

SUNSHINE GUIDE TO THE DAMASCUS AREA, SYRIA

LOCATION: Damascus is located in southwestern Syria, not far from the Lebanese border. The city is situated on the Barada River, between the Anti-Lebanon Mountains (to the west) and the Syrian Desert (to the east). Elevations average about 2,400 feet above sea level.

	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
HOURS OF DAYLIGHT	10:13	10:58	11:58	13:00	13:53	14:21	14:09	13:24	12:25	11:23	10:28	9:59
HOURS OF SUNSHINE	5:27	6:43	7:52	8:59	10:57	12:26	12:37	12:03	10:49	9:00	7:27	5:31
AREA OF BLUE SKY	51%	55%	59%	61%	74%	93%	96%	96%	93%	79%	67%	55%
LOW FOR MONTH	25°	27°	29°	35°	42°	49°	54°	55°	49°	41°	31°	26°
SUNRISE TEMPERATURE	35°	38°	41°	47°	54°	60°	63°	63°	59°	52°	44°	38°
AFTERNOON TEMPERATURE	53°	57°	64°	74°	84°	92°	96°	97°	91°	81°	67°	56°
HIGH FOR MONTH	64°	70°	79°	89°	95°	101°	104°	104°	99°	91°	79°	66°
FROSTY MORNINGS	33%	24%	10%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	10%	27%
AFTERNOONS OVER 90°	0%	0%	0%	2%	29%	72%	95%	95%	66%	11%	0%	0%
AFTERNOON HUMIDITY	54%	46%	38%	30%	23%	20%	21%	22%	23%	30%	41%	53%
DRY DAYS	78%	76%	81%	89%	97%	99%	99%	99%	99%	92%	86%	79%
REASONABLY DRY DAYS	88%	89%	92%	95%	99%	99%	99%	99%	99%	97%	92%	89%
5-DAY PRECIPITATION	0.29	0.25	0.13	0.08	0.04	0.03	0.00	0.00	0.01	0.06	0.20	0.29
SNOWY DAYS	3%	3%	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%
THUNDER DAYS	1%	1%	2%	3%	4%	1%	0%	0%	1%	4%	3%	2%
FOGGY DAYS	14%	9%	6%	4%	2%	1%	1%	4%	3%	2%	4%	14%

COMMENTS: Damascus has a desert version of the Mediterranean climate, with its winter rain and summer drought. The Lebanon and Antilebanon Mountains to the west put Damascus in their "rain shadow", thereby diminishing its rain. Summer is the dominant season, running from late May through early October. It is extremely sunny, very hot, and virtually rainless. Winter (late October through early March) starts with the first serious rains following the September Equinox. It is fairly sunny, mild in temperatures, and not really very wet. Both crops (winter-wheat and olives) and local vegetation continue to grow throughout the winter months. Spring (late March through the middle of May) is the season of vegetative resurgence, as the plants take advantage of the winter's moisture and the increasing sunshine. Since almost all of the local woody plants are evergreen, there is no "fall". On occasion (especially during the spring and early summer), winds will blow out of the eastern desert, bringing dust and sand, extremely high temperatures, remarkably low humidities, and very short tempests. This is the fabled *khamseen*, (Arabic for "fifty"). It usually blows for a few days, but fifty is an exaggeration. During the storm, fine dust will penetrate everywhere. Local law recognizes that crimes of violence committed during the *khamseen* carry lesser penalties than during other times.