

SUNSHINE GUIDE TO THE SONOMA VALLEY WINE DISTRICT, CALIFORNIA

DESCRIPTION: The valley of the Sonoma River is tucked away north of San Pablo Bay between its two larger and better-known wine districts—those of the Napa Valley and the Russian River Valley. The Sonoma Valley, however, was producing wine before either of its two larger rivals. Wine-making here dates back to the 1850's. Some two-dozen wineries stretch through the “Valley of the Moon” from Schellville through Sonoma, El Verano, Boyes Springs, and Glen Ellen to Kentwood. Sonoma is the largest of these communities, and dates back to 1832. It contains *Sonoma State Historic Park*, while Glen Ellen has the *Jack London State Historic Park*. *Sugarloaf Ridge State Park* is up Adobe Canyon from Kenwood. Elevations 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	14:47	14:34	13:40	12:29	11:15	10:09	9:34
HOURS OF SUNSHINE	5:04	6:52	8:34	10:28	11:55	13:15	13:14	12:16	11:12	9:27	7:03	4:59
AREA OF BLUE SKY	37%	43%	48%	56%	64%	76%	84%	82%	80%	71%	52%	39%
LOW FOR MONTH	21°	24°	27°	29°	34°	39°	43°	42°	38°	32°	25°	21°
SUNRISE TEMPERATURE	37°	39°	40°	42°	45°	49°	51°	51°	49°	45°	40°	37°
AFTERNOON TEMPERATURE	58°	63°	66°	71°	78°	85°	89°	89°	87°	79°	66°	58°
HIGH FOR MONTH	71°	77°	82°	87°	97°	103°	104°	103°	103°	97°	81°	72°
FROSTY MORNINGS	34%	19%	11%	4%	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%	15%	31%
AFTERNOONS OVER 90°	0%	0%	0%	1%	11%	30%	46%	45%	37%	13%	0%	0%
AFTERNOON HUMIDITY	65%	55%	48%	45%	42%	37%	35%	34%	36%	42%	56%	65%
DRY DAYS	65%	64%	68%	80%	90%	97%	99%	97%	97%	87%	73%	68%
REASONABLY DRY DAYS	72%	74%	78%	88%	95%	98%	99%	99%	98%	93%	81%	76%
5-DAY PRECIPITATION	0.99	0.94	0.66	0.30	0.13	0.04	0.00	0.01	0.06	0.26	0.64	0.80
DAYS WITH SOME SNOW	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
DAYS WITH SOME THUNDER	1%	1%	1%	2%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%
DAYS WITH SOME FOG	31%	17%	12%	8%	5%	3%	6%	13%	12%	14%	27%	32%

CLIMATE: Bright sunshine is likely on 77% of the daylight hours of the year. This might range from a low of 51% in cloudy and rainy January, to a high of 91% in virtually cloudless July. The lowest temperature of the year should be close to 19° at some clear and calm winter sunrise, and the highest should be near 106° 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 3° cooler than actual ones throughout the year. The wine valleys almost always have some degree of haze, mist, or fog that move upriver from San Pablo Bay or simply form in place under clear nighttime skies. A foggy day in the table is one in which—at some time of day—an object a half-mile away is invisible due to the fog. Anything more transparent than that is considered merely haze or mist. Low cloud is simply fog that has lifted a few tens or hundreds of feet, and is now fog at some higher elevation. Under these conditions, the surface is now clear of fog—though cloudy and dank. Local sunshine, temperatures, and humidity vary from site to site, depending upon how much fog and low cloud that particular site gets. This, in turn, is dependent upon distance from the Bay, elevation, and peculiarities of local topography. All of this is of tremendous importance to the wine-growers.