

APRIL PAENGA-WHĀ WHĀ HIGHLIGHTS

Omega Centauri

Originally thought to be a single star, in 1677, this fuzzy spot was identified to be a cluster that actually contains around 10 million individual stars. Pictured on the cover, Omega Centauri is a globular cluster: a collection of stars that orbits a galactic core. This is the largest of these in the Milky Way, with light taking 150 years to travel from one edge to the other.

Omega Centauri has a mass four million times that of our Sun, making it also the most massive cluster in our galaxy. The light coming from the millions of stars in the cluster has travelled for 15 800 years to reach us here on Earth.

As this cluster is most easily seen from April to September, now is the time to start looking for it. Brighter than any other star cluster, Omega Centauri can currently be found high in the southeastern sky, along the back of the constellation Centaurus. It will appear as a bright fuzzy blob, which is comprised of spots of light, almost as large as the full Moon in dark skies.

Centaurus

The constellation Centaurus is circumpolar, which means that, because the stars in it rotate closely around the South Celestial Pole, we can see this constellation at any time of the year.

In Greek mythology, Centaurus represents a centaur: a creature half human and half

horse. Sources differ on which centaur the constellation represents, but most consider it to be Chiron, who mentored many Greek heroes. Centaurus was one of the 48 constellations described in the 2nd century by astronomer Ptolemy, and it remains one of the 88 modern constellations.

High in the southeast, you will find two bright stars that appear close together, called Alpha Centauri and Beta Centauri. These stars mark the two front legs of the centaur, and also act as the pointer stars to help find the Southern Cross.

Image: Johannes Hevelius – Wikimedia Commons



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Each chart shows the position of stars, constellations, planets, and the Sun, and the phase of the Moon for the exact time, date, and location of your special event.

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THE SKY TONIGHT TE ĀHUA O TE RAKI I TĒNEI PŌ



