

SUNSHINE GUIDE TO THE DARJEELING AREA, INDIA

LOCATION: Darjeeling is located high in the Himalayas of northeastern India. This is one of the many "hill stations", once used by the British (and now by the Indians themselves) to escape from the summer heat of the plains. The city is built on a number of terraces that ascend the hills. Elevations within the town range from 6,500 to 7,500 feet above sea level; and offer views of Kachenjunga at more than 28,200 feet in elevation. The road to Darjeeling continues on to Sikkim.

	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
HOURS OF DAYLIGHT	10:39	11:14	12:00	12:48	13:28	13:49	13:41	13:06	12:21	11:33	10:51	10:29
HOURS OF SUNSHINE	5:09	4:33	5:29	5:25	3:26	1:47	1:05	1:50	2:12	4:47	5:48	5:51
AREA OF BLUE SKY	44%	36%	41%	37%	20%	9%	5%	9%	12%	36%	49%	52%
LOW FOR MONTH	30°	31°	36°	43°	47°	52°	54°	54°	53°	45°	39°	33°
SUNRISE TEMPERATURE	36°	38°	44°	50°	54°	57°	59°	58°	57°	51°	44°	39°
AFTERNOON TEMPERATURE	48°	50°	58°	63°	65°	66°	66°	66°	66°	63°	57°	51°
HIGH FOR MONTH	55°	57°	66°	70°	71°	72°	73°	73°	72°	68°	63°	58°
FROSTY MORNINGS	7%	4%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	2%
AFTERNOONS OVER 90°	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
AFTERNOON HUMIDITY	78%	76%	68%	70%	82%	89%	91%	91%	89%	82%	74%	73%
DRY DAYS	94%	79%	81%	70%	39%	27%	6%	13%	23%	71%	83%	97%
REASONABLY DRY DAYS	97%	89%	87%	77%	55%	30%	16%	22%	43%	84%	97%	97%
5-DAY PRECIPITATION	0.10	0.19	0.30	0.69	1.31	3.72	4.88	3.91	2.87	0.79	0.13	0.04
SNOWY DAYS	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
THUNDER DAYS	1%	1%	6%	13%	13%	6%	5%	5%	5%	1%	0%	0%
FOGGY DAYS	26%	25%	19%	18%	42%	67%	74%	73%	58%	19%	17%	15%

COMMENTS: The region has the two-season monsoonal year. The wet Southwest Monsoon reigns from May through October in most years. It gradually gives way to the dry Northeast Monsoon of December through April. November is sort of a transitional month, and is sometimes call the "inter-monsoon" season. Below-freezing temperatures can be expected to occur (but not often) from December through February. Frosty mornings are on record from November through April, but are only sometimes events. Even in the middle of winter, the vast majority of days and nights will be frost-free. Snow flurries do occur during the three winter months, but rarely last for long or remain on the ground for more than a few hours. Afternoon humidities range from high during the winter months to saturated during the monsoon season. Morning temperatures are always saturated, as witness the prevalence of fog. I suspect the British liked to spend their summers in Darjeeling and similar stations because the weather reminded them of home--cold, damp, cloudy, and foggy!