

Chile: Top to Toe

Classic Tour | 14 Days | Physical Level 2

Santiago – Valparaiso – San Pedro de Atacama – Puerto Varas – Puerto Natales – Santiago

Travel the entire length of Chile, from the barren beauty of the Atacama and Altiplano of the north, via the lakes and volcanoes of the Lake District, to the spectacular mountains and glaciers of Patagonia in the south.

- Valparaiso by day via funicular
- Take a walk in the Moon Valley
- Altiplano lakes and mountains
- Osorno Volcano scenic hike
- Admire Torres del Paine National Park

TOUR MAP



CHILE: TOP TO TOE TOUR INCLUSIONS:

- Return international economy flights, taxes and current fuel surcharges (unless a land only option is selected)
- All accommodation
- All meals
- All sightseeing and entrance fees
- All transportation and transfers
- English speaking National Escorts (if your group includes 10 or more passengers) or Local Guides
- Specialist advice from our experienced travel consultants
- Safe and secure with IATA

The only thing you may have to pay for are personal expenditure e.g. drinks, optional excursions or shows, insurance of any kind, customary tipping, early check in or late check out and other items not specified on the itinerary.

CLASSIC TOURS:

These tours are designed for those who wish to see the iconic sites and magnificent treasures of Chile on an excellent value group tour whilst travelling with like-minded people. The tours are on a fully-inclusive basis so you'll travel with the assurance that all your arrangements are taken care of. You will be accompanied by our dedicated and professional National Escorts and local guides, whose unparalleled knowledge will turn your holiday into an unforgettable experience.

PHYSICAL LEVEL 2:

All our tours feature a physical rating to help you select the right holiday for you. To travel on any of our tours requires unaided mobility and the ability to stroll around the sights. Chile Top to Toe is rated as a physical level 2 tour. A reasonable level of fitness is required as you will be spending a significant amount of time on your feet. You'll be getting on and off coaches and boats, walking around the sights and climbing steps.

- A few destinations on this tour are at altitude. San Pedro de Atacama sits at 2,400 metres above sea level and Tatio Geyser reaches over 4000 metres – activity at these altitudes will be at an easy pace.
- You will be required, on several occasions, to climb on and off boats without assistance and spend an extended amount of time on boats in open water.
- There will be several days of sightseeing on foot for an extended period and in some cases for several hours.

Of course, our National Escort and local 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.

JOINING YOUR TOUR:

The tour is 14 days in duration including international flights or 12 days in duration based on 'Land Only'.

Travellers booked on a 'Land Only' package, the price includes your arrival/departure airport transfers if arriving/departing on the start and conclusion date of your tour. Please advise your international flight times to our reservations team.

Join the tour on Day 1 in Santiago and end the tour on Day 12 in Santiago. Please refer to your final itinerary for more specific meeting instructions pertaining to your departure.

ITINERARY CHANGES:

It's our intention to adhere to the day-to-day itinerary as printed; however, the order of events or sightseeing may change as we look to improve our tours or as local conditions dictate. In these circumstances we'll make the best possible arrangements maintaining the integrity of your trip.

Day 1: Fly to Santiago Meals: D



Fly to Chile's capital Santiago. On arrival, you will be welcomed at the airport by your Wendy Wu representative where you will then transfer to your hotel. Transfer time is approximately 45 minutes. The remainder of the afternoon will be at leisure before a welcome dinner at a local restaurant this evening.

You will also have the option to enjoy a panoramic city tour of Santiago, this can be arranged at your own expense.

Early check-in is not included. Additional nights' before and after your tour can be arranged. Please contact our Reservations team to book.

Destination Information

Santiago - Santiago is a vibrant and cultural city set on the plains of the Andes and home to 40% of Chile's population. Split into 32 boroughs (comunas), each area has its own distinct character, with the vibrant energy of the city remaining throughout.

Day 2: Discover Valparaiso Meals: B, L, D



After breakfast, travel westwards for approximately 2 hours to the coast to visit the bohemian port town of Valparaíso. Designated a UNESCO World Heritage Site, Valparaíso is a unique and delightful port city, draped over a series of hills. Funiculars connect the industrial seafront with the cerros (hills) neighbourhoods, each a maze of colourful, artfully dilapidated mansions and enchanting street art.

A highlight is visiting Pablo Neruda's house, before heading to the serene Casablanca Valley. At Casas del Bosque Winery, enjoy a behind-the-scenes tour and sample award-winning wines.

