for clear skies along the eclipse path. While weather is always unpredictable, especially outside of a few days, some key destinations give you the best odds of an unobstructed view.

- **The Heart of the Eclipse:** The eclipse's path of totality, where the moon completely obscures the sun, will sweep

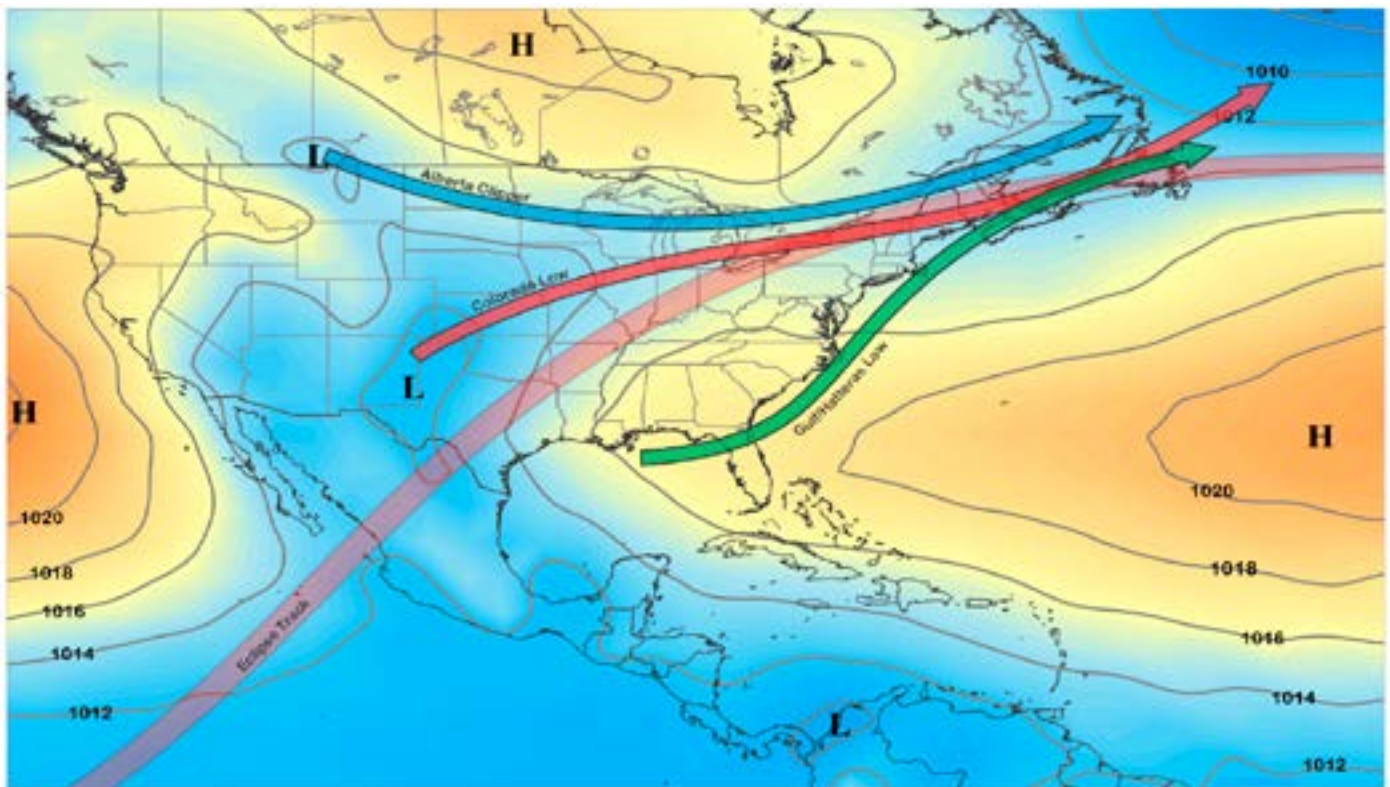


Image Credit: Michael Zeiler, GreatAmericanEclipse.com

across Mexico, the United States, and Canada. This path, about 115 miles wide, will offer the most spectacular views. Key locations along this celestial highway include major cities like San Antonio and Dallas, Texas; Indianapolis, Indiana; Cleveland, Ohio; Erie and Buffalo, Rochester, and Syracuse, New York; Burlington, Vermont; and Montreal, Canada. The eclipse will first touch land in Mexico, offering the longest duration of totality with about 4 minutes 30 seconds, near Torreon. As it moves northeast, the duration decreases to just under 3 minutes as it leaves Canada. [For more details on the eclipse path, click this link: Great American Eclipse](#)

