

Chile: From Top to Toe



TRIP OVERVIEW

Chile boasts an astonishing array of unique landscapes from the scorched plains of Atacama Desert, to the piercing glacier shards of Torres del Paine Nacional Park. Experience a visual feast as you travel through the vibrant city of Santiago, colonial Valparaiso and the quaint town of Puerto Natales.

ITINERARY & DETAILS

This document aims to give you all the information that you require for a smooth and comfortable trip to Chile. Please take the time to read this dossier to familiarise yourself with all the aspects of our tour. It includes important information such as visa requirements.

Your included meal guide:

B = Breakfast, L = Lunch, D = Dinner,

DAY 1: UK to Santiago

Depart London on your scheduled overnight flight to Santiago in Chile, via Sao Paulo, Brazil.

DAY 2: Santiago D

On arrival, you will be met and transferred to your hotel for some time at leisure before re-joining your group for tonight's welcome dinner.

DAY 3: Santiago B

Set against a backdrop of snow-capped Andean peaks, Chile's vibrant and versatile capital city of Santiago is an unforgettable treasure trove waiting to be explored. During today's morning tour, delve into the city's historic core, uncovering the impressive government palace and the beautiful 13th century baroque cathedral, renowned as one of the only churches in the world constructed directly above the tomb of a disciple of Jesus. Later, discover the landscaped park of Santa Lucia Hill which reveals the site where Spanish conquistadors founded the city in the 16th century, and relish incredible vistas overlooking the city and mountains beyond. Journey to the port city of Valparaiso this afternoon to explore its colonial architecture and enjoy a cable car ride.

DAY 4: Santiago B

Today is for you to spend at leisure, for you to relax at your hotel or further explore the surrounding areas. You may choose to spend your day experiencing one of Chile's most famous sites, the stunning Colchagua Valley. Producing some of the country's very best red wines, enjoy tastings of award-winning Cabernet Sauvignons and wonderfully rounded Merlots in an area of natural beauty.

DAY 5: Santiago to San Pedro De Atacama B

Board a morning flight from Santiago to Calama in the Atacama Desert; renowned as the driest place on earth, this truly unique 1000-kilometre stretch of land boasts a landscape like no other. Comprising of windsculpted canyons and salt lakes that miraculously turn from orange to gold throughout the day, delight in vistas before climbing the crimson sand dunes of Moon Valley this afternoon; observe as the blazing sun begins to set.

DAY 6: San Pedro De Atacama B/L/D

Following breakfast, journey to the mesmerizing Salar de Atacama. Chile's largest salt flat is home to many native bird species and boasts an extraordinary landscape of jagged salt peaks and steaming volcanos which extend beyond the horizon. Traverse the crunchy crystalline edge of this immense basin to the Chaxa Lagoon where you can get close to dozens of flamingos eagerly dipping their beaks into the mineral rich waters. Next, relish in exceptional tranquility at the nearby Miscanti and Minique Lagoons; positioned at the base of grandiose volcanoes and characterized by their motionless blue waters, this biodiverse oasis provides incredible views over its unique landscape.

DAY 7: San Pedro De Atacama B/L/D

Before the earliest glimpse of daylight emerges, journey to the world's highest volcanic geothermal field, positioned over 4,300 metres above sea level in the Andean mountain range, to witness the dramatic Tatio Geysers. Reaching the peak of their fervent activity in the early morning, watch a fascinating display of gushing steam and water burst out from deep underground in a shrill eruption of white mist. As the rising sun warms the earth below, take a dip in the luxurious hot springs nearby, whose natural waters are geothermally heated underneath the Earth's crust. Return to San Pedro for this evening's overnight stay.

DAY 8: San Pedro De Atacama to Puerto Varas via Santiago B/D

Transfer to the airport for your flight to Puerto Varas, via Santiago. Upon arrival, you will be met and transferred to your hotel for the rest of the day at leisure.

DAY 9: Puerto Varas B/L

Situated on the banks of Lake Llanquihue, the town of Puerto Varas affords spellbinding views of distant snow-capped volcanic peaks. This morning observe a cascading ribbon of sapphire water which slices through the verdant landscape at Petrohue Falls, before gently cruising the glistening waters of idyllic Lake Todos Los Santos, referred to as Lago Esmeralda due to its piercing emerald hues. Later this afternoon, meander along rocky terrain at the foot of Osorno Volcano.

DAY 10: Puerto Varas B

Enjoy a day at leisure as you explore the charming 'City of Roses' in Puerto Varas.

