

SUNSHINE GUIDE TO THE DRAA VALLEY, MOROCCO

LOCATION: LOCATION: The Wadi Draa has its source in the High Atlas Mountains of Morocco. It flows southeast to the fringes of the Sahara, then turns west towards the Atlantic coast. About the time it does so, the surface flow of water disappears, not to re-emerge until just before it reaches the Atlantic near Tan Tan. For much of its middle course, the wadi forms the border with Algeria. The table and descriptions below apply essentially to that part of the Draa between Ouarzazate and Zagora. Elevations are between 3,000 and 3,500 feet above sea level in this part of the valley. Scenery and authenticity are the major attractions of the Draa Valley--although the latter is just beginning to fade under the onslaught of tourism. Orchards of date palms, almonds, olives, and citrus line the valley, with picturesque villages and abandoned fortresses dotting the landscape.

	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
HOURS OF DAYLIGHT	10:24	11:05	11:58	12:55	13:43	14:08	13:57	13:17	12:23	11:27	10:38	10:12
HOURS OF SUNSHINE	7:47	8:39	9:31	10:25	10:41	11:07	10:02	9:18	8:54	8:37	8:01	7:43
AREA OF BLUE SKY	72%	72%	71%	70%	71%	77%	72%	70%	68%	72%	73%	77%
LOW FOR MONTH	27°	31°	36°	41°	46°	55°	62°	61°	54°	46°	36°	28°
SUNRISE TEMPERATURE	35°	40°	45°	50°	57°	64°	70°	69°	63°	54°	45°	37°
AFTERNOON TEMPERATURE	62°	67°	73°	79°	86°	95°	101°	101°	92°	80°	70°	62°
HIGH FOR MONTH	72°	77°	84°	89°	96°	103°	107°	106°	100°	89°	81°	72°
FROSTY MORNINGS	14%	3%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	12%
AFTERNOONS OVER 90°	0%	0%	0%	1%	18%	78%	99%	98%	55%	2%	0%	0%
AFTERNOON HUMIDITY	34%	29%	25%	22%	19%	17%	14%	18%	22%	29%	36%	36%
DRY DAYS	91%	91%	92%	94%	93%	96%	95%	89%	86%	89%	88%	91%
REASONABLY DRY DAYS	96%	96%	97%	98%	98%	99%	99%	97%	94%	95%	94%	97%
5-DAY PRECIPITATION	0.07	0.11	0.06	0.04	0.04	0.02	0.01	0.04	0.09	0.09	0.12	0.08
SNOWY DAYS	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
THUNDER DAYS	0%	1%	1%	1%	3%	4%	6%	8%	10%	4%	2%	0%
FOGGY DAYS	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%	0%	0%	1%	1%

COMMENTS: The climate is a mountain version of a sub-tropical desert climate. There are essentially two seasons, based on temperature. Summers (June through September) are very hot, and winters are mild to warm. Sunshine is abundant throughout the year, and rainfall is slight and irregular. The valley is a natural funnel for the *sirocco* or *chili*, the hot, dusty, and very dry winds from the Sahara. Here, they are more likely than not to be laden with dust and sand. They can occur at any time of year, but are most common in the spring. Don't venture out of town when they hit. In the opposite extreme, flash floods are a danger. Since the minor roads tend to follow the valley bottoms, visitors should be alert for the appearance of rain clouds over the nearby mountains.