APRIL PAENGA-WHĀ WHĀ SKY GUIDE

PERPETUAL
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OTAGOmuseum

MOON MARAMA PHASES

Phase

Date

First Quarter

Wednesday, 1 April

Full Moon

Wednesday, 8 April

Third Quarter

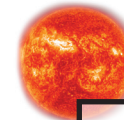
Wednesday, 15 April

New Moon

Thursday, 23 April



APRIL PAENGA-WHĀ WHĀ 2020



SUN RĀ RISE / SUNSET

Date

Rise

Set

Wednesday, 1 April

7.55am

7.26pm

Wednesday, 15 April

7.14am

6.01pm

Thursday, 30 April

7.33am

5.36pm

PLANETS WHETŪ AO

Venus

Meremere-tū-ahiahi

1 April until 8.55pm

15 April until 7.32pm

30 April until 7.05pm

In Taurus



Jupiter

Hine-i-tiweka

1 April after 1.06am

15 April after 11.19pm

30 April after 10.25pm

In Sagittarius



Saturn

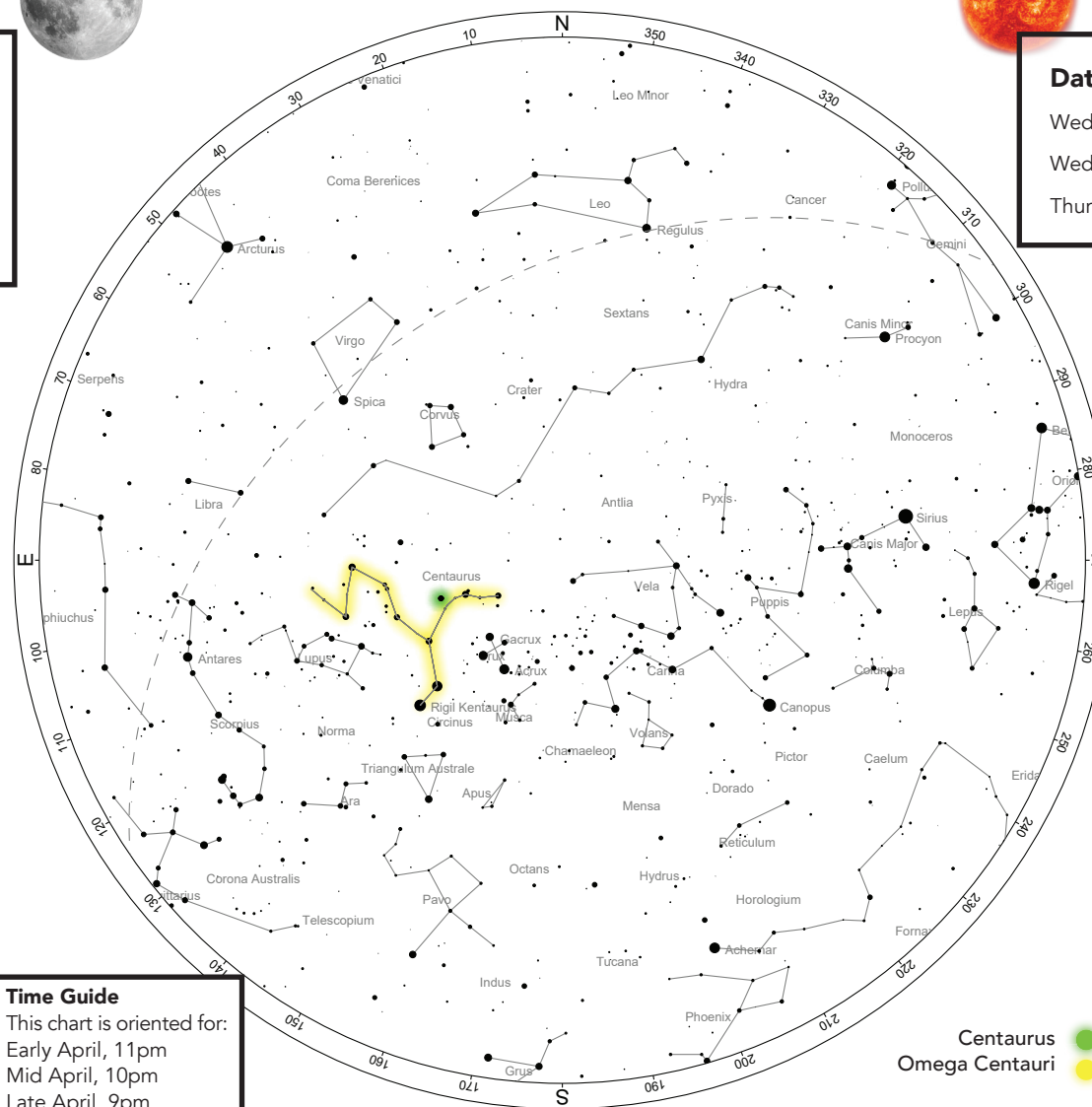
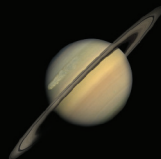
Pareārau

1 April after 1.39am

15 April after 11.48pm

30 April after 10.51pm

In Capricornus



Time Guide

This chart is oriented for:

Early April, 11pm

Mid April, 10pm

Late April, 9pm

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How to use this chart: Hold the chart up to the sky and rotate it, so the direction you are looking matches the direction printed on the bottom. For example, if you are looking south, place 'S' at the lower edge. Stars rise in the east and set in the west like the Sun. As the Earth turns, the sky appears to rotate clockwise around the south celestial pole. The sky makes a small shift to the west every night, as the Earth rotates around the Sun.

SUPERMOON

On Wednesday 8 April, there is a full Moon and this month it is a supermoon. As the Moon doesn't go around the Earth in a perfect circle, its distance from the Earth varies throughout its orbit.

A supermoon occurs when a full Moon closely coincides with perigee, the Moon's closest point to Earth in its monthly orbit. The full Moon must come within 90% of its closest approach to Earth, or around 360 000 kilometres to be dubbed a supermoon.

While there will be multiple supermoon events this year, the one taking place in April will be the most impressive as it will be the closest to Earth, at a distance of 357 035 kilometres. Because it's so close to Earth, a supermoon looks larger and brighter than an average full Moon.