

SUNSHINE GUIDE TO LA SERENA AND THE NORTE CHICO, CHILE

LOCATION: La Serena is located on the Pacific coast of north-central Chile. The city is situated on a natural harbor at the mouth of the Elqui River. Elevations are everywhere close to sea level. La Serena lies on the margin of the Atacama Desert, in an area noted for its beach resorts.

	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
HOURS OF DAYLIGHT	13:50	13:10	12:18	11:24	10:39	10:16	10:26	11:03	11:54	12:48	13:36	14:02
HOURS OF SUNSHINE	9:30	9:18	7:20	6:16	4:35	3:48	3:56	4:23	5:14	5:30	6:56	8:37
AREA OF BLUE SKY	55%	57%	54%	45%	43%	43%	43%	43%	44%	44%	52%	54%
LOW FOR MONTH	53°	51°	46°	46°	43°	38°	40°	40°	43°	45°	48°	51°
SUNRISE TEMPERATURE	59°	59°	56°	53°	50°	47°	47°	47°	49°	51°	53°	56°
AFTERNOON TEMPERATURE	71°	71°	69°	65°	63°	61°	59°	60°	62°	64°	66°	69°
HIGH FOR MONTH	77°	77°	75°	74°	70°	69°	68°	68°	69°	71°	74°	74°
FROSTY MORNINGS	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
AFTERNOONS OVER 90°	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
AFTERNOON HUMIDITY	66%	66%	69%	72%	74%	73%	74%	72%	69%	69%	67%	67%
NEARBY WATERS	63°	64°	63°	61°	59°	58°	56°	56°	56°	57°	59°	62°
DRY DAYS	87%	87%	86%	86%	89%	87%	83%	84%	80%	81%	83%	87%
REASONABLY DRY DAYS	99%	99%	99%	99%	95%	92%	92%	92%	98%	99%	99%	99%
5-DAY PRECIPITATION	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.02	0.13	0.25	0.18	0.14	0.04	0.02	0.00	0.00
SNOWY DAYS	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
THUNDER DAYS	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
FOGGY DAYS	3%	3%	7%	9%	12%	9%	8%	10%	9%	8%	4%	2%

COMMENTS: La Serena's climate is that of a tropical desert. Rainfall is sparse, unreliable, and extremely variable from year to year. Below-freezing temperatures have occurred between March and August, but most years pass without them. Exceptionally clear nighttime skies can drop temperatures significantly before sunrise. Wet fogs, *camanchacas*, add somewhat to the true rainfall by their habit of condensing on obstacles, including vegetation. During the winter months, these can persist for days. Sea breezes, *virazon*, are prominent during the day. These can reach considerable strength and cause dangerous surf conditions and strong undertows or "rips". During the night, the land breeze, *terral*, is usually dominant. For much of the year, a layer of stratus cloud covers the area at low elevations, but well above the ground near the coast. This cloud is thicker during the winter and thinner during the summer months. When conditions are right, it can disappear for hours (especially in the afternoon) or days (especially during the summer).