Go on to savour a gourmet lunch amidst stunning vineyard views, all before returning to Santiago.

Sightseeing today lasts approximately 8 hours.

Destination Information

Valparaíso – Overlooked by an imperious hillside and set on a wide bay, Valparaiso is considered to be the most captivating and unique city in Chile. Designated a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 2003, the colourful houses are dotted across the hillside in a beautifully disorganised fashion and the main method of getting around is on the city's old funicular lifts.

Pablo Neruda's House – Home of the esteemed Chilean Poet.

Day 3: San Pedro de Atacama

Meals: B, L, D



Rise early today to transfer to the airport and fly to the northern city of Calama (2 hours 10 minutes approximately), from here, you will drive to the desert oasis town of San Pedro de Atacama before enjoying a local lunch in Ayllu de Coyo.

Explore some of San Pedro's most famous landscapes with a drive out to Moon Valley, some of the driest spots on the planet. With lonely volcanoes populating the horizon, enjoy unparalleled views and the tranquil silence as the afternoon sun turns the hues of the rock from orange to red to purple. Later this evening enjoy star gazing in Atacama.

Destination Information

San Pedro de Atacama - San Pedro de Atacama is a town sitting in the Andes mountains of North East Chile. The dramatic landscapes that surround the town include desert, salt flats, volcanoes, geysers and hot springs.

Moon Valley – The Moon Valley is a vast lunar backdrop of scattered hills in the Atacama Desert. The Valley is at its most impressive during sunset and sunrise when the sunlight creates a magical series of colours from orange to purple and pink.

Day 4: Salar de Atacama Meals: B, L, D



Travel approximately 2 hours to the otherworldly Salar de Atacama, the largest salt flat in Chile. Visit Chaxa lagoon, part of the Los Flamencos National Reserve en route to reach Miscanti and Miniques lagoons, which sit on the high plains at the base of two colossal volcanoes of the same names. Travel to the village of Socaire. Here you will see ancient agricultural terraces with irrigation channels.

After lunch, travel to another peaceful village with typical colonial architecture built in Liparita (volcanic stone), Toconao. Explore the village before returning to your hotel.

Destination Information

Salar de Atacama – The largest salt flat in Chile is an intriguing natural phenomenon. The basin was formed by evaporated water which flowed down from the Andes. There are numerous lakes within the basin, some of which are home to frolicking flocks of flamingos.

Day 5: El Tatio Geysers Meals: B, L, D



Rise early this morning and travel for around 2 hours deeper into the Atacama to visit El Tatio Geysers. Set within a ring of volcanoes, there are about 80 lively geysers and fumaroles, which are best at sunrise. Enjoy a guided walk amongst the mud craters and bubbling geysers. Wander freely before travelling through the Andes Mountain Range with impressive views of Putama Volcano and Tocorpuri Mountains.

Visit the small desert village of Machuca to see the typical terrace farming system, mud houses with straw roofs, and its local fauna such as llamas, alpacas and flamingos. This afternoon, travel to an archaeological site where you can see Petroglyphs, stone sculpted figures with drawings of llamas and shamans, among others. Today is a full day of touring, and you will be reaching an altitude of 4320 metres above sea level for a short period of time.

Destination Information

El Tatio - Set within a ring of volcanoes, El Tatio is the world's third largest geyser field with about 80 lively geysers and fumaroles. The spectacle is best observed at sunrise when the geysers are at their most active.

Day 6: Puerto Varas Meals: B, L, D



This morning, transfer back to Calama and board your flight to Puerto Montt, the gateway to Chile's spectacular Lakes District. The flight is approximately 5 hours via Santiago. Continue about an hour to Puerto Varas, a charming town on Llanquihue Lake that is dominated by two snow-capped volcanoes.

Check into your hotel for a relaxing evening.

Destination Information

Puerto Varas – Known as the city of roses, Puerto Varas is a scenic city sitting in the shadow of two impressive volcanoes, Osorno and Calbuco.

Day 7: Osorno Volcano Meals: B, L, D



Travel further around Llanquihue Lake to the village of Ensenada at the foot of Osorno Volcano. Here you will take an easy hike on the volcano's verdant slopes to reach the Osorno Ski Mountain Centre at 1,240 metres.

Travel through Perez Rosales National Park to Petrohué Falls, where boardwalks will help you admire the turquoise waters and lush greenery of the Petrohué River. Finish the day with a boat tour across Todos Los Santos Lake, where wonderful views of the forest, mountains and Osorno Volcano await.

