

Chile General Information

Entry and exit requirements

Visa is not needed for most Western Europeans, US citizens and Australian visitors. When entering the country, visitors receive a 90-day permit renewable for the same period of time. Some must pay the following tax in cash: US Citizens US\$ 100 / Canadians US\$ 55 / Australians US\$ 35.

Please check for up to date information with the consulate in your country.

Fresh products, plants and animals can't be taken into the country. When entering to Chile it is necessary to fill in a form testifying if one enters with/without fresh products.

Language

The official language is Spanish.

Health

Inoculations for Chile are not prescribed. The standard of hygiene is high, one of the highest in Latin America. We advise to take some care with drinking water from the tap (especially in smaller towns) and when eating unwashed fruits and vegetables.

Climate

Due to its topography and immense length from north to south, Chile has a great variety of climates.

Desert climate in the area between Arica and La Serena, Mediterranean in the central area down to Concepción and temperate and rainy from Concepción to Punta Arenas and the polar ice of Antarctica.

Santiago and Middle Chile are best in the verdant spring (September through November) or during the fall harvest (late February into April), while popular natural attractions like Parque Nacional del Paine in Magallanes and the lakes region are best in summer (December through March).

Time:

GMT minus three hours (Chilean summer) or five hours (Chilean winter), continental Chile has only one time zone. Easter Island – 2 hr from cont. Chile.

Electricity Supply: 220 V, 50Hz

Credit Cards and Traveler's Checks

The most generally accepted credit cards are Visa, MasterCard, Diners, and to a lesser extent, American Express. Traveler's checks are widely accepted.

Banking Hours

Banks attend Monday to Friday from 9:00 to 14:00

Currency changers open Monday to Friday from 9.00 to 14.00 and 15.00 to 18.00.

Official Currency:

The official currency of Chile is the Chilean Peso. Its approximate value against the US\$ is 580 pesos for each dollar.

National Holidays

New Year (1st January), Holy Week (end of March or April), Labour Day (1st May), Naval Battle of Iquique (21st May), Corpus Christi (22nd June), St Peter and St Paul (29th June), Assumption of the Virgin (15th August), National Reconciliation Day (1st Monday in September), Independence Day (18th September),

Army Day (19th September), (Hispanic) Columbus Day (12th October), All Saints' Day (1st November),

Immaculate Conception (8th December), Christmas (25th December).

Tourist Information

Office of the National Tourist Service, SERNATUR (Av. Providencia 1550, Santiago, between Metro stations Manuel Montt and Pedro de Valdivia. It attends Monday to Friday, from 9.30 to 20.00, and on Saturdays and Sundays, from 9.30 to 18.30. Telephone numbers: 731 -83361 731 -8337.

There is another SERNATUR office at Santiago's Arturo Merino Benitez Airport, telephone 601-9320. It attends Monday to Sunday from 8.15 to 21.30.

Shopping

Shops in Santiago are open from 10.00 to 20.00. Malls and supermarkets close at 21.00.

Transport

There is a wide network of public transport in the capital, with taxis, buses and the Metro (Metropolitan Railway). For journeys within the country there are local airlines and excellent long-distance buses from the capital to the vast majority of destinations. The bus terminals are:

Terminal Santiago, tel. 779-1385 (buses for the south and international routes), Terminal Alameda, tel. 778-0808 (the coast, north and south), San Borja, tel. 776-0645, 776-1025 (the north and area around Santiago), Terminal Los Héroes, tel. 696-9250 (mainly the north)

Enjoy your trip!