

Wish Upon A Star

One of my favorite things growing up was to gaze at all the stars in the sky. Living in a small city (maybe it was more of a large town at that time), the light glow still allowed us to see the stars fairly easily. Somewhere along the way during elementary school, I ended up with a telescope and star chart.



Each season has a benefit to viewing the stars. Winter time tends to make the sky crystal clear and each star twinkle like a diamond, able to be plucked out of the sky if you just reach up to it. But my favorite time of the year for star-gazing has always been during Summer.

I have fond memories of Summer Camps located in the country, where no city light glow interfered with the brilliance of the star lights. Of course, somehow the camps all had a dock on a lake. And we'd laze around on the dock in the humid Summer night air and allow the peace of the night sky to calm us down after a day of play.

Or the Summer trips to my grandparents' houses. Both homes were in the country at that time, and presented beautiful night panoramas. One even had a little hill next to the house where we'd sometimes lay in the grass to gaze up at the stars.

No matter which state we had travelled to for Camps or for family vacations, I could always look up at the night sky and pick out several constellations. It provided comfort that even though I was in a new location and having new adventures, there was always a familiar friend around. So far, I haven't made it down into the Southern Hemisphere, but I'm looking forward to a trip in the (probably distant) future and viewing the constellations that are specific to the southern locations.

If you've never tried to pick out specific stars or constellations (or if it's just been a long time and you want a refresher), Fourmilab Switzerland has an Astronomy and Space page that will let you obtain a star chart based on your current location (scroll down to Your Sky for the chart). Or plug in a location you'll be travelling to get their sky chart. Plus, they have other astronomy and space goodies to play with.

<http://fourmilab.ch/nav/topics/astro-space.html>

The StarDate Online web site is provided by the University of Texas McDonald Observatory. Find out what's happening currently in the night sky, check out a constellation guide, or find out when is the best time to view specific planets or meteor showers.

<http://stardate.org/nightsky/>

The Griffith Observatory is located in Los Angeles, California. They maintain a Sky Information page with various reports on sky activities, including a daily “Tonight’s Sky” report.

<http://www.griffithobservatory.org/skyinfo.html>

The Naval Oceanography Portal’s Astronomy Info web page contains oodles of astronomical data and information. One report is “The Sky This Week”, which contains a “weekly set of pictures and descriptions of the sky, stars, and planets”.

<http://www.usno.navy.mil/astronomy>

Whether you are just gazing in general or looking for a specific star or constellation, be sure this week to look up at the stars; make a wish; and enjoy the beauty of the night sky.

About The Author

Marie Rice is the founder and editor of PartOfTheWhole.com - wellness for body, mind, and spirit. She enjoys helping others reach their goals. When she's not online, Marie's spending time with her family, gardening, doing crafts, or **most likely** – reading a book!

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