

BOLIVIA

Official Name: Republic of Bolivia

Capital: La Paz (seat of government)

Sucre (legal capital and seat of judiciary)

Languages: Spanish, Quechua, Aymara (all official)

More than half of Bolivia is mountainous. In the west are the Andes which divide into two parallel ranges. Between them lies the altiplano, a high plateau 3700 to 4000m (12000 to 13000ft) above sea level. Low plains cover the rest of the country.

Best time: Good all year round, but better March to May (autumn) and September to November (spring).

Other good months are June to August (dry but cold) and December to February (warm but wet). Variations in altitude provide Bolivia with contrasting patterns of climate. Note that thin air at high elevations can bring on “soroche,” altitude sickness, which leaves you with nausea and shortness of breath. People with heart or lung problems should be aware of this.

We have divided the weather into two regions. Refer to map for corresponding numbers.

1. Altiplano region. (Includes the high plateau where La Paz is situated.)

April to October: Warm. Afternoon temperatures average 17°C (63°F). Overnight temperatures can drop to -3°C (27°F), particularly June to August. This is the dry season; June is the driest month.

November to March: Warm to hot. Afternoon temperatures average 19°C (66°F) but temperatures can fall quickly after sunset to 6°C (42°F) and lower. This is the rainy season; most rain falls December to February. Afternoons are often cloudy, but sun usually shines for several hours. Expect 5 to 6 hours of sunshine daily.

Recreational activity: Skiing is possible, December to March, at Chacaltaya, the highest ski run in the world, just 36km (22 miles) from La Paz. Ski equipment can be rented in La Paz.

La Paz, Bolivia: Altitude 3658mm (12001ft)

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun
Sunrise °C(°F)	6(42)	6(42)	6(42)	4(39)	3(37)	1(33)
Mid-afternoon °C(°F)	17(63)	17(63)	18(64)	18(65)	18(64)	17(62)
Days with precipitation	21	18	16	9	5	2
Precipitation mm	114	107	66	33	13	8
Precipitation inches	4.5	4.2	2.6	1.3	0.5	0.3
Daily hours of sunshine	6	5	5	6	8	9
	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Sunrise °C(°F)	1(33)	2(35)	3(38)	4(40)	6(42)	6(42)
Mid-afternoon °C(°F)	17(62)	17(63)	18(64)	19(66)	19(66)	18(64)
Days with precipitation	2	4	9	9	11	18
Precipitation mm	10	13	28	41	48	94
Precipitation inches	0.4	0.5	1.1	1.6	1.9	3.7
Daily hours of sunshine	9	8	7	6	6	6

