



HOW

does location affect the colors you see in an aurora?

Aurora extend hundreds of kilometers into the sky

... which is why they can be seen on the horizon from hundreds of kilometers away.

500 km

100 km



So while some people may have an unobstructed view of an aurora overhead...



... others may view an aurora from farther away...



... or even on the horizon.



When viewed on the horizon...

... the lower extent of an aurora may be hidden by landforms or the curvature of the Earth.

The auroral colors blend together into a blurry glow, often green. That's because green is the dominant color in aurora over a wide range of altitudes. Red is created highest in the atmosphere and may contribute to the glow.



From underneath an aurora...

... you see the colors created at the lower boundary most clearly.

These may include pink, violet, blue, and most frequently green. Pink, violet, and blue come from nitrogen that is more common at lower altitudes. Green is from oxygen.



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