



PHOTO BY AMANDA CASTLEMAN

STARGAZE WITH A SINGING ASTRONAUT

Power down and look up this autumn, as the Dark Sky Festival returns to Jasper, Alberta, from October 17–26th.

The Canadian Rockies cradle one of the world's largest dark sky preserves. Peaks, ice fields and stunning lakes — often turquoise-colored from glacial melt-water — earned UNESCO protection 30 years ago. Now the region's turning up its star wattage, as Colonel Chris Hadfield joins the festival lineup.

The first Canadian to float freely outside the atmosphere, Hadfield spent almost five months captaining the largest spaceship ever built, the International Space Station. He shared the journey with a million Twitter followers, and his fame supernova-ed last year when he played himself offstage with a zero-gravity cover of David Bowie's *Space Oddity*.

Hadfield will strike a chord again in Jasper, giving the

keynote speech (backed by his band, The Free Radicals).

Other highlights include an outdoor symphony, deep-sky telescopes and a partial solar eclipse. After the gala, stroll — or take a carriage ride — to Pyramid Island. Trails, marked by



scarlet votive candles, form a red carpet for astronomers. But nothing outshines the event's star turn: constellations reflected on the tranquil waters of Western Canada.

—Amanda Castleman

www.jasper.travel/dark-sky-festival-2014