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QCD under extreme conditions: Hot, shiny fluids and sticky business

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The phase diagram of Quantum Chromodynamics (QCD, the theory of the strong interaction) is only poorly known. There is currently a vibrant experimental and theoretical program that concentrate on the study and the characterization of the quark-gluon plasma, a fundamental state of matter that existed a few microseconds after the Big Bang. I will describe the theoretical aspects of this endeavour, and highlight some of the surprises uncovered along the way.

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