DAY 11: Puerto Varas to Puerto Natales B/D

This morning, travel to the airport for your flight to Punta Arenas before continuing on your journey towards the quaint town of Puerto Natales. Renowned as the gateway to Parque Nacional Torres del Paine, this humble town is situated on the shore of the Sound of Ultima Esperanza, nestled between the Argentinian border and Chile's interconnected isles.

DAY 12: Puerto Natales to Torres Del Paine to Puerto Natales B/L

Immerse yourself in a landscape of supreme natural splendour on a full day tour of Torres del Paine National Park. A biodiverse haven bursting with environmental phenomena including rugged glaciers, explore this spectacular landscape whilst keeping a close eye out roaming Guanacos and majestic condors soaring in the skies overhead.

DAY 13: Puerto Natales B/L

Set sail upon the Channel of Last Hope this morning, marvelling at the gargantuan glaciers which sharply pierce the ocean from the southern continental ice field. Catch a glimpse of diving Magellan Dolphins and graceful sea lions, recurrent visitors to the area, before disembarking for a leisurely stroll along the shores of Tempanos Lagoon towards the Serrano Glacier; a landscape of towering icebergs and native forests truly epitomises an unforgettable day.

DAY 14: Puerto Natales to Santiago B/D

Transfer to the airport for your return flight to Santiago and after a day at leisure, re-join your group this evening for a farewell dinner.

DAY 15/16: Santiago to the UK B

Travel to the airport for your overnight flight back to the UK via Sao Paulo, Brazil.

ACCOMMODATION DETAILS & MAP

Accommodation

Your accommodation is selected for convenience, location, comfort or character, and can range from business hotels to leisure hotels. Hotel accommodation is generally rated as local three to four-star standard, but please note there is no international classification system for hotels, and differences in facilities and quality do exist between the UK and Chile. All group tour hotels have private bathroom facilities and air-conditioning where needed. If you are staying in a lodge during your tour, plumbing and electricity supplies can vary and, in some cases, infrequent, with electricity only being accessible during certain times of the day. Rest assured that all accommodation used by Mercury Holidays is regularly inspected by our staff and partners to ensure that standards meet your needs.

If you have booked a triple share, please note that your room will be a twin room with a rollaway bed or sofa bed added. This may limit the floor space in the room.

Please note: the hotels listed are provided for guidance only and final confirmation of your accommodation will be sent in a document, along with your final flight information, approximately 10 days before you travel.

Meals

Breakfast is always western style and served in the hotel each morning. Lunches on Day 9 and Day 13 are boxed lunches, provided on the way to your excursions. The remaining lunches and dinners, where included, will be taken in local restaurants or at the hotel.



ON YOUR ARRIVAL

On arrival in Chile you will be met by a representative from our local agent, **Southbound Travel**, holding a sign displaying: "Mercury Holidays". The Mercury Holidays/Southbound Travel representative will show you to your transfer vehicle. If you cannot see your representative, they will be at Exit Gate 4. There are many illegal taxis operating around Santiago Airport and they have been known to steal from tourists. Official taxis are dark blue in colour. Your guide will be on hand 24 hours a day should you have any queries. However, if you need to contact Southbound Travel during your stay the details are:

Southbound Travel

Address: Av Kennedy #7900, Vitacura, Santiago de Chile

Contact number - Operations Department: 00562 2241 1049

Emergency contact information

Please find below the emergency contact details for **Southbound Travel** in **Chile:**

Telephone 24 hour: 00569 9639 1191

E-mail: emergency@southbound.travel

WHAT TO PACK

- Sunglasses, sunscreen and hat in summer
- Comfortable walking shoes
- Camera and charger
- A plug adaptor - three different plug sockets are used, so it is best to bring a multi-adaptor
- Antibacterial hand gel
- Binoculars

- Personal first aid kit containing travel pills, rehydration powder, plasters, stomach settlers, antiseptic creams, aspirin etc
- Small day pack for excursions
- Waterproof, lightweight jacket
- Lightweight clothing
- Sweater and jacket for the cooler months

WHAT YOU NEED FOR YOUR TOUR

Visas

If you are a British passport holder a visa is not required for entry into Chile. Further visa advice should be sought from the applicable tourist authority for other nationalities and for general queries. We strongly advise you to check with your destinations' Tourist Board or Embassy for the most up-to-date guidelines regarding required passport validity.

Tour Guides

This is a fully escorted tour meaning that you will be met by a local guide in each of the cities that you visit, ensuring that you have first-hand knowledge at all times.