- **Weather-Proof Your Viewing:** April's weather for most of the United States and Canada can be extremely unpredictable,

and for an event like the solar eclipse, clear skies are essential. Three common storm tracks — the Alberta Clipper, Colorado Low, and Gulf/Hatteras Low — could significantly influence weather conditions. Historical data suggests areas with the greatest cloudiness include the Ohio Valley, western Pennsylvania, northeastern New York, and northern New England. Conversely, Texas, Oklahoma, Missouri, and Arkansas might offer clearer skies. In general, the further southeast you are, the greater chance you have for more clear skies. As you head northeast across the country and the temperature drops, less water vapor is needed for condensation, aka clouds. For more details on your chances for a better viewing location, click this link [Space.com Great American Solar Eclipse](#) A map of average April sea-level pressure from



2000-2019 and the tracks of the most common types of spring storms is on the previous page. The eclipse track is the pale red ribbon from lower left to the upper right. (Image credit: Data: NOAA. Courtesy: Jay Anderson at Eclipseophile.com)

- **Northern Views:** For our friends in Canada, especially the Maritime regions, this website sheds light on the unique challenges and rewards of eclipse watching in that area. Experts predict that most Canadian locations will have less than 40% chance of sun based on historical data. If you can view looking southward over the Northumberland Strait, there could be more of a chance for sun since the sun isn't able to warm the cold waters of the Strait enough to form clouds. For an in depth look at the chances for sun across different states, [this is a great link to reference, Eclipseophile.](#)
- **Mobility and Flexibility:** For the dedicated eclipse chaser, mobility is key. The path of totality includes major highways and interstates, allowing for last-minute adjustments based on real-time weather updates. For example, Interstate 90 offers a route through Ohio to New York, staying within the path of totality. The goal is to find a spot with clear skies, even if it means a bit of travel.

Final Thoughts

The 2024 solar eclipse is more than just a celestial event; it's an opportunity for adventure, learning, and connecting with nature. As a camper, you're uniquely positioned to enjoy this spectacle in a way that others can't. So, start planning, pick your spot, and get ready for an eclipse viewing experience that's as comfortable as it is awe-

inspiring.

Where will we be? I grew up in northeast Ohio and my hometown will see full totality. Just after the 2017 eclipse, we told my dad that we'd be camping out in his backyard for this one. Unfortunately, my dad passed away a few years ago, but we've made plans to reconnect with family friends over that weekend. It will be a great chance to catch up and to see a once-in-a-lifetime solar eclipse over my hometown.

Be sure to check out the article titled "Under the Shadow: Prime Camping Spots for the April 2024 Eclipse" later in this issue.

Don't miss out! The next total solar eclipse won't be until 2044 in North Dakota and Montana, according to the National Park Service and 2045 as it crosses from California to Florida. Happy eclipse chasing!

Send us some of your eclipse photos and we might use them in an upcoming magazine! Send your shots to Anne@cooltears.com ■





Tiny Campers in the News

Vistabule, a St. Paul, Minnesota based teardrop manufacturer, debuted a new model this weekend at the Twin Cities RV Super Show. Instead of the traditional kitchen under the hatch, there is access to the sleeping quarters.

The DayTripper offers custom lighting, storage, and solar charging options. Starting just under \$15,000USD, it is over 400 pounds lighter than the original Vistabule.

Boulder, Colorado based Colorado Teardrop Trailers, filed for Chapter 7 bankruptcy protection at the end of November 2023. The manufacturer was founded in 2014 by Dean Wiltshire. According to a report from RV News, the company listed liabilities over \$800,000 and assets of only \$35,000. This significant disparity between liabilities and assets highlights the financial difficulties the company faced. It is unknown if they were experiencing decreased demand, increased competition, increased costs, or operational challenges. According to the founders LinkedIn profile, they had built over 700 off-road teardrops and at its height, the company had fifty employees and made six trailers per week in their 20,000 square foot facility. In our [September/October 2021 back issue](#), we highlighted their EV Trailer (patent pending). This situation is unfortunate for the employees, customers, suppliers, and the teardrop trailer community. ■



Smokey Bear Turns 80: A Look Back at America's Beloved Fire Prevention Symbol

By ANNE COX

This year marks the 80th anniversary of Smokey Bear, the iconic cartoon mascot created by the U.S. Forest Service to educate the public about the dangers of wildfires. For eight decades, Smokey's famous phrase "Only You Can Prevent Wildfires" has reminded generations of Americans how important it is that we each do our part to stop unwanted, human-caused fires before they start.

Smokey was born in 1944, when the Forest Service partnered with the Ad Council to create a campaign to warn Americans about the dangers of forest fires during World War II. With many men away fighting, fewer people were available to respond to wildfires caused by campers, smokers, and other travelers in the nation's forests. A bear was chosen as the campaign's mascot because of his natural connection to the woods. Smokey's debut appearance was on a poster drawn by artist Albert Staehle, which pictured him pouring a bucket of water over a campfire and stating "Smokey says - Care will prevent 9 out of 10 forest fires!"

