Characteristics of Ocean Water

The water in the ocean heats and cools at a very slow rate. Throughout the day, the ocean absorbs heat from the sun and during the night the ocean holds in the heat permitting only small changes in temperature.

Air Temperatures over the Land and Sea

The range of air temperatures throughout the year increases as you travel farther away from the ocean. In the center of most continents, the range of air temperatures may exceed 40°C, whereas, over the ocean and along coasts the range of air temperatures is usually less than 10°C.

Effect of Ocean Water on Coastal Temperatures

Locations along the coast do not experience very drastic changes in weather. The ocean stores heat in the summer, releases it in the winter, and then starts the cycle over again. As a result of this cycle, winters along the coast tend to be warmer than winters inland and summers along the coast tend to be cooler than summers inland.

Fast Fact:

You need the Calories contained in 1 Dairy Queen hamburger (290 Calories) to heat up 80 gallons of ocean water by 1°C.