



# WELCOME TO CHILE

SURVIVAL

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GUIDE



TEMUCO  
UNIVER  
CIUDAD

WELCOME TO CHILE:  
A SURVIVAL GUIDE

Information material for foreign students  
and trainees coming to Chile

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## ABOUT US

Temuco UniverCiudad is an initiative led by the six main universities in La Araucanía Region: Universidad de La Frontera, Universidad Católica de Temuco, Universidad Autónoma de Chile, Universidad Mayor, Universidad Santo Tomás and Universidad Tecnológica de Chile INACAP. All of these working hand in hand with the Municipality of Temuco and Corparaucanía.

Together in this alliance, our main goal is to transform Temuco into a university city of national and international prestige, covering many development areas. The focus of the International Relations' area is offering more opportunities for Chilean students to go abroad and more information and services for foreign students coming to Chile.

Taking a step forward and wanting to provide more opportunities for students all across the country, we became in 2014 the official and only representative of the International Association for the Exchange of Students for Technical Experience (IAESTE) in Chile. This organisation is present in more than 85 countries around the world and provides traineeship for thousands of students every year.

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for more information



## ABOUT THIS BOOKLET

"Welcome to Chile: A Survival Guide" was created to give foreign students and trainees coming to Chile an insight into the country, as well as some useful tips for your journey in our fascinating territory.

In the following pages you will find travel information, answers to common issues such as money, weather, services, safety and much more. We have also included some cultural tips and many practical details and links to different websites with more information.

Please note that the information contained in this handbook is just a reference, as it is a broad summary of previous students' experiences and other sources. The information presented may thus differ from the current situation, so feel free to contact us if you have any doubts.

We hope you find the information within this publication useful and that you have a great stay in Chile!





## BEFORE THE TRIP

**VISA:** The first thing you need for staying long periods of time in the country is a visa. There are many types and you will need either a student's, trainee's or worker's visa, depending on your country of origin, the total length of your stay and your main activity during your stay. For further information, you can get in touch with us or contact the Chilean embassy or consulates in your country directly. As the visa application may be lengthy, we recommend you do this immediately as soon as you are sure of your student or trainee placement in our country. All Chilean diplomatic offices abroad can be found here: [chile.gob.cl/en/embajadas](http://chile.gob.cl/en/embajadas).

**PACKING YOUR BAGS:** Chile is quite a long country, stretching almost 4.300 km from north to south. Because of this particular geography, the climate in Chile is very diverse, ranging from the desert in the north, to tundra and glaciers up in the Andes and to the far south, subtropical climate in Easter Island, Oceanic in the south and Mediterranean climate in central Chile. So, before you start packing, make sure you check the weather for the city where you'll be staying.



## HEALTH AND SAFETY

**VACCINES:** There are no special vaccinations required when entering the country. To be sure, you can always get in contact with your physician or a specialist before traveling.

**EARTHQUAKES:** You may have heard about it: because of its geography, smaller earthquakes occur very often in Chile. The population is very well prepared for these events and, in most cases, these tremors don't even interrupt the daily routine. However, every now and then, larger earthquakes take place. In case of these major events, make sure you always follow the advice of authorities and the local population.

**DRUGSTORES:** They are commonplace, selling not only medicines but many other goods, ranging from toiletries & hygiene products, cosmetics, food items, non-alcoholic beverages, etc. You can also top up your prepaid phone.

**EMERGENCY NUMBERS:** Toll free nationwide numbers:  
131 Ambulance - 132 Fire Department - 133 Police

**CAUTION:** Mainly in larger cities, beware of pickpockets in crowded areas, tourist sites or bus stations. Don't leave bags, cameras and other valuables unattended.