The original living Smokey Bear was a young black bear cub rescued from a wildfire in the Capitan Mountains of New Mexico in 1950. Smokey had climbed a tree to escape the blaze, but his paws and hind legs were badly burned. Thanks to the care of his rescuers, he recovered and went on to live at the National Zoo in Washington, D.C. for over 25 years. Smokey died in 1976 and was returned to Capitan, New Mexico, where he is buried at the Smokey Bear Historical State Park. A plaque at his gravesite reads "This is the resting place of the first living Smokey Bear..."

Over the decades, Smokey's look has evolved to fit the times. He originally appeared in his ranger's hat in most posters and ads through the 1950s and 60s. In the 1970s, he was depicted wearing jeans and carrying a shovel, as a more modern outdoorsman. Smokey got an updated illustrated look in 2008, but his friendly smile and authoritative forest ranger hat remain an iconic symbol today. Over 75 years, Smokey's message has helped reduce the number of acres lost annually to wildfires from about 30 million to approximately 7 million.

Though Smokey is now a seasoned senior citizen at age 80, his message remains as important as ever in 2024. Here are 4 tips you can follow to help prevent destructive wildfires:

1. Fully extinguish campfires with water and stir ashes until cold before leaving camp.
2. Avoid camp stoves and lanterns near dry grass, branches or leaves.
3. Store extra fuel for stoves and lamps away from sources of heat.
4. Don't park vehicles or RVs over dry vegetation - the hot undercarriage can start fires.

Smokey's legacy lives on today through prevention education and heroic firefighters who work tirelessly to suppress wildfires. We can all continue Smokey's work by taking sensible precautions and spreading awareness. If we're careful with fire and follow common sense fire safety, together we can help save our forests from unwanted wildfires. Here's to many more years of Smokey Bear reminding us to be vigilant to prevent destructive fires whenever we work and play by saying "Only YOU Can Prevent Forest Fires!" ■







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Harvest Hosts is a membership program that provides access to a network of wineries, farms, breweries, museums and other unique attractions that invite RVers to visit and stay overnight. Harvest Hosts now allows clamshell and teardrop trailers, but you may NOT use your outdoor cooking facility. Click the logo below to get 15% off the regular yearly price. We've stayed at breweries, wineries, farms, and art studios in our local area as well as across the country.



Upcoming Teardrop, Squaredrop, and DIY Camper Gatherings



By **COOL TEARS STAFF &
DEBORAH PONTIUS**

As a dedicated team at Cool Tears, we strive to keep you informed about upcoming events and gatherings. However, we recognize that we can't be everywhere at once. That's where you come in! We rely on the contributions of our community to help us discover new stories, uncover exciting events, and submit articles that will captivate and inspire the broader teardrop camping community. Thank you to Deborah Pontius for highlighting an upcoming tiny camper gathering.

The 4th Annual Redwood Rendezvous registration is open! This year's event will take place Thursday August 22 through Tuesday August 27 at Pamplin Grove. Please note this is a CHANGE from September to August due to date availability. Due to dramatic pricing increases by the Humboldt County Parks department, we will be charging \$150/trailer regardless of # of occupants. We also need to reach 40 registrations in order to break even, so please help get the word out!

This event takes place at group site/county park close to Carlotta, CA. This is in northern California, about 30 minutes south of Eureka. It is a gorgeous, ethereal place that must be seen to be appreciated. There is no other camping like camping deep in the tall trees.

We welcome all single-axle trailers and will be having lots of fun, including happy hour, potlucks, an art class, cooking demonstration, bird watching, cornhole tournament, and more! See previous years posts for more information about the event. Feel free to DM me as well.

To register and for more information, visit <https://www.tangledyogi.com/special-events>
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Celebrating the Winning Photos: 2024 Cool Tears and Tiny Campers Photo Contest

By **COOL TEARS STAFF**

We extend our heartfelt thanks to every participant who shared a piece of their adventure with us. Your snapshots have not only showcased the charm and versatility of tiny trailers but have also reminded us of the boundless beauty that lies in the great outdoors. Your enthusiasm and passion for tiny campers have genuinely turned this contest into a global celebration.

A special congratulations to these winners! Your images stood out for their composition, the unique beauty of the locations, and the way they captured the spirit of tiny trailer travel. From Canada to the vibrant landscapes of South America, the coast of Europe, the wilderness of the US, and the untamed wilds of Australia each photo tells a story of exploration and the joy of the open road.

There are a few calendars left for sale. Head to www.cooltears.com/calendar to purchase your copy today!

Happy travels and happy snapping!