Destination Information

Osorno Volcano - A 2,652-metre tall volcano in Los Lagos Region of Chile, it is noticeable for its similar appearance to Mount Fuji.

Day 8: Puerto Natales Meals: B, L, D



Fly to southern Patagonia and transfer to your hotel in Puerto Natales in a picturesque setting surrounded by mountainous towers, also referred to as "Torres del Paine", a unique rock formation. Puerto Natales is also home to a wealth of different species of birds and mammals as well as the largest ice field on the planet.

PLEASE NOTE: Where possible you will be booked on a direct flight from Puerto Montt to Puerto Natales, followed by a transfer of approximately 30 minutes. However these flights do not operate daily and schedules can change with little notice, so if it is not possible for this flight to be taken, you will instead fly to Punta Arenas and take a scenic transfer of approximately 4 hours.

Destination Information

Puerto Natales – Just a drive away from Argentinian Patagonia, Puerto Natales was founded in 1911 as a port for the booming sheep industry. Nowadays it is more commonly known as the gateway to the Torres del Paine National Park, with tourism being a key contributor to the town's economy.

Day 9: Glaciers Cruise Meals: B, L, D



Today sail on the gloomily-named Ultima Esperanza (Last Hope) Fjord to Mount Balmaceda Glacier before continuing on foot to the magnificent Serrano Glacier. Visit a local estancia for a glimpse of daily life on a traditional ranch and enjoy a typical Patagonian asado lunch.

Destination Information

Ultima Esperanza - In 1557 Juan Ladrillero, a Spanish explorer, gave the channel its name when he believed travelling through it was his last opportunity to reach the Strait of Magellan, though he was met with a dead end.

Day 10: Torres Del Paine National Park Meals: B, L, D



Enjoy another full day excursion, this time to the UNESCO World Heritage-designated Torres del Paine National Park. Spend the day amongst this breathtaking example of resplendent nature, spotting large herds of guanacos as you go.

Visit the Salto Grande of the Pehoé River, with the impressive mountains of Torres del Paine in the background. Then visit Lake Pehoé, Lake Grey and Grey Glacier.

After lunch, on the way back to Puerto Natales, stop at Milodon Cave where the remains of a prehistoric animal were found in the last century. Today includes lots of walking on uneven ground; sturdy walking shoes are recommended.

Destination Information

Torres del Paine National Park – A picturesque and staggeringly beautiful national park packed with waterfalls, lakes, glaciers and jagged peaks. The park's best-known view is of the jagged granite towers from which the park takes its name.

Day 11: Santiago Meals: B, L, D



Transfer back to the airport and board your flight to Santiago, where your tour began. On arrival, transfer to your hotel, where the rest of the day is at your leisure, with a farewell dinner this evening to round off the trip.

Days 12-14: Depart Santiago Meals: B

Today (according to your flight time) you will be transferred to the airport for your overnight onward flight home, arriving two days later. Any time before your flight is at leisure.

Late check-out is not included. Additional nights before and after your tour can be arranged. Please contact our Reservations team to book.



TRAVEL INFORMATION

VISAS:

New Zealand passport holders are currently permitted entry to Chile without a visa for stays of up to 90 days. An online immigration arrival form must be completed before entry – details will be provided in your final documentation.

Please be advised that your passport must have at least six months validity left on it when you arrive back in New Zealand.

Please note the visa procedures and requirements may change at any time. These changes are often made by the relevant embassy or consulate; Wendy Wu Tours acts as a third party and has no influence on the process of a visa.

INSURANCE:

We strongly recommend that you take out a policy as soon as you pay your deposit. Wendy Wu Tours cannot in any way be made liable for any additional cost incurred by the customer on any tour due to the customer not having adequate travel insurance.

We also encourage all customers to take a copy of their travel insurance documents (especially relevant international contact numbers) with them while on tour. We advise that you check the inclusions and procedures for lodging claims prior to your departure. These documents should be stored separately from the original.

