





## PLACES OF INTEREST

colony grew in size and importance, Chile also gained autonomy from the Spanish crown. The chaos that ensued after Napoleon Bonaparte's brother deposed the Spanish king in 1808 led a group of Chilean leaders from Santiago to declare self-rule on September 18, 1810. Battles between loyalist and separatist Chileans during this "Reconquista" period lasted for eight years. In 1818, Bernardo O'Higgins, an Irish-born patriot who became Chile's first president, and Jose de San Martin, the Argentine patriot, joined to finally defeat the Spanish in April 1818.

Following Chilean independence, Valparaíso became a critical stop-over port for ships traveling around Cape Horn. South Americans also flocked to Valparaíso to catch a ship to California during the Gold Rush. A 1906 earthquake demolished many buildings in the port and the opening of the Panama Canal decreased Valparaíso's popularity as ships now had a faster way to travel between the Pacific and Atlantic Oceans.

After the War of the Pacific with Peru and Bolivia (1879 - 1883), Chile gained mineral-rich territories to the north in the Atacama Desert. This region, rich in nitrate deposits, became a critical source of wealth for the Chilean economy. Nitrate excavation, copper mining, industrial

development, and immigration prompted growth in Santiago and Valparaíso in the early twentieth century. This growth also made the cities the primary theaters for political debates between conservative and liberal parties. The 1970 election of Salvador Allende gave Chile its first socialist president and caused more problems than it solved. On September 11, 1973, the Chilean military, led by General Augusto Pinochet, toppled the Allende government.

During the seventeen years of the Pinochet regime, economists from the University of Chicago, known as the "Chicago Boys," advised on the implementation of a series of reforms to radically transform Chile into a market economy. Since the return to democracy in 1990, Chile's political climate has stabilized, and its economic status has improved. In 2003, Chile signed a free trade agreement with the United States, and Santiago has emerged as a financial capital of Latin America. With an established democracy, sound economy, and an emerging arts scene, Chile will capture your interest from your first view of the Andes Mountains and that first sip of Chilean wine.

### SANTIAGO PLACES OF INTEREST

**1 Palacio de la Moneda** Chile's Presidential Palace is located on the Plaza de la Constitución in downtown Santiago. This was the site of the 1973 military coup led by General Augusto Pinochet.

**2 Plaza de Armas** The historic center of Santiago, artists crowd this square selling their beautiful creations. The plaza is within walking distance of many of the city's most important buildings.

**3 Cerro San Cristóbal** From the top of Santiago's largest park and second-highest hill, you can see breathtaking views of the capital with the snow-capped Andes in the distance.

**4 La Chascona** Located in the colorful neighborhood of Bellavista, poet Pablo Neruda designed and named this house the "disheveled one," a nickname for his third wife, Matilde.

### VALPARAISO PLACES OF INTEREST

**Muelle Prat** This pier is a meeting place for locals and tourists alike. See the replica of the Spanish ship *Santiaguillo*, shop in the arts market, or say hello to the sea lions along the shore.

**Ascensor Concepción** One of fifteen funicular elevators in Valparaíso, this is the oldest (1883). Ride the elevator to the top to see a spectacular view of the city and pier.

**La Sebastiana** One of Chilean national poet Pablo Neruda's three homes, this house has a maze of rooms, reflecting his eclectic personality and life.

**Plaza Sotomayor** This central square is the heart of Valparaíso's city life. It is also home to many historic sites, including the Naval Heroes Monument, the Justice Tribunal, and the Ex-Intendencia buildings.

**Museo Naval y Marítimo** Located in a mansion that used to be Chile's naval academy, the Naval and Maritime Museum has several exhibits on the history of the Chilean Navy, as well as the port of Valparaíso.

### Beyond Valparaíso and Santiago

**Viña del Mar** This town is minutes away from Valparaíso and is home to white sand beaches, the national casino, and a famous flower clock.

**Valle de Casablanca** Casablanca's cool temperatures make it ideal to produce excellent white wines, especially Sauvignon Blanc, Chardonnay, and Late Harvest varietals.

**Valle del Maipo** This region surrounding Santiago is best known for some of Chile's most famous vineyards that produce very good red wines, especially Carménère, Cabernet Sauvignon, and Merlot.

**Portillo** South America's oldest ski area located 90 miles north of Santiago, Portillo is renowned for unrivaled skiing in the Andes during the winter, as well as its idyllic views of snow-capped mountains and sparkling lakes at any time of year.

**SHORE EXCURSIONS** To make the most of your visit to Valparaíso, Santiago and surrounding areas we suggest you take one of our organized Shore Excursions. For information concerning tour content and pricing, consult your Shore Excursion Brochure, Shore

Excursion TV Channel or contact the Shore Excursion Desk. When going ashore, guests are advised to take with them only the items they need and to secure any valuables.

**LOCAL CUSTOMS** Bargaining: Though prices are fixed in restaurants and stores, bargaining at open-air markets is common.

Tipping: A 10% tip is customary at restaurants, but tipping is not necessary in taxis.

**LOCAL CUISINE AND DRINK SPECIALTIES** Chile has a wide variety of seafood, including abalone, salmon, conger eels, and sea bass. Some local favorites include: Pebre – A spicy salsa made with tomatoes, onions, and peppers. Chileans use it as a condiment for bread, red meat...or any other food. Empanada de pino – Chile's signature empanada is made with ground beef, raisins, olives, and hard-boiled egg. Pastel de choclo – This hearty Chilean casserole is made with corn, chicken, beef, raisins, and hard-boiled eggs.

Pisco Sour – This is Chile's national drink, made with pisco, a brandy made from Muscat grapes, egg whites, lemon (mango in Arica) and sugar. The nearby Valle de Casablanca is one of the country's best and newest wine regions, famous for white wines, including Chardonnay and Sauvignon Blanc.

**SHOPPING FACILITIES** Chile is one of two places in the world to find lapislazuli, a dark blue semi-precious stone. Mapuche- and Aymara-produced souvenirs (pottery, stone work, textiles, silver) are sold in some artisan markets and shopping malls. In Valparaíso, visit O'Higgins Square or Muelle Prat, right next to the pier.

Ferias artesanales (craft fairs) are all over Santiago. Visit downtown Santiago, especially near Feria Santa Lucia and the nearby shops in front of Santa Lucia Hill. For the best array of products, visit the Pueblito de los Dominicos in Las Condes, which has over 180 stalls of treasures, like lapislazuli, Chilean cowboy crafts, pottery, and silver work, among other things.

**LOCAL CURRENCY** The local currency is the Chilean peso (CL\$). Foreign currency is not widely accepted in Chile. ATM's are usually available, especially in heavily trafficked tourist areas.

**POST OFFICE AND TELEPHONE FACILITIES** In Valparaíso there is a Post Office at 856 Prat. Another location is 95 Plaza Sotomayor. In Santiago, the Correo Central (Main Post Office) is in the Plaza de Armas.

Dial the following access numbers to use a personal calling card:

AT&T: 800.225.288

MCI: 800.207.300

**TRANSPORTATION** Taxis are widely available in Valparaíso and Santiago. Call for a "radio taxi," rather than hail one on the street. "Colectivos," a mix between a taxi/bus, run fixed routes and transport multiple parties. Santiago's metro system is easy, fast, and efficient. Buses, known as "micros," are accessible, but a little more challenging to use...even for locals.