Congrats to our winners - depicted in order, by month: Jerry Clark (cover), Aleksander and Marina Kitsen, Anthony McAvoy (AUS), Guido and Andrea Scheidler (Europe), Shirley Reynolds, Mikola Lee (AUS), John Chico, Jim and Barbara Steffens, Sam Van Fleet, Ricardo Ospina (Columbia, South America), Kat McConnell, Pamela Becker (Canada), Jim and Selma Bennett, and Tony Latham (back cover). ■















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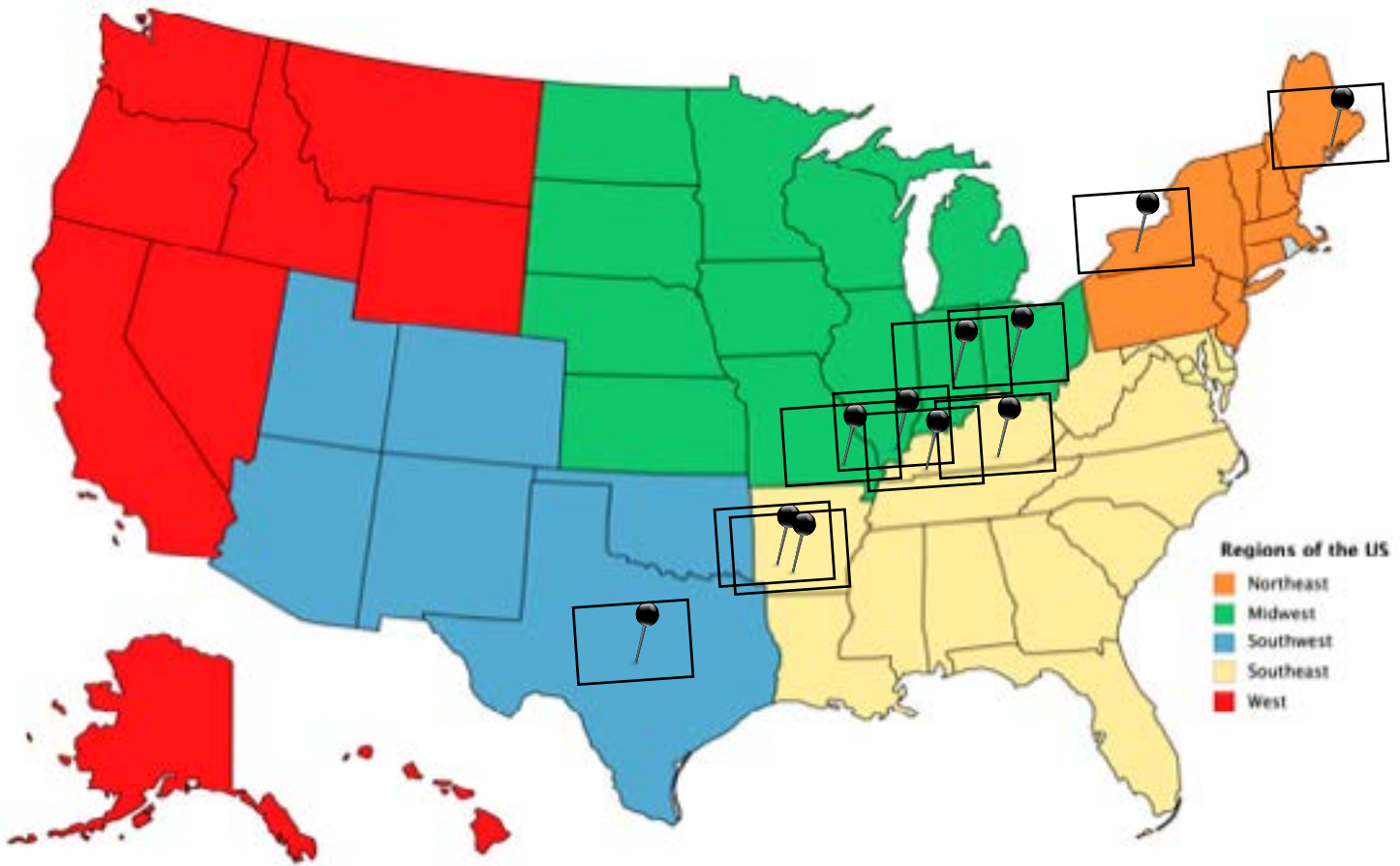
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Under the Shadow:

Prime Camping Spots for the 2024 Eclipse

By **COOL TEARS STAFF**

As the moon casts its shadow across the United States in April 2024, eclipse chasers and outdoor enthusiasts will be presented with a unique opportunity to witness this celestial spectacle from some of the country's most stunning natural landscapes. From the dense forests of the East to the expansive skies of the Midwest, here are four prime camping spots along the eclipse's path where you can set up camp and gaze upwards as day turns to night. Remember that most of these camping locations include no electric and the temperatures can be below freezing at night so be prepared for the cold!