ALTITIUDE:

On this tour you will be spending several nights at altitude – in San Pedro de Atacama at 2,400 metres, and on Day 5 whilst visiting the El Tatio Geysers you will reach altitude of 4,300 metres. At these sort of altitudes, Altitude Sickness is a risk. Symptoms may include dizziness, fatigue, nausea and shortness of breath. It is recommended that travellers utilise their first day in high-altitude destinations to acclimatise. To help you acclimatise we have designed our tours to be at a slower pace with more convenience stops and more free time during the first few days. Staying hydrated, eating light meals and following a very light schedule will all help. We recommend that any symptoms that are unusual should be brought to the attention of your National Escort. Your National Escort will be extremely well-trained in dealing with its effects. Serious cases mean that you must descend immediately, are rare. We have adapted the itinerary to make sure that your time at these heights is as relaxed and easy as possible.

There are no specific factors, such as age or fitness, that can cause you to suffer from altitude sickness. This can affect anyone at any time and symptoms may vary. All the hotels that we have selected to use on our programmes provide oxygen free of charge; please ask to use this. There is medication that can help treat and prevent symptoms. Consult a doctor before taking any of these medications, before engaging in strenuous activity at high altitude and regarding any necessary vaccinations in plenty of time before travelling.

EATING IN CHILE:

The diversity of the landscape provides Chile a tremendous amount of produce, meat and seafood, essentially unparalleled in the rest of the world. The unique environments are well represented in Chilean cuisine, being equally as varied. Typical dishes are hearty and filling, containing a combination of meat or seafood and vegetables, often put into a crust. A great example of Chilean cuisine are empanadas, which are fried beef, onion and olive dumplings, served all throughout the country. Others include a thick stew called cazuela de ave and an indigenous recipe of corn and onions cooked in cornhusks called humitas. Because of its long coast, seafood is a staple in many dishes, especially across the centre and south. Chile's supply is funnelled into Spanish-influenced dishes such as marinated shrimp and paella. Meals in Chile are culturally considered as a time for families to gather at home, especially around lunchtime, which is the primary meal of the day.

Your itinerary has been carefully crafted to introduce you to a range of local dishes and we hope that you enjoy the culinary adventure ahead. All meals (excluding drinks) are included in our fully inclusive group tours from dinner on the day of your groups' arrival until breakfast on your day of departure.

Those with dietary requirements will be well catered for - just make sure to inform your booking agent of any specific requirements well in advance of your trip.

All the restaurants we visit will be researched and inspected regularly to ensure that they follow the strictest health, cleanliness, and safety guidelines. All waiting staff will wear face masks and gloves and self-service buffets will be avoided in favour of à la carte dining, waiter-served meals, or waiter-assisted buffets. Hand sanitiser will be provided to the group before and after every food and beverage service.

Whilst we strongly recommend trying as many local dishes as possible, Chile also has a wide range of international dishes and local wines to enjoy.

ACCOMMODATION:

Your accommodation is selected for convenience of location, comfort or character, and can range from corporate hotels to rainforest lodges. Hotels are generally rated as local three to four-star standard, but please note that there is no international classification system for hotels and differences in facilities and quality may exist between New Zealand and Chile. All group tour hotels have private bathroom facilities and air conditioning where needed. If you experience any difficulty, please speak to your National Escort. Rest assured, all hotels used by Wendy Wu Tours are regularly inspected by our staff and our partners to ensure that standards meet your needs.

PORTERAGE:

Please be aware that porterage is not included on our tours in Latin America. You will therefore need to be able to handle your own luggage within the hotel and when using transportation like trains and coaches.

TRANSPORT:

Coaches: Coaches with air conditioning are used on our group tours for city short excursions to the countryside and longer transfers between destinations. Roads in Chile have generally been improved over recent years, but please be aware traffic and/or weather conditions may extend driving times. There may be sections of road where the surface may be comparatively bumpy, but our drivers will do their utmost to lessen the impact.

Planes: Internal flights are based on economy class, with reputable airlines. Within Latin America flights are often changed multiple times before departure, both timings and flight numbers. The utmost care will be taken to ensure that your final documents will have the latest information, however your local guide will confirm this in destination. Boarding passes can be collected directly at the airport. The flights booked as part of your itinerary will always reflect the best timings to suit the touring itinerary, with direct flights wherever possible, however due to limited schedules some flights may require an early departure or late arrival.

SOUVENIRS:

We want to be able to give you an opportunity to buy souvenirs, so we include some stops at museums or exhibitions which demonstrate a craft or product unique to that region with pieces available to buy. We understand that souvenir hunting is not for everyone, so we aim to take you to places, which hold local interest. We trust you will enjoy these opportunities to learn about local arts and crafts and understand their historical and cultural importance.

