

SUNSHINE GUIDE TO NAPA AND THE LOWER NAPA VALLEY WINE DISTRICT, CALIFORNIA

LOCATION: The Napa River rises on the slopes of Mt. St. Helena, some sixty miles north of San Francisco. Flowing south, it passes through Calistoga, St. Helena, Rutherford, Oakville, Yountville, and Napa on its way to San Pablo Bay near Vallejo. The valley is home to more than 30,000 acres of grapevines, supporting more than 150 wineries. The Napa Valley is almost synonymous with the California Wine Country. Elevations range from sea level at San Pablo Bay to some 4,344 feet above it at the summit of Mt. St. Helena. This *Guide* covers the wine district between Napa, the valley's largest community, and Yountville. Elevations in the lower valley are close to sea level.

	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
HOURS OF DAYLIGHT	9:50	10:45	11:56	13:11	14:14	14:48	14:34	13:40	12:29	11:15	10:09	9:34
HOURS OF SUNSHINE	5:00	6:56	8:40	10:39	12:02	13:10	13:10	12:12	10:59	9:17	7:01	4:49
AREA OF BLUE SKY	32%	40%	45%	53%	63%	75%	83%	80%	78%	67%	46%	34%
LOW FOR MONTH	23°	27°	29°	32°	37°	42°	46°	46°	41°	36°	28°	24°
SUNRISE TEMPERATURE	38°	40°	41°	43°	47°	51°	53°	52°	50°	47°	42°	38°
AFTERNOON TEMPERATURE	57°	61°	65°	69°	74°	80°	82°	81°	82°	76°	66°	58°
HIGH FOR MONTH	70°	74°	79°	83°	91°	95°	93°	92°	95°	92°	81°	71°
FROSTY MORNINGS	27%	12%	7%	3%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%	6%	23%
AFTERNOONS OVER 90°	0%	0%	0%	1%	6%	16%	15%	15%	21%	8%	0%	0%
AFTERNOON HUMIDITY	62%	55%	48%	42%	38%	34%	32%	34%	32%	37%	50%	62%
DRY DAYS	65%	64%	72%	81%	90%	97%	99%	99%	97%	87%	74%	69%
REASONABLY DRY DAYS	74%	75%	81%	87%	94%	97%	99%	99%	97%	93%	83%	78%
5-DAY PRECIPITATION	0.79	0.77	0.53	0.28	0.13	0.04	0.00	0.01	0.06	0.20	0.44	0.71
DAYS WITH SOME SNOW	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
DAYS WITH SOME THUNDER	0%	0%	1%	1%	1%	0%	0%	0%	1%	0%	0%	0%
DAYS WITH SOME FOG	43%	29%	21%	14%	13%	15%	20%	23%	19%	21%	33%	40%

COMMENTS: Bright sunshine is likely on 76% of the daylight hours of the year. This might range from a low of 50% in December, to a high of 90% in sunny July. The lowest temperature of the year should be close to 21° at some calm and clear winter sunrise, and the highest should be near 97° on some equally clear and windless summer afternoon. Clear skies and calm airs tend to make the high temperatures higher and the low ones lower. Sensible afternoon temperatures (the ones you feel) will be up to 4° cooler than actual ones, due to the low humidity. Each new vintage begins in March, with the leafing-out of the bare vines of winter. By the end of the rains in early May, the leaves are a vivid green and thriving. Sometime in June, the vine produces its hardly noticeable flowers. During the next two weeks, rain is a disaster and hot weather is almost as bad. By September, some varieties are beginning to ripen, but most wait until the end of the month or early in October. During the harvest, everyone works from before sunrise to well after sunset. After Thanksgiving, things quiet down. The vines are trimmed, the new wine is bottled, and visitors get some attention. December through February is the rainy season, with the vines dormant.