## MONEY

**CURRENCY & EXCHANGE:** The official currency is the Chilean Peso. There are coins of 1, 5, 10, 50, 100 and 500 pesos and notes of 1000, 2000, 5000, 10000 and 20000 pesos. One Euro is worth about 700 pesos and one US dollar about 650 pesos (as of January 2017). You can exchange money in banks, although we recommend you do this at exchange offices (casas de cambio) - and of course never on the street or other informal locations. Be sure to bring either US-Dollars or Euros, all other currencies may not be accepted for exchange in many places. Outside of the larger cities, currency exchange can be difficult or even non-existent.

**WITHDRAWALS:** ATMs are found in almost every bank and also in many supermarkets, drugstores and shopping malls. Be aware that many international card holders are charged a small fee for every time they withdrawal money from a Chilean ATM. Money withdrawn in Chilean ATMs is always in local currency.

**CREDIT CARDS:** Visa and MasterCard are commonly accepted, even in many small shops.





## ARRIVING IN CHILE

**CUSTOMS AND FORMALITIES:** You can find updated information on custom and other regulations in the following website: <http://chile.gob.cl/en/sobre-chile/informacion-turistica/condiciones-de-seguridad/>

**INTO THE CITY:** If you are coming to Chile by plane, your arrival will most likely be at Santiago's International Airport: Arturo Merino Benítez. If you are then travelling to other cities, there are several ways to proceed. In Chile, the main long distance travels are done by either plane or bus, depending on how far your destination is and how much money are you willing to spend getting there. If you are travelling by plane, just proceed to the national flights section of the airport. If you are travelling by bus or train, you'll need to go to the bus terminals or train station, all located in the center of Santiago. You can get there by taking an airport bus (cheapest option at around \$1,700 CLP (2.5 USD), a shuttle or transfer or a taxi. If you choose this last one be sure to take one of the official airport taxis only. Taking a taxi is the most expensive option - between \$13,000 CLP (20 USD) and \$40,000 CLP (60 USD), depending on your destination within the city, time of day and traffic - but the fastest and most comfortable one.



## CONTINUING YOUR TRIP

**PLANE:** By far the fastest, but at the same time, the most expensive option - although since recently you can find very good deals when booking tickets online in advance (in some cases even cheaper than buses!). For travels within the country, all you need is a valid passport. The two main airlines in Chile are Latam airlines (previously known as Lan) and Sky Airline. Destinations and tickets can be found on their websites, <https://www.latam.com> and [www.skyairline.cl](http://www.skyairline.cl) respectively. There are some other smaller airlines covering mainly regional flights. There are about 18 major airports in Chile servicing the biggest cities north to south, as well as Easter Island.

**TRAIN:** There is also a small working rail system, but it just covers some cities in central Chile (as well as some short specific routes in the south) and it tends to be more expensive and have longer travel times than buses. Do not expect the same quality service as European or other country's railway system though! Further information and tickets here: <http://www.trencentral.cl/> (only available in Spanish!).



## WHAT ABOUT THE BUS?

This is the most used mean of transportation in Chile (for both locals and tourists), with daily regular services to almost every city, town, and even remote villages across the country.

If your destination is far away, be prepared for a really long trip! There are many options, ranging from smaller buses with not much leg space, to regular buses, to luxury first class seats. Many bus lines now include on-board services like snacks, films, plugs and free wi-fi. For long haul trips (+ 6 hours) you should pay a bit more and buy better seats. For many bus lines, you can buy the tickets online in advance (although for many booking websites you will need a Chilean ID number!), or you can get them directly at bus terminals. Information on bus lines and online booking for many of them can be found here: <http://omnilineas.cl/companies/index.html>.

In buses, you can get more luggage than allowed on a plane. By regulation you can take 1 or 2 bags up to 30 kg., but in reality, luggage is never weighted and you can see people taking (much) more than 2 regular sized bags.



## AFTER YOUR ARRIVAL

**VISA REGISTRATION:** After your arrival in your final destination, you will have 30 days to register (stamp) your visa. You must do this at the office Departamento de Extranjería y Policía Internacional (Immigration Department & International Police) in your city. To do this, you must bring to that office your passport, visa and the stamped country entry document.

