



## CHILE HIGHLIGHTS

Chile is the land of contrasts, from verdant vineyards to driest desert, deep fjords and towering glaciated volcanoes.

A narrow but incredibly long, snake-like country, Chile's unusual geography features more than 5,000km of South Pacific Ocean coast. The country is almost 4,400km long but barely more than 160km at its widest.

It is best divided into general regions, all of which offer spectacular landscapes and identities of their own.

You can travel around Chile by air, road or water and often cruises help join up itineraries in a relaxing and beautiful way.



Stunning volcanoes in Chile

### Santiago

The spectacular setting is one of the main attractions as it is located in the heart of the wine country, and you are just over an hour's drive from the coast and in less than an hour you can be at the ski resorts at +3,000m. It is a city of over six million inhabitants and houses one third of Chile's population.

In colonial times, Santiago was on the periphery of the Spanish empire and as such does not have a great colonial heritage to show off. However, several decades of prosperity are reflected in it being one of South America's most modern cities with many skyscrapers, a state-of-the-art metro system and a network of urban highways.

Shopping is also a national pastime, so those seeking retail therapy have ample opportunities and those with a more bohemian penchant will have no shortage of fine restaurants and buzzing bars and nightclubs to choose from.

Culturally, the Pre Columbian Museum is a rewarding visit and great views can be found from the top of San Cristobal hill where a giant statue of the Virgin Mary overlooks the city.

Santiago's historic centre is worth taking the time to explore on foot during the day. The most important governmental buildings such as the Moneda Palace, Metropolitan Cathedral, Mapocho Station and the colourful fish market are found within easy walking distance. Santiago is a safe city to wander around but like anywhere, common sense must prevail.

Within Santiago's Metropolitan region, the Maipo Canyon offers a taste of the Andes with its great opportunities for short treks and alfresco dining in one of the many typical countryside restaurants.



Vineyards of Chile

### Vineyards

Chile has a long history of winemaking, dating back to the 16<sup>th</sup> century when the Spanish colonized the region.

Today, Chile is the fifth largest exporter of wines in the world, and almost every region has a grape and variety for you to enjoy. You can relax at vineyards and enjoy sampling alongside sumptuous meals and stunning settings.



The Valle Central is the biggest producer and most popular vineyard destination. The Maipo valley is famous for its Cabernet Sauvignon; The Rapel region in Colchagua for its Cabernet; and Curicó has both red and white wine varieties planted but is most widely known for its Chardonnay.

There are some great Merlots available near the northern region of Aconcagua, on the Chilean side.

In the north the Copiapó Valley and the Huasco Valley are big producers of Pisco and table grapes, alongside Elqui, Limarí Valley, and the Choapa Valley.



Exploring the lakes of Chile

## Lakes

Chile's Lake District is replete with snow capped conical volcanoes, emerald coloured lakes, fast flowing rivers and National Parks. The fine infrastructure and a whole host of outdoor activities make this firm holiday favourite.

Pucon and Lake Villarrica are the main draws in the northern lakes. Pucon itself, on Villarrica Lake shore, boasts a spectacular setting and many hotels and restaurants. Nearby, one can visit volcanic caves, climb to the crater of Villarrica Volcano, white water raft on the Trancura river, bathe in the hot springs at the Termas de Huife or Termas Geometricas or take a hike in a nearby national park marvelling at the Aracuarias (Monkey Puzzle Trees) in their natural setting.

Further south, on the coast, is Valdivia. This is Chile's only city to have navigable rivers. It is a great place to explore with forts nearby built as defence from the Spanish during the wars of independence.

Puerto Varas on Lake Llanquihue and Puerto Montt are the gateways at the southern end of the district. The Osorno Volcano dominates this area and hidden gems such as the Cochamo Valley are nearby. Outdoor activities include white water rafting, kayak, trekking, canyoning, canopy, horse riding, fly fishing and mountainbike.

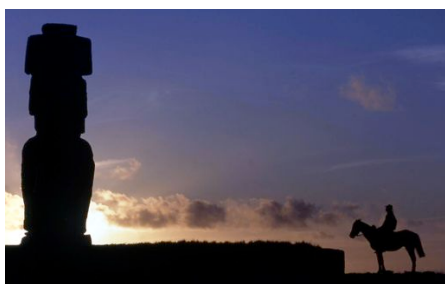
This area is also a good staging point to cross the Andes into Argentina. Pucon links across to San Martin de Los Andes and Puerto Montt|/Puerto Varas across to San Carlos de Bariloche.

There are strong Germanic influences in the architecture and cuisine (not to mention the beer!) as the area was colonized by German immigrants from Bavaria in the mid 19th Century.

## Easter Island

Lying more than 2,300 miles off the coast of Chile is the most remote inhabited island in the world.

Easter island is a tiny volcanic triangle, and was named Rapa Nui or 'Navel of the World' by its early settlers. Here you find the famous moai stone statues, as well as caves and rocks decorated with etched petroglyphs and painted pictographs.



Moai on Easter Island

Take advantage of the good climate and the chance to explore this fascinating place by foot, horseback or bike. There are more than 600 moai (some up to nine metres tall and weighing 250 tonnes) and many traditional cave dwellings open to view.

How the islands' native people first arrived and what transpired over the centuries is a puzzle that is still to be unravelled.



