

STARGAZING

Ten places to stop and look up in North Carolina

WESTERN

BLUE RIDGE PARKWAY

Parkway views are spectacular no matter where you go, but our favorite spots for looking up are Craggy Dome Overlook at Milepost 364.1 and Graveyard Fields at Milepost 418.8.

BARE DARK SKY OBSERVATORY

This Burnsville observatory is the first International Dark Sky Park (yes, that's a thing!) in the Southeast. What does that mean for you? Stars as far as the eye can see.

STONE MOUNTAIN STATE PARK

Bring your binoculars to this secluded state park near Roaring Gap, which is famous for its massive granite dome. With expansive picnic and camping grounds, it's ideal for a family stargazing trip.

CENTRAL

UWHARRIE NATIONAL FOREST

Wine and stars? Yes, please! There are four wineries between this national forest and Charlotte, so city-dwellers can enjoy a sip or two on their way to a star-filled sky.

TOWN CREEK INDIAN MOUND

Native Americans used to welcome the new year at this Mount Gilead location. Now, it's a landmark and historic site that has hosted public astronomy events for the past 15 years.

JORDAN LAKE STATE RECREATION AREA

To escape the Triangle's city lights, head to this Apex oasis where you can lay a blanket on one of its seven beaches or pick from more than 1,000 campsites — the perfect setting for a nighttime adventure.

EASTERN

BLADEN LAKES STATE FOREST

Pitch a tent and watch the stars appear on this remote 33,000 acres near Elizabethtown, far away from artificial light.

OCRACOKE ISLAND

Take an evening stroll along some of the 16 miles of protected, undeveloped seashore with nothing around to disturb your view.

OAK ISLAND

Visit the western tip of the island, known as The Point, to see the stars reflected in the ocean on one side and Lockwood Folly River on the other.

BALD HEAD ISLAND

A small island. No cars. Only accessible by ferry. The night sky conditions couldn't be much better than when you're on the beach at Bald Head.