**CHILEAN ID:** Once you've registered your visa, you will receive a document called: Certificado de Registro de Visa (Visa registry certificate). You must bring this document, as well as your passport to the offices of the Servicio de Registro Civil e Identificación (Civil Registry Office) to receive your Cédula de identidad (Chilean ID card). This formality takes about 15 days, and afterwards you'll have to go again to the Civil Registry Office to retrieve your ID.

For further information on any of these legal formalities you can check the Ministry of Foreign Affairs' website here:

[http://www.minrel.gob.cl/minrel/site/edic/base/port/servicios\\_eng.html](http://www.minrel.gob.cl/minrel/site/edic/base/port/servicios_eng.html)





## LOCAL PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

**SUBWAY:** Only in Santiago (Metro). It is one of the most modern in Latin America and the second largest. A large part of the city is covered by this service and it is one of the main means of transportation in the city, which also accounts for very crowded peak hours. You can buy a single ride ticket (for around 1 USD) or buy a BIP card, prepaid card for all transportation in the capital.

**URBAN TRAINS:** Only in the central region (Metrotrén), Concepción (Biotrén) and Valparaíso (Merval). Commuter rail service connecting suburbs and nearby locations.

**"MICROS":** Small buses with defined routes and inexpensive prices. They reach almost every corner in towns and cities. Be aware that you should be able to speak at least some Spanish when you take these buses, since normally the driver won't speak English and you usually will need to tell him/her where you want to get off. You pay for the ride directly to the bus driver when you get on, have cash ready (coins). Pros: The cheapest way to move around the city and it covers large parts or all of it. Cons: The slowest option, especially on peak hours. You cannot bring on large bags or luggage. The service works generally between 06.00 and 23.00 hrs. in big cities.



## MORE LOCAL TRANSPORTATION

**"COLECTIVOS"**: A car, like a taxi, that has a defined route and more people get on and off, like a bus. They are generally black with a yellow registration plate and a big sign on the roof. You can get on in bus stops or, more commonly, hail one as you would a taxi. They work 24 hrs., although the frequency during night-time may be low. You pay the driver directly and you tell him/her where you want to get off. Much faster than buses and you can carry luggage and larger bags at no extra cost.

**TAXIS**: They are either a) black with a yellow roof or b) deep blue, with no other roof color. Some have the taxi sign on the roof, some in the windshield, and others not at all. In any case, you can recognize them for their distinctive orange registration plate with black or white letters. Always check that the driver starts the taximeter and try to avoid them when the traffic is heavy.

**OTHERS**: Since recently, there has been an increase in private transportation apps such as Uber and Cabify. However, they are only available in some major cities. Another way to get around in bigger cities is by bike, some cities have decent bike path networks, check them out here: <http://www.bicineta.cl/rutas>



## SERVICES AND MORE

**COMMUNICATIONS:** If you are staying in Chile for a longer period, we suggest you buy either a phone or a Chilean SIM-card for your own phone. You can buy these in many stores and even in larger supermarkets, either as prepaid or contract plan. The country dial code is +56.

**OPENING TIMES:** Shops open from 9 or 10 am until 20.00 or 21.00 hrs, except for restaurants and cinemas that stay open until later. On Sunday, many stores are closed, as well as public services that close for the whole weekend. Supermarkets open daily at around 8.30 or 9 am, even on weekends and many holidays. Banks open Monday to Friday from 9 am to 2 pm and close on public holidays.

**COST OF LIVING:** In Chile, the cost of living is not particularly cheap, being one of the most expensive countries in Latin-America. However, most things are cheaper than in Europe or North America. Prices can also vary within the country: touristic cities or remote places tend to be more expensive. You can check and compare the prices for different cities here:

<https://www.numbeo.com/cost-of-living/>

A quite accurate culture guide can be found here:

<http://www.commisceo-global.com/country-guides/chile-guide>



# CHILE



# CHILE (CONT'D)









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