Shawnee National Forest, Illinois

Nestled between the Mississippi and Ohio rivers, Shawnee National Forest offers an expansive backdrop for experiencing the eclipse. With its rugged bluffs, lush woodlands, and clearings perfect for sky watching, Shawnee provides a serene setting to witness the eclipse. The Garden of the Gods Recreation Area, with its breathtaking rock formations and panoramic views, is a must-visit spot within the forest. Campers can choose from several campgrounds and backcountry spots to set up their base, each offering a unique way to enjoy the natural beauty of southern Illinois.



Shawnee National Forest - Garden of the Gods sunset

Mark Twain National Forest, Missouri

Covering a vast portion of the Missouri Ozarks, Mark Twain National Forest is another ideal location for eclipse viewing. The forest's diverse landscape of rolling hills, rivers, and lakes makes it a picturesque camping destination. The Eleven Point National Scenic River offers secluded campsites along its banks, providing a tranquil setting for those who wish to enjoy the eclipse away from the crowds. The clear waters and untouched wilderness around the river create a reflective atmosphere for experiencing the natural wonder.

Big South Fork National River and Recreation Area, Kentucky and Tennessee

Straddling the Kentucky and Tennessee border, the Big South Fork National River and Recreation Area boasts some of the most rugged and scenic landscapes in the eastern United States. The area's deep gorges, towering rock formations, and extensive trail system make it a paradise for outdoor lovers. The East Rim Overlook offers stunning views of the river gorge below – a perfect backdrop for the eclipse. Campgrounds and backcountry camping spots abound, offering a variety of experiences for both seasoned backpackers and casual campers.



East Fork Overlook - Big South Fork National River and Recreation Area

Enchanted Rock State Natural Area, Texas

Located in Central Texas, Enchanted Rock State Natural Area is famed for its massive pink granite dome rising above Central Texas' landscape. This geological landmark offers a unique vantage point for the total eclipse, with wide, open skies that provide an unobstructed view of the celestial event. The area around Enchanted Rock includes camping facilities, making it an

ideal spot for those looking to experience the eclipse amidst the natural beauty of Texas Hill Country.

Land Between the Lakes National Recreation Area, Kentucky and Tennessee

Nestled between Kentucky Lake and Lake Barkley, Land Between the Lakes (LBL) National Recreation Area offers a unique water-bound setting for experiencing the eclipse. With over 170,000 acres of forests, wetlands, and open lands, LBL is a haven for wildlife enthusiasts, hikers, and campers alike. The area's numerous campgrounds and backcountry sites allow visitors to choose their perfect spot, whether it's a lakeside view under the open sky or a secluded spot in the forest. The Golden Pond Planetarium and Observatory within the recreation area provides an educational complement to the eclipse experience.

Hot Springs National Park, Arkansas

Hot Springs National Park, known as "The American Spa," might not be the first place that comes to mind for eclipse viewing, but it offers a unique combination of natural beauty and historical significance that can enhance the experience. While the park is more famous for its thermal baths and historic buildings, it also features beautiful landscapes that provide a great backdrop for the eclipse.

Why Hot Springs National Park?

Scenic Views: The park's location in the Ouachita Mountains offers scenic vistas, with several overlooks that provide clear views of the sky. The Hot Springs Mountain Tower, in particular, offers panoramic views that would be ideal for watching the eclipse.

Hiking Trails: With over 26 miles of trails winding through the park's forested hills, visitors can find their perfect spot to set up for eclipse viewing in a more secluded setting.

Thermal Baths: While not directly related to the eclipse, the opportunity to relax in the park's famous thermal waters before or after the celestial event adds a unique twist to the experience.

Ouachita National Forest

Spanning across central Arkansas and into eastern Oklahoma, the Ouachita National Forest offers vast expanses of wilderness that are perfect for those looking to experience the eclipse surrounded by nature. The forest's diverse landscapes, including mountains, forests, and

streams, provide numerous vantage points for eclipse watchers.

Why Ouachita National Forest?

Diverse Camping Options: From developed campgrounds to primitive backcountry sites, the Ouachita National Forest caters to all types of campers.

Water Recreation: The forest is home to several lakes and rivers, offering the chance to enjoy water activities like fishing, kayaking, and swimming in addition to eclipse viewing.

Hiking and Mountain Biking: With hundreds of miles of trails, including the renowned Ouachita National Recreation Trail, outdoor enthusiasts can enjoy their favorite activities while waiting for the eclipse.