Private Tour

If you have booked a private tour then you will be accompanied by a Driver Guide or a Driver and Local Guides. These will be available to you during all scheduled sightseeing. Private Tours can depart on any day of the week depending on flight and train schedules and the opening days of the attractions. They will follow the itinerary as described in the brochure unless you have been advised otherwise and you will still have all of the same meals, sightseeing and local excursions included.

Tipping

It is at your customary/discretion to tip both your driver and guide. We would recommend to tip approximately USD\$6 person per day. This is a total of USD84 per person to budget for tips on your trip. Tips will be collected at the end of your tour. Tips are accepted in the local currency.

Currency Exchange

The currency in Chile is the Chilean Peso, also known as CH\$. US Dollars are widely accepted in Chile should you wish to keep an alternative currency on you. It is advised that you should convert some money into the local currency (Chilean Pesos). If you are taking the Easter Island Extension U.S Dollar (\$) may not be accepted in some small businesses, shops and restaurants. Please be aware that card facilities are hard to find on Easter Island, there are only three ATMs (Only accept MasterCard) on the island so it is more preferred to use cash.

Personal Expenses

You will need to take money with you to cover any personal purchases such as souvenirs, laundry, any meals not included in the itinerary as well as drinks and any additional snacks. Approximately £600- £700 per person will be sufficient for the duration of the tour. It is a good idea to try and maintain a supply of small notes and change in the local currency for tipping or small purchases.

Group Size

The minimum number of travellers in your group will be 10, and the maximum will be 35. If in the unlikely event there are less than 10 people booked on your tour date, we will endeavour to reduce any disruption to your holiday and try to operate your tour with lower passenger numbers. If we are not able to operate your departure date, then you may be asked to change to a different date and a full refund will be made available to you should this alternative not be suitable.

Health and Vaccinations

It is your responsibility to check any health and vaccination requirements applicable to your booked arrangements. We can only provide general information about this. Health and hygiene facilities and disease risks vary from country to country. You should take health advice about your own needs as early as possible and in good time before your departure. Sources of information include; www.fco.gov.uk, www.travelhealthpro.org.uk, www.hpa.org.uk, your General Practitioner or a specialist clinic.

Itinerary Changes

The order of events and sightseeing may vary according to local conditions or for operational purposes. The schedules of the domestic airlines in country are subject to frequent changes. For this reason, we have indicated approximate times only. Your local guide will inform you of any schedule changes as they are informed of them. Some road construction &/or weather conditions may lengthen the driving times. Our intention is to adhere to the day-to-day itinerary as printed; however, order of events and sightseeing may vary according to local conditions.

Physical Accessibility

This tour is accessible to most people with a good level of fitness and normal mobility. It involves climbing of steep stairs and getting on and off coaches. This tour is not suitable for anyone with walking difficulties. All our tours feature a "Tour Pace" to help find the right holiday for you. To travel on any of our tours requires unaided mobility and the ability to stroll around the sights, climb stairs and get on and off coaches and boats. The tour pace for Chile: From Top to Toe is rated as Advanced. A higher level of fitness as required as you may be on your feet for most of the day though this will be interspersed with regular breaks and vary from day to day. You will be walking around the sights, getting on and off coaches, boats and climbing steps which may be irregular. There may be some time spend at high altitude. You will stay in variety of hotels, and accommodation standards may not match those you are used to at home. Our guides will always endeavour to provide the highest level of service and assistance; however, they cannot be expected to cater for customers who are unfit to complete the itinerary.

Credit Card Information

As normal practice you may be asked for your credit card details on check-in at the hotel in order to cover any extras incurred during your stay. If you do not have a credit card, you may be asked for a cash deposit. American Express, Diners Club, MasterCard and Visa are widely accepted in hotels.

Travel Insurance

We strongly recommend that you and all members of your party are suitably insured as soon as you book your holiday. It is a condition of booking that you must have suitable travel insurance. It is important that you purchase travel insurance that suitably covers your participation in whatever activities you may undertake at the time that you make your booking. To assist you with this, we have arranged travel insurance in partnership with Holiday Extras. To arrange your travel insurance with Holiday Extras, please call **0800 781 4237** and quote **'WK830'** for preferential rates. Please ensure you provide us with the name of your insurer, policy number and their 24 hour emergency contact number as soon as possible. Mercury Holidays will not be liable for any costs incurred by you due to your failure to take out suitable travel insurance from the date of booking.