TIPPING POLICY:

Local tipping is customary in Latin America. However, this can often lead to awkwardness in knowing when it is appropriate to tip and how much, as well as ensuring you have a suitable amount of change available at the time. For your convenience, with years of experiences in providing the best customer service, Wendy Wu Tours operates a kitty system on our Group Tours so your National Escort will look after this aspect of your trip for you. It also ensures that the amounts paid are reasonable for you but still fair for the local people. The amount is stated on each Group Tour page will be advised again on your final documentation. Tipping is in US Dollars and will be collected by your National Escort on arrival and distributed throughout the tour on your behalf. Any additional tipping on any of our tours is welcomed at your discretion. Further guidance for tipping contributions will be outlined in your final documentation.

We generally find that most customers appreciate the convenience of our tipping policy, but we do recognise that it may not suit everyone. However, as this is a group tour, we ask that everyone follows the same protocol to be fair to other group members and to ensure smooth operation of your tour.

PACKING LIST AND CLIMATE:

On this tour, you will be travelling through various regions of Chile with quite diverse climates especially in the Atacama Desert and in the Torres del Paine National Park where all four seasons can be experienced in one trip. It is recommended to bring lots of layers including the following: T Shirts made of breathable materials, hiking trousers with the option to turn into shorts, a fleece jacket for colder parts (during your visit to the Tatio Geysers on Day 6, early morning temperatures may be as low as - 6 degrees celsius) and the evenings and a waterproof jacket as a shell layer or a light rain jacket, a scarf and hat, warm socks., sensible walking shoes and small back pack that fits into your main hand luggage to carry your daily essentials.

Seasonal weather patterns can be quite unpredictable. Up to the minute information on worldwide weather can be found on www.weather.com.

LUGGAGE:

All travellers are limited to two items of luggage each: a suitcase with a maximum weight of 20kg and one piece of hand luggage with a maximum weight of five kilograms. It is essential that your luggage is lockable. Please note that authorities will only allow bottles onto the aircraft if they have been checked in as main baggage. Bottles in hand luggage may be confiscated.

EXCHANGING CASH:

The unit of currency in Chile is the Chilean Peso (CLP) and US Dollars can be easily exchanged in Chile, provided notes are new and undamaged. We suggest exchanging your money before travelling to remote areas and smaller towns, as exchange facilities can be limited. Try and keep some small notes and coins on you, as on street stalls and in small shops they may not have the change to break up a high denomination note. If you decide to use US dollars, make sure they are in a good state (not ripped, etc.) or they will not be accepted. ATMs are common across Chile and we recommend using an ATM inside a bank where possible. Most major credit cards are widely accepted across the continent, though please bear in mind the charges of your provider. Debit cards are also widely accepted but may have a limit to the amount of cash you can withdraw – consult your bank about this before travelling.

PERSONAL EXPENSES AND OPTIONAL TOURINGS:

Personal Expense - You will need to take some extra money to cover drinks, laundry and souvenirs, plus any additional sightseeing that may be offered to you. Based on the advice of previous customers an approximate amount of $600NZD per person, per week should be sufficient; however, for those that can't resist a bargain or may wish to participate in all of the optional excursions, consider allocating a higher amount.

Optional tours may be offered in each city you visit during your tour at an additional cost. These are not included in the standard itinerary and will only be available if time permits. Each option will be arranged locally by your National Escort/Local Guide.

VACCINATIONS AND YOUR HEALTH:

Wendy Wu does not give specific health advice, but we do recommend you see your doctor at least six weeks prior to travel for advice and to allow time for any necessary vaccinations. Please remember to take your itinerary with you. Safe travel has a comprehensive website that you may also find useful www.safetravel.govt.nz

BEFORE YOU LEAVE:

We strongly recommend registering your travel plans with www.safetravel.govt.nz as in the event of an emergency, New Zealand Consular assistance will be more readily available.

Up until the day you travel, it is vital you keep up to date and familiarised with the entry requirements as these can change at short notice. You are personally responsible for completing any entry forms, conducting any covid tests (if necessary), etc and adhering to countries' specific entry requirements. You can also access the New Zealand Government's travel advisory service for up-to-date information about your destination on the same website.

AFTER YOUR BOOKING:

Once you have booked with Wendy Wu Tours, you will receive a confirmation invoice. If a visa is required, our Visa Department will be in touch with the paperwork and next steps. Your final documentation pack will be sent to you approximately 2-3 weeks prior to departure.

Updated: October 2026