Maximizing Your Eclipse Experience in Arkansas:

Plan Ahead: Both Hot Springs National Park and Ouachita National Forest are likely to be popular destinations for eclipse viewers because the weather should be more mild. Early planning and reservations are recommended.

Eclipse Timing: Check the exact timing of the eclipse in Arkansas to ensure you're set up and ready in advance. Remember, the total eclipse will only last a few minutes.

Safety First: Use proper eclipse glasses to view the event safely, and prepare for variable



Sunrise in Ouachita National Forest

weather conditions by packing layers and rain gear.

Leave No Trace: Help preserve the natural beauty of these areas by following Leave No Trace principles during your visit.

Brown County State Park, Indiana

Brown County State Park, located in the rolling hills of southern Indiana, is the state's largest park and offers a picturesque setting for eclipse viewing. Known as the "Little Smokies" because of the area's resemblance to the Great Smoky Mountains, the park's high ridges provide excellent vantage points for the eclipse. With its extensive network of hiking and mountain biking trails, as well as accommodations ranging from camping to cabins, Brown County State Park is an ideal destination for nature lovers looking to experience the eclipse.

Why Brown County State Park?

Scenic Overlooks: The park's numerous overlooks offer panoramic views of the forested hills, making for a stunning backdrop to the eclipse.

Recreational Activities: Besides eclipse viewing, visitors can enjoy hiking, mountain biking, horseback riding, and more.



Accommodations: The park offers a variety of camping options, including RV sites, tent sites, and cabins for those who prefer a bit more comfort.

John Bryan State Park, Ohio

John Bryan State Park in southwestern Ohio is another excellent location for eclipse enthusiasts. Situated near the charming town of Yellow Springs, the park is part of a larger network of natural areas that includes Clifton Gorge State Nature Preserve. The park's position along the scenic Little Miami River offers a tranquil setting for viewing the eclipse, with open areas that provide clear sightlines to the sky. The last total solar eclipse visible in Ohio was in 1806 and the next will be 2099, according to the Ohio DNR.

Why John Bryan State Park?



Natural Beauty: The park's limestone gorge, cut by the Little Miami River, offers stunning natural scenery.

Outdoor Activities: Visitors can enjoy hiking, fishing, rock climbing, and paddling in the area.

Proximity to Yellow Springs: The nearby town offers eclectic shops, restaurants, and the opportunity to explore Glen Helen Nature Preserve.

Letchworth State Park, New York

Letchworth State Park, known as the "Grand Canyon of the East," is located in western New York and offers a dramatic landscape that could serve as a breathtaking backdrop for the eclipse. Although New York will not experience totality, the park's high cliffs and deep gorge provide a unique vantage point for a partial eclipse, with the Genesee River flowing through the canyon below. These other state parks will be open for camping specifically for the eclipse: Allegany, Fair Haven Beach, Evangola, Golden Hill, and Wellesley.

Amphitheater Falls, John Bryan State Park

Why Letchworth State Park?

Spectacular Views: The park's cliffs offer stunning vistas of the gorge and surrounding forests.

Variety of Activities: Hiking, kayaking, hot air ballooning, and more are available for visitors.

Accommodations: The park has camping facilities, cabins, and a historic inn for those wishing to extend their stay.

Acadia National Park, Maine

Acadia National Park, located on the rugged coast of Maine, is a jewel of the Northeast and offers a stunning backdrop for viewing the partial eclipse. With its dramatic rocky cliffs, dense woodland areas, and the highest peak on the U.S. Atlantic coast, Cadillac Mountain, Acadia provides a variety of natural settings from which to enjoy the event. The park's clear, dark skies make it an excellent location for stargazing and will offer a clear view of the eclipse's partial phases.

What Makes Acadia Special?

Cadillac Mountain: As the first place to see the sunrise in the U.S. for part of the year, Cadillac Mountain offers expansive views of the Atlantic Ocean and the surrounding park. It's an ideal spot for watching the eclipse, with panoramic vistas that are hard to beat.

Jordan Pond: For a more serene viewing experience, the area around Jordan Pond offers a picturesque setting. The calm waters reflect the surrounding landscape, providing a tranquil spot to observe the eclipse.

Hiking and Exploration: Acadia is home to over 120 miles of hiking trails ranging from easy coastal walks to more challenging mountain hikes. Exploring these trails can provide unique vantage points for the eclipse and allow you to experience the park's diverse ecosystems.

Stargazing Programs: The park occasionally offers night sky programs, making it a great opportunity to learn more about astronomy and the eclipse from experts.

Maximizing Your Eclipse Camping Experience

To make the most of your eclipse camping trip, consider the following tips:

- **Plan Ahead:** Campsites in these areas are likely to fill up quickly, especially near the eclipse date. Reserve your spot well in advance and familiarize yourself with the park's rules and amenities.
- **Eclipse Glasses:** Ensure you have ISO-certified eclipse glasses to safely view the eclipse's phases. Regular sunglasses are not sufficient to protect your eyes.
- **Arrive Early:** Arrive at your camping spot a few days early to avoid traffic and to scout

out the best viewing locations.