Passport Information

Your Passport Information is required for this tour. This information is required at least 90 days prior to your departure. Failure to provide this information on time may result in your booking being cancelled with loss of deposit.

FLIGHT INFORMATION

IMPORTANT: Please note that final flight details, including terminal, airline and baggage allowance, will be confirmed on your final documentation which will be sent to you approximately 10 days before departure. A printed E-ticket is no longer required at check-in, all you need to do is present your passport to the staff at the desk and your boarding pass will be given to you.

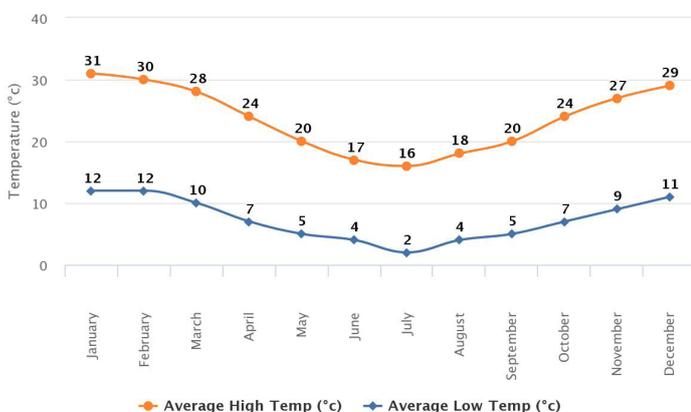
Airport Extras

If you wish to arrange Airport car parking, lounges or accommodation at preferential rates, we recommend you book this in advance with Holiday Extras Tel. 0871 360 2000, quoting HX313.

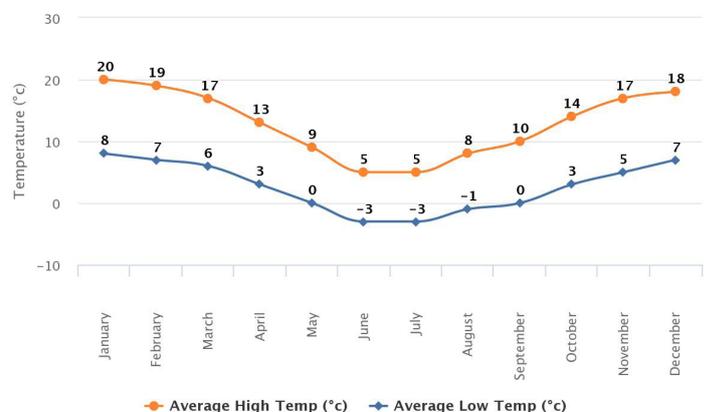
WEATHER AND CLIMATE

Weather can vary quite considerably throughout the year, so please familiarise yourself with the climate charts below.

Average Temperature (°C) Graph for Santiago



Average Temperature (°C) Graph for Puerto Natales



Viña Del Mar Beach Stay Extension

If you have not yet booked this fabulous extension, there is still time to do so. Please contact 0333 003 0522



TRIP OVERVIEW

Located on the Pacific Coast of central Chile, enjoy three nights in Viña del Mar. Simply relax on the golden sandy beaches just a short walk from your hotel, or stroll along the manicured boulevard lined with palm trees.

ITINERARY & DETAILS

This document aims to give you all the information which you will require during your extension to Viña del Mar.

Viña del Mar:

Viña del Mar, meaning “Vineyard of the Sea”, is a city and commune on central Chile’s Pacific coast. Often referred as “La Ciudad Jardín” (“The Garden City”), Viña del Mar is located within the Valparaíso Region, and it’s Chile’s fourth largest city. It is known for its placid resorts, malls, extensive coastal high buildings, hotels and various entertainment venues. A Mediterranean climate prevails and an appealing array of sandy strips beckon.

Hotel

Your stay will take place at the 4★ Marina del Rey Hotel or the 5★ Sheraton Miramar on Bed & Breakfast, unless otherwise stated at booking.

All internal transfers are included.

Hotel contact information:

4★ Marina del Rey Hotel

Address: Ecuador 299, Viña del Mar, Región de Valparaíso, Chile
 Telephone Number: 0056 32 238 3000.

5★ Sheraton Miramar

Address: Armada de Chile 15, Viña del Mar, Chile.
 Telephone Number: 0056 32 238 8600.

