



Evening sky in October 2018

As we shake off the winter chills, October provides us with the last opportunity to observe the centre of our Milky Way Galaxy, between the constellations Scorpius and Sagittarius. By mid-month, the bright red star Antares in Scorpius will set a few hours after sunset, just as the Southern Cross starts to dip below the southern horizon.

In the south, the Large Magellanic Cloud (LMC, a neighbouring galaxy) looms over the constellation Mensa. This faint group of stars, identified by the French astronomer [N.L. de Lacaille](#) in the mid-18th century, was named after Table Mountain in Cape Town as the LMC reminded him of the mountain's occasional cloud cover. In the East, the constellation Eridanus (the river) winds its way up our night skies, and Pegasus (winged horse) begins to stride in from the North-East.

Towards the end of October, Venus transitions from bright evening to morning star where it will remain until October next year. Mercury then takes the place of evening star as it reappears out from under the Sun's glare towards month-end. Jupiter and Saturn set well before midnight, and Mars can be seen nestled within Capricornus until it sets in the early morning. The moon will be in the evening sky from the 10 October until month-end, with full moon on the 24 October.