- **Prepare for the Weather:** Weather can be unpredictable in April. Pack for all conditions, including cold nights and the potential for rain.
- **Leave No Trace:** Respect the natural beauty of these sites by following Leave No Trace principles. Pack out all trash and minimize your impact on the environment.

Witnessing an eclipse is a profound experience, one made even more memorable by the natural beauty of the United States' public lands. Whether you choose the rugged landscapes of Shawnee National Forest, the rolling hills of Mark Twain National Forest, the scenic gorges of Big South Fork, or the desert vistas of Guadalupe Mountains, these locations offer a backdrop that will make the April 2024 eclipse an unforgettable event. Pack your bags, prepare your tiny camper, and get ready to be enveloped in the shadow of the moon in some of the most awe-inspiring settings America has to offer. ■



Beehive Trail, Acadia National Park

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Leave No Trace - Be

Considerate:

Harmony in the Wild - Embracing Consideration in
Teardrop Camping

#BeNice

In the world of teardrop camping, small actions can have a big impact. By embracing the seventh principle of Leave No Trace – being considerate of others – we contribute to a harmonious outdoor experience for everyone. The great outdoors provides a restorative escape, but increased usage requires us all to minimize our impact.

As teardrop enthusiasts, we have an opportunity to model conscientious camping through noise awareness, site sharing, and preserving landscapes. By employing Leave No Trace ethics, we can protect these natural havens for future generations. Our small campers should leave the smallest footprint possible.

nature lovers. Keeping noise levels down, especially during early mornings and late evenings, ensures everyone can enjoy the peacefulness of their surroundings.

Noise pollution should be carefully considered in campgrounds. Light sleepers in tents can easily be disturbed by generator humming,

loud music or rowdy late night chatter emanating from nearby RVs and trailers. Be courteous by maintaining reasonable volume levels and limiting noisy activities during designated quiet hours, usually from 10pm to 7am.



Make an effort to contain sound from portable speakers, radios and TVs. Choose a site that is more isolated or set up further from neighboring tents and vehicles. Face

speakers inwards towards your camp instead of blasting outward. Pop in some earbuds if listening to music late at night.

Limit prolonged generator usage during prime daytime hours when others are trying to enjoy nature's tranquility. Insulate your rig to reduce the need for cooling and appliances. Turn off the genny after reasonable evening runtimes. Upgrade to solar power for a quieter, eco-friendly alternative.

The Essence of Consideration

Being considerate of others while camping in teardrops involves a blend of empathy, awareness, and action. It's about recognizing that the tranquility of the outdoors is a shared treasure, and our actions should contribute to, not detract from, this communal experience.

Noise Pollution: Teardrop campers often find themselves in close quarters with fellow

Minimize disruptive driveway gatherings by socializing fireside or at picnic tables instead. Keep late night conversations low. Rowdiness to a minimum. Bring along a white noise machine to soothe children to sleep without disruptive cries.

Simple noise mitigation efforts go a long way in preserving the peaceful ambiance all campers seek. Be mindful of volume so everyone can enjoy the great outdoors. With some minor adjustments, we can collectively reduce noise pollution and respect quiet hours.

Respect for Privacy:

While the compact nature of teardrop campers often leads to communal camping setups, respecting the privacy and space of others is crucial. This means being mindful of where you set up your camper and how your activities might intrude on someone else's space.

When camping in popular areas, site crowding can be an issue. Be mindful of others' space and right to privacy by not taking up excessive room with your rig and setup. Park only in designated sites to avoid sprawling into vacant adjacent spots. While teardrops themselves are compact, accessories like tarps, tables, outdoor kitchens and gathering areas around the camper can monopolize a site. Set up your

caravan and tent add-ons thoughtfully to minimize infringement on your neighbors' space. Face tent doors and social areas inwards for more privacy. Keep camp chairs, cooking gear and other equipment consolidated neatly around the teardrop rather than scattered too far beyond. It's tempting to fully spread out when unhitching after being confined to a small trailer, but be considerate of how much visible and audible room you occupy. With some careful thought, we can maintain comfortable individual camps while still respecting communal boundaries.



Shared Facilities: Many camping sites offer shared amenities like restrooms or kitchen areas. Keeping these spaces clean and being considerate about usage times helps maintain a pleasant environment for all.



Light Pollution: Minimizing light pollution by using low-intensity lights and turning off unnecessary outdoor lights not only helps fellow campers but also preserves the natural night-time environment. Refrain from leaving lights on all night.

