

SUNSHINE GUIDE TO CAIRNS AND THE GREAT BARRIER REEF, AUSTRALIA

LOCATION: Cairns is located on the Coral Sea Coast of Queensland, in northeastern Australia. Just offshore is the northern portion of the Great Barrier Reef. Elevations in Cairns are close to sea level, although the escarpment of the Atherton Plateau rises almost a mile higher just a bit west of town. Mangrove swamps border the town at each end, and the sea offshore is quite shallow.

	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
HOURS OF DAYLIGHT	13:01	12:40	12:13	11:44	11:21	11:09	11:14	11:33	12:00	12:28	12:54	13:07
HOURS OF SUNSHINE	7:05	6:35	6:24	6:32	6:27	7:08	7:10	7:51	8:19	8:39	8:21	8:02
AREA OF BLUE SKY	47%	45%	42%	46%	48%	51%	54%	58%	62%	62%	58%	55%
LOW FOR MONTH	70°	70°	68°	65°	58°	54°	52°	53°	58°	62°	65°	68°
SUNRISE TEMPERATURE	74°	74°	73°	71°	67°	64°	62°	63°	65°	69°	71°	74°
AFTERNOON TEMPERATURE	89°	88°	86°	84°	81°	78°	78°	79°	82°	85°	87°	89°
HIGH FOR MONTH	96°	95°	92°	89°	85°	83°	83°	84°	87°	90°	92°	95°
FROSTY MORNINGS	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
AFTERNOONS OVER 90°	32%	30%	17%	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	2%	9%	27%
AFTERNOON HUMIDITY	68%	69%	69%	68%	68%	65%	61%	59%	59%	61%	62%	66%
NEARBY WATERS	83°	82°	82°	79°	76°	74°	73°	73°	75°	77°	79°	82°
DRY DAYS	49%	42%	41%	46%	53%	64%	70%	73%	74%	77%	69%	64%
REASONABLY DRY DAYS	31%	32%	33%	59%	73%	80%	86%	87%	87%	87%	79%	69%
5-DAY PRECIPITATION	2.71	2.70	2.80	1.68	0.71	0.44	0.23	0.25	0.27	0.32	0.67	1.22
SNOWY DAYS	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
THUNDER DAYS	9%	8%	3%	1%	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%	2%	4%	7%
FOGGY DAYS	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

COMMENTS: Cairns residents see the year as having two seasons, a very wet one and a relatively dry one. The rainy season runs from the middle of December through the end of April. It features higher temperatures, higher humidity, more clouds, less sunshine, and much more rain. The dry season runs from May through early December. It has lower temperatures, more sunshine, less rain, and masses of tourists--both Australians and foreigners. Below-freezing temperatures are unknown. Although there are differences in the averages, the weather on any given day of the year could occur in any month. Tropical storms reach this coast once or twice a year, usually during the rainy season. They can bring extremely heavy rains and destructive flooding. Except during these storms, rainfall will be lighter and shorter out on the Reef islands, and heavier and longer back on the Plateau.