

These Hotels Offer Stellar Stargazing—and Out-Of-This-World Amenities

These are some of the top spots to sleep under the stars.



Thomas J. Story

Written by **Kristin Scharkey** APRIL 12, 2022

Did you know that more than 99% of the U.S. population lives in areas with light pollution capable of drowning out even the most prominent constellations and planets? And approximately one in every three people can't see the Milky Way?

But the West is trying to buck that trend entirely. More cities and states are [making major moves to protect their astral bounty](#), and the hospitality industry is following suit. Telescopes are becoming a common hotel amenity. And you can basically bank on finding all variety of [s'mores](#)—from pre-made packs to gourmet kits—at the front desk.

It's not surprising that astrotourism continues to grow in popularity, considering how many people began to explore the outdoors for the first time amid the shutdowns of the COVID-19 pandemic. In fact, five times as many people in North America camped for the first time in 2020 compared to the year prior, according to [an annual report](#) by the Kampgrounds of America, with many looking to try even more new experiences in Mother Nature.

When it comes to astrotourism, it's not just about chasing the aurora borealis or experiencing a rare eclipse. It can also simply be about putting yourself "in the way of beauty," as author Cheryl Strayed wrote in her best-selling memoir *Wild*, and enjoying the infinite satisfaction that can come from nights spent under dark skies.

If you're ready to stargaze but not as enthusiastic about the prospect of putting up a tent, we put together a few of our favorite hotels offering out-of-this-world amenities—and prime locations—to experience the beauty of the West's night skies. Don't wait much longer to [start planning a night \(or a full weekend\) of stargazing](#): Autumn is the best time to view the Milky Way in the West!

California

Vespera Resort on Pismo Beach



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College astronomers from California Polytechnic State University's Astronomical Society visit the [hotel's oceanfront lawn](#) every month to share their knowledge—and bring two telescopes along with them. You can also bring your own, as Vespera provides a portable telescope and stargazing map in each guest room.