

SUNSHINE GUIDE TO THE PUNTARENAS AREA, COSTA RICA

LOCATION: Puntarenas (all one word) is the capital of the province of the same name in west-central Costa Rica. The city lies on a narrow peninsula projecting from the northeast shore of the Gulf of Nicoya, an arm of the Pacific Ocean. Elevations are everywhere close to sea level. A paved highway extends the 70 miles inland to the capital at San Jose, and ferry service connects Puntarenas with the Nicoya Peninsula. The beaches of Puntarenas itself—although scenic—are too polluted for swimming. Try those at Jaco, down the coast road.

	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
HOURS OF DAYLIGHT	11:37	11:49	12:04	12:21	12:35	12:42	12:39	12:27	12:12	11:55	11:41	11:34
HOURS OF SUNSHINE	8:30	9:00	9:06	8:30	6:32	5:12	5:18	5:30	5:18	5:24	6:06	7:30
AREA OF BLUE SKY	73%	76%	72%	58%	36%	25%	27%	31%	28%	30%	40%	60%
LOW FOR MONTH	66°	66°	69°	70°	71°	72°	71°	70°	71°	69°	69°	66°
SUNRISE TEMPERATURE	73°	74°	74°	73°	72°	75°	74°	73°	73°	74°	73°	72°
AFTERNOON TEMPERATURE	93°	94°	95°	95°	92°	90°	90°	90°	90°	89°	89°	91°
HIGH FOR MONTH	96°	98°	99°	98°	96°	94°	91°	91°	91°	90°	92°	92°
FROSTY MORNINGS	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
AFTERNOONS OVER 90°	64%	79%	89%	86%	60%	40%	33%	34%	31%	25%	26%	36%
AFTERNOON HUMIDITY	56%	53%	54%	58%	64%	68%	68%	68%	68%	68%	65%	61%
NEARBY WATERS	82°	82°	83°	84°	84°	83°	83°	83°	83°	82°	81°	80°
DRY DAYS	98%	98%	97%	92%	62%	53%	49%	45%	36%	43%	64%	88%
REASONABLY DRY DAYS	99%	99%	99%	95%	73%	64%	64%	62%	52%	59%	77%	94%
5-DAY PRECIPITATION	0.03	0.01	0.04	0.19	1.04	1.38	1.13	1.30	1.79	1.49	0.71	0.19
SNOWY DAYS	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
THUNDER DAYS	1%	0%	1%	5%	20%	27%	25%	25%	28%	20%	9%	2%
FOGGY DAYS	3%	1%	9%	10%	6%	5%	5%	4%	5%	5%	6%	2%

COMMENTS: Puntarenas has a tropical wet-and-dry climate. Its tropical location, less than ten degrees from the Equator, means that there is little change in the length of the daylight period from one month to another, nor much of a change in temperatures. The rainy season runs from May through November. In addition to being the wetter of the two seasons, it is also cloudier, hotter, and more humid. Because of this humidity, sensible temperatures (the ones you actually feel) average about ten degrees hotter than the ones you see in the table above or on the thermometer. The dry season extends from December through April in most years. It is sunnier, a bit less humid, and a touch cooler. Sensible temperatures average only five degrees higher than actual ones. It should be noted that the beaches of this Pacific coast do not get the cold *nortes* that the Caribbean coast is subject to, nor its hurricanes.