Sharing the Trails: We usually will meet other people while enjoying our time on the trails.



Knowing who has the right away and how

to safely pass each other is key to remaining safe. Here are some tips on trail etiquette:

- Yield to other users - Uphill foot travelers have the right of way. Bikers yield to hikers and horses. Hikers yield to horses. Step off the trail to allow others to pass comfortably. Everyone yields to people using assistive devices.
 - Respect designated uses - Stick to hiking on hiking trails, biking on bike trails, etc. Follow any posted restrictions.
 - Keep pets leashed - Unleashed dogs can startle other visitors and wildlife. Always keep your pet under control.
 - Avoid trailblazing - Stick to established trails to prevent erosion and vegetation trampling. Don't cut switchbacks.
 - Watch your speed - Moderate your pace according to trail conditions and other traffic. Slow bicyclists should allow faster riders to overtake. If you are the faster person, announce your presence by

respectfully saying “on your left” if you’ll be passing someone. This informs the person being overtaken so they will know to stay in their “lane” and not move on the trail.

- Keep noise down - No loud music or shouting. Enjoy the peace and quiet of nature.
- Pack out all trash - Leave no trace by taking everything you bring in back out with you. Please immediately pick up any of your pet’s waste in a bag and carry it with you for the duration of your hike. Don’t spoil another person’s view on the trail by leaving the waste on the side of the trail to pick up later on your hike.

By being patient, yielding right of way, and following marked paths, we can all safely share the trails. Simple courtesies like a smile or nod keep encounters pleasant. Thoughtful trail etiquette preserves the land and ensures an enjoyable experience for all outdoor enthusiasts.

Responsible for pets:

Pets bring loads of fun and some serious health perks too. There's something special about the love you get from your dog when you're having a tough day. Studies even show that pets can help lower blood pressure, reduce cholesterol, and ease stress. Just keep in mind, while they're a lot of fun, pets also mean a good deal of responsibility, especially while camping

or enjoying our public lands.

When bringing your furry friends camping, be sure to keep them under control and minimize their impact on the environment and other campers. Dogs should be leashed when outside your site and their barking should not disturb your neighbors. Be prepared to provide proof of vaccinations if required.

Always pick up and properly dispose of your pet's waste instead of leaving it on trails or campgrounds where others may step in it. This can be a very touchy topic, even in our family. In order for everyone to have a great experience, it's key to not leave a bag of dog poop trailside, spoiling the view for someone else, even if you will pick it up and dispose of it on your return hike.

Consider bringing a portable pen or crate so your pet doesn't damage vegetation or wildlife habitats. Giving them plenty of exercise will prevent excessive barking from boredom or confinement.



Be mindful that not all fellow campers are pet lovers, so don't let your companions approach strangers without permission. Keep an eye out for signs indicating areas where pets must be on leash or are prohibited altogether. Bring along their own food, water and supplies so they don't eat wildlife or contaminate natural water sources.

With some basic courtesy, your furry friends can safely join in the camping fun while respecting the environment and other visitors looking for peace and quiet. Keeping your pets under control reflects the same conscientiousness we must practice when sharing public lands.

Respect Indigenous Cultures: When exploring public lands, we must be mindful of the indigenous peoples native to the lands and their enduring connection to the earth. As visitors, we should educate ourselves on local customs and make an effort to honor and support native cultures. Here are some tips on respectfully interacting with indigenous communities when visiting parks, forests and other public spaces:

- Research the history of the area and peoples native to the land. Understand their connections.
- Treat cultural sites and artifacts with dignity. Never remove or disturb them.
- When encountering ceremonies, ask permission before observing. Be considerate from a distance.
- Support Indigenous vendors and guides to benefit local communities. Purchase permits.
- Follow rules about photography. Some rituals and sacred sites prohibit



- photos.
- Learn proper etiquette if visiting a reservation or settlement. Ask about customs.
- Tread lightly and stick to designated trails to avoid damaging significant sites.
- Educate yourself on Indigenous struggles. Think critically about your role as a visitor.
- Reflect on public lands as stolen land. Consider ways to honor native peoples.

By making an effort to respect the first peoples of any land we visit, we can foster deeper connections to place and community. Thoughtful conduct demonstrates our shared humanity across cultures.

Conclusion

Teardrop trailers offer a unique way to experience nature while still enjoying some comforts of home. As these compact campers grow in popularity, it's crucial we practice

responsible camping ethics. A key principle is being considerate of fellow outdoor enthusiasts. However, this closeness also brings a responsibility – to ensure our presence is harmonious, not only with nature but also with fellow campers.

Let's cherish and uphold this ethos by following the guidelines above, ensuring that our love for teardrop camping leaves a positive imprint on both nature and our fellow adventurers. ■



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