## Photo safaris

Renowned landscape photographer Bruce Percy, published internationally including in National Geographic, leads our photographic safaris, and we have two excellent options in Chile.

You can visit Easter Island or Patagonia with Bruce. Whatever your level, from beginner to expert, Bruce leads the party with enthusiasm with an emphasis on support and sharing ideas, so everyone learns.

All trips are fully supported logistically, so all you need to worry about are angles, your images and which stunning landscape to photograph, as we help you to take advantage of the best conditions, every day.



Wildlife shot from Photo safaris

## Atacama

The Atacama is a lunar landscape in places, lush river canyons in others. In some parts, rain has not touched this parched land for the past three hundred years while summer can bring brilliant rainstorms in the mountains.

The northern skies of Chile are famous for being some of the clearest in the world. The combination of an extremely dry climate, high altitude and the distance from any source of environmental pollution makes them a perfect and clear window into the Universe.

Choose to watch the sunset from Moon Valley, visit salt flats, gaze at cave paintings or marvel at hissing geysers. Atacama may be a desert, but the harsh environment produces some of Chile's most evocative and enduring images and experiences.

## Southern Patagonia

Land at the end of the earth, mystic mountain spires, deep blue glaciers, condors, gauchos and ranches.

The amazing collection of soaring granite spires and vast glaciers of Paine National Park offer awesome panoramas and perfect opportunities for adventure treks and expeditions.

There is the classic Paine W or circuit, camping, refugio based or day walks from luxury estancias. Or jump into a kayak and paddle around the beautiful fjords and icebergs of the wilderness of Pumalin National Park.

Patagonia has something for everyone, from active to relaxing, from mountains to bikes to horse riding to lakes. All wrapped up in amazing scenery you will never forget.



Trekking in Northern Patagonia

## Northern Patagonia

Off-the-beaten-track? Northern Patagonia is truly pioneer country. You can cross the Andes through the remotest of borders via boat and hikes.

There are boats from Puerto Montt + Laguna San Rafael and its glacier, plus the Navimag to Puerto Natales. From Natales there are sailings to the glaciers of Balmaceda and Serrano, and day trips to Last Hope Sound.

From Punta Arenas there is a ferry to Porvenir, sailing tours sails Magdalena Island and cruises to Ushuaia, Argentina.





## Patagonia cruises

Cruise in style to the remotest parts of Patagonia - away from civilization - to watch sea lions play and visit UNESCO world heritage sites.

Chiloé awaits sailors who wish to drift away from civilisation to a land seemingly forgotten, a UNESCO site scarcely visited and incredibly beautiful.

Alternatively the Mare Australis and Via Australis offer twice weekly five-day cruises from Punta Arenas to Ushuaia, sailing the Beagle Channel and visiting glaciers and the Cape Horn National Park.

You can do the route in reverse in four days, Ushuaia to Punta Arenas, and the season is from September through to April.

From Punta Arenas, head to Porvenir or Magdalena Island, or cruise to Ushuaia, Argentina. From Punta Montt there are more possibilities - head to Laguna San Rafael and its glacier, or the Navimag to Puerto Natales. And from Natales, sail to Balmaceda and Serrano glaciers.



Kayaking in Chile

## Kayaking and rafting

Our adventures in sea kayaks take in some of the most amazing and remote areas of Chile.

Many of the places we visit are only accessible by water.

In Paine National park deep in southern Patagonia the Tyndall glacier's remote location means it sees very few visitors. Camping is wild and remote. There are no facilities but you are sure to witness some stunningly beautiful campsites.

Pumalin Park is one of the largest private parks in the world. It also provides one of the most spectacular sea kayaking experiences in northern Patagonia, with its deep fjords, hot springs and sea lion and dolphin colonies.

You can also combine trekking in the famous Paine with kayaking on the Serrano river. We provide the equipment so all that is left is to turn up and paddle!

Adrenaline junkies love the grade IV and V rapids on the Rio Futalufeu, a nine day white water rafting trip considered one of, if not the, best in the world.



Gaicho

## Robinson Crusoe Islands

These remote craggy islands inspired Daniel Defoe to write the novel Robinson Crusoe, after Scots mariner Alexander Selkirk was marooned for more than four years on the main island in 1704.

There are also legends of hidden treasure on the Archipelago, which was declared a World Biosphere Reserve by UNESCO in 1977, which is situated 420 miles off the central coast of Chile.

Nowadays, most visitors to the island of 650 people are attracted by its remoteness, the chance to walk and explore, the diving, its history and the flora and fauna. Here spiny lobster fishermen rub shoulders with treasure hunters, explorers with scuba divers and sea lions with wild boars.



## Antarctica XXI

Antarctica is an ecological wonder that bewitches explorers, scientists and voyagers alike. The Drake passage is a famously rough crossing which can act as a barrier for those who want to cruise around Antarctica.

But with this amazing fly-cruise Antarctic trip, only from Chile's Punta Arenas, can you fly over Cape Horn and the Drake Passage, straight to Antarctica. Here, the Antarctica XXI programme will take you to one of the most remote places on earth, where you can enjoy the awesome scenery made of glaciers, mountain and roaming icebergs.

Wildlife includes whales, elephant seals, weddell seals and penguins, as well as a variety of birds, such as Albatrosses, Petrels and Snowy Sheathbills.



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Weddell seal