

Trinidad and Tobago Meteorological Service Cloud Atlas

Today, in recognition of World Meteorological Day 2021, the Trinidad and Tobago Meteorological Service (TTMS) will be launching its very own Cloud Atlas. Clouds are central to weather observations, forecasts and warnings. This Atlas will provide extensive descriptions and offer explanations of the various cloud types observed in Trinidad and Tobago. It will provide an opportunity to celebrate the inherent beauty of clouds and also help the public to understand their influence on weather conditions and the local and global climate.

The TTMS is now seeking high-quality photographs of different clouds captured across Trinidad and Tobago to be featured in the TTMS Local Cloud Atlas.

Submission Guidelines:

- Photos must be submitted in JPEG format.
- Submissions must be digital photographs.
- Only coloured photos will be accepted.
- Photos must have been taken in Trinidad and Tobago within the past 5 years.
- No persons, buildings, power lines or other obstructive objects should be featured in photos.
- Photos must not contain any mark that identifies the photographer.
- Photographer's full name must be included in email, along with the location and date photo was taken.
- Only one (1) submission is allowed per person.
- Your submission must be emailed to metcommunications@gov.tt.
- The submission period runs from March 23rd 2021 – February 15th 2022.

Review and Selection:

The clouds submitted will be reviewed and classified by TTMS staff. At the end of the submission period, if multiple submissions of the same cloud type are received, the photos will be published on the TTMS's Facebook and Instagram pages, allowing followers to vote for their favourites.

The WMO International Cloud Atlas currently recognizes ten basic cloud “genera,” which are defined according to where in the sky they form and their approximate appearance.

High-level clouds typically have a base above about 5 000 metres (16 500 feet); middle-level clouds have a base that is usually between 2 000 and 7 000 m (6 500 to 23 000 feet); and low-level clouds usually have their base at a maximum of 2 000 m (6 500 feet).

Most cloud names contain Latin prefixes and suffixes which, when combined, give an indication of the cloud’s character. These include:

- Stratus/strato: flat/layered and smooth
- Cumulus/cumulo: heaped up/puffy
- Cirrus/cirro: feathers, wispy
- Nimbus/nimbo: rain-bearing
- Alto: mid-level (though Latin for high)

The 10 genera are subdivided into “species,” which describe shape and internal structure, and “varieties,” which describe the transparency and arrangement of the clouds. In total there are about 100 combinations.

Persons whose photos are selected to be featured in the TTMS Cloud Atlas will be appropriately credited.

For further inquiries, please email: metcommunications@gov.tt.