Tour Guides

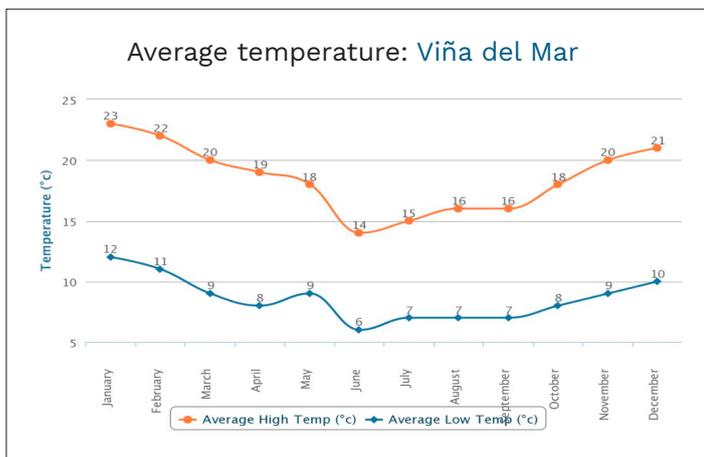
Your stay in Viña del Mar is not escorted by a tour guide.

Personal Expenses

You will need to take money with you to cover any lunches and dinners, as well as personal purchases, such as souvenirs, laundry, drinks and snacks.

WEATHER AND CLIMATE

Weather can vary quite considerably throughout the year, so please familiarise yourself with the climate charts below.



Sheraton Miramar

FLIGHT INFORMATION

Please note: Final hotel and flight details will be confirmed on your final documentation which will be sent to you approximately 10 days before departure.

For any further enquiries or for more information call us on **0333 003 0522**

Easter Island Mini Tour

If you have not yet booked this fabulous extension, there is still time to do so. Please contact 0333 003 0522



TRIP OVERVIEW

A tiny island formed from volcanic rock, the mysterious Easter Island is one of the most remote inhabited places on earth. Enjoy 4 nights exploring this breath-taking UNESCO World Heritage site.

ITINERARY & DETAILS

This document aims to give you all the information which you will require during your extension to Easter Island

Your included meal guide:

B = Breakfast, L = Lunch, D = Dinner

DAY 15: Santiago to Easter Island B

Departing mainland Chile, fly to Easter Island, a tiny island formed from Volcanic rock in the middle of the Pacific Ocean. Known as Rapa Nui to its native Polynesian settlers, the UNESCO World Heritage Site is the most remote inhabited island in the world.

Day 16: Easter Island B/L/D

Today visit Ahu Tongariki, the island's largest Ahu (shrine) with 15 imposing moai statues that have become synonymous with Easter Island itself. The meaning and creation surrounding these sublime works of art have sparked lively debate for centuries. The tour concludes at the beautiful beach of Anakena where you can take a refreshing swim in the Pacific Ocean's warm waters.

Day 17: Easter Island B/D

Ascend the extinct Rano Kau volcano to the Orongo ceremonial village to discover where indigenous kings were once chosen following a gruelling competition. This afternoon, venture out to explore some more shrines and archaeological sites including Hanga Poukhura where toppled moai reveal tales of ancient battles.

Day 18: Easter Island B

Enjoy a day at leisure to explore the region at your own pace.

Day 19: Easter Island to Santiago B

Return to Santiago by flight and transfer to your hotel.

Day 20: Santiago to the UK B

This morning you will be transferred to the airport for your flight to the UK (via Sao Paulo).

Hotel

Your 5 night stay will take place at the following hotels;

(4 nights) 4★ Easter Island Ecolodge

Address: Avareipua, Hanga Roa, Isla de Pascua, Valparaíso, Chile
 Contact Number: 0056 32 270 3141

(1 night) 4★ Hotel Fundador on a Bed and Breakfast basis

FLIGHT INFORMATION

Please note: Final hotel and flight details will be confirmed on your final documentation which will be sent to you approximately 10 days before departure.

Address: Serrano 34, Santiago, Región Metropolitana, Chile
 Contact Number: 0056 2 2387 1200.

Please note that it is not common for accommodation on Easter Island to have Air-Conditioning.

Meals

Breakfast is always western style and served in the hotel each morning. Lunch on Day 17 is a boxed lunch, provided on the way to your excursion. Dinner, where included, will be taken at the hotel.

Personal Expenses

You will need to take money with you to cover personal purchases, laundry service, souvenirs, plus lunch, dinner and drinks.

Tour Guides

Your stay in Easter Island is semi-escorted by a tour guide. All internal transfers are included.

Please note

This extension takes place after your main tour.

WEATHER AND CLIMATE

Weather can vary quite considerably throughout the year, so please familiarise yourself with the climate charts below.

