

## Chile: Coastal Vistas & Vineyards

### Bike Vacation Only

This unique Chile cycling vacation includes a region most bike tours miss—the coast! As you spin along sunny Chilean shores, you'll discover a wealth of South American marine life during a boating excursion with a local fisherman. Your local VBT trip leaders will introduce you to the colorful coastal city of Valparaíso—with its brightly-painted buildings and vibrant street art. Turning inland, you'll spin through the Valle de Casablanca, famous for its fine white wines, and enjoy a tasting at the innovative Kingston Family Winery. Cycle through the Valle dei Maipo—then receive a royal welcome from our friends at the sumptuous Santa Rita Vineyards. As you enjoy the amenities of this opulent estate, you'll experience a unique wine-tasting workshop, in which an experienced Chilean sommelier helps you uncover the secrets of your own palate.

### Cultural Highlights

- Marvel at Humboldt penguins and sea lions as they lounge on islands just offshore.
- Join a captain in his small boat and help him bring in the catch of the day.
- Admire the pride of Viña del Mar, the Reloj de Flores—a large clock made of flowers.
- Stroll the cobbled, winding streets of hillside Valparaíso, a UNESCO World Heritage site, with a local guide.
- Blend your own wine with a sommelier, then have it bottled and labeled to go.

### What to Expect

This tour features easy terrain and short-mileage rides, making it ideal for beginning cyclists. For more avid riders, longer mileage options with easy-to-moderate terrain are available in the afternoons. Many of the scenic coastal routes follow primary roads that may have traffic. Our VBT support vehicle is always available for those who would like assistance with hills or prefer to avoid sections with heavier traffic. To provide a variety of scenery and ride experiences, this tour includes a fair amount of travel time. Drive times range from 1.5 to 2.5 hours, and some rides require shuttle transfers of 30 to 45 minutes to reach the starting or ending points.

**Tour Duration:** 7 Days

**Average Daily Mileage:** 11-34 miles

**Average Cycling Time:** 1-4 hours

**Group size:** 14-20 max

## Climate Information

### Average High/Low Temperature (°F)

January 85°/54°, February 84°/53°, March 80°/49°, April 72°/45°, October 71°/45°, November 77°/48°

### Average Rainfall (in.)

January 0, February 0.1, March 0.2, April 0.5, October 0.5, November 0.2

## DAY 1: Your VBT Vacation Begins / Warm-Up Ride / Travel to Pacific Coast / Welcome Reception and Dinner in Zapallar

Meet one of your VBT trip leaders at our Santiago pre-tour hotel—The Singular Santiago—at 8:45 a.m. When you depart this morning, be dressed in your cycling attire for the warm-up ride.

You'll shuttle (approximately 1.5 hours) to the starting point of your ride, where you meet your second trip leader. Leaving behind the hustle and bustle of Santiago, travel northwest toward the Pacific Coast. As you cross the coastal mountain range, you'll pass through Chile's agricultural heartland. The region's Mediterranean-like climate is perfect for growing avocados, peaches, walnuts, olives, almonds, citrus fruits, export flowers, and, of course, grapes for Chile's celebrated wines.

Begin your Chile bike tour with a warm-up ride through this fertile countryside along a scenic, seldom-traveled country road. After your ride and lunch, continue with a one-hour shuttle to the quaint coastal fishing town of Zapallar and your charming inn overlooking the Pacific.

This evening, gather for a cocktail reception followed by a delicious welcome dinner at the hotel.

### Today's Ride Choices

Morning: Warm-Up Ride — 19.9 km (12 miles)

### What to Expect:

Today's warm-up ride offers the perfect opportunity to get familiar with your bike as you pedal along fairly level country roads with minimal traffic. While you may encounter occasional uphill climbs and stretches with slightly more traffic, this ride serves as a great introduction and preview of the cycling experiences to come on this tour.

Cumulative Distance Range: 19.9 km (12 miles)

Included Meals: Lunch, Dinner

## DAY 2: Playas Salinas de Pullally / Papudo

Following breakfast, set out on a morning ride along Chile's scenic *Ruta del Mar*—the Route of the Sea. Enjoy sweeping coastal vistas as you pedal along the country's central shoreline. Later, turn off the *Ruta del Mar* and follow a narrow, paved road past small farms to Playas Salinas de Pullally. This beautiful beach, named for the salt dunes that once attracted indigenous populations, is now a refuge for surfers and kayakers. There will be time to explore before enjoying your included boxed lunch.

After lunch, cycle along a quiet rural road with gentle terrain before shuttling back to your hotel (approximately 40 minutes). If you're looking for more mileage, you may choose to ride a longer, scenic route back to the hotel.

This afternoon, unwind by the hotel's pool or stroll down a hillside path through towering pines to the seaside *Rambla*—a series of coastal stone walkways winding around massive boulders. Nearby, a popular beach invites you to join local residents sunbathing and swimming in the calm waters of a horseshoe-shaped cove.

This evening, dine at your leisure at the inn's small restaurant or on its outdoor terrace. Alternatively, take a walk along the scenic *Rambla* to a nearby seaside restaurant and savor freshly caught seafood.

### Today's Ride Choices

Morning: Zapallar to Las Salinas de Pullally Beach — 33.2 km (20 miles)

Afternoon: Las Salinas de Pullally with Shuttle to Zapallar — 10 km (6 miles) OR Las Salinas de Pullally to Zapallar — 22.8 km (14 miles)

### What to Expect:

The first part of today's ride follows a gently rolling route. After passing through Papudo, you'll encounter one final gradual climb before the terrain flattens out all the way to the beach and the end of the short option. The long option includes a few ascents, making the return ride to the hotel more challenging. Please note: during the summer months of January and February, heavy traffic is common along the coastal *Ruta del Mar*, which may result in longer travel times and less favorable riding conditions for

those choosing the extended afternoon ride.

Cumulative Distance Range: 33.2 – 56 km (20 – 34 miles)

Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch

## **DAY 3: Zapallar and Cachagua by Bike / Humboldt Penguins / Fisherman's Catch / Travel to Concón**

This morning, set off by bicycle to explore Zapallar, a quaint seaside town known for its historic mansions. The village was established over a century ago by a wealthy Chilean who envisioned a modest South American version of the French Riviera. He offered plots of land to affluent friends and relatives on the condition that they build within a couple of years—an offer they gladly accepted. Today, descendants of those original families still own many of the homes, and only the very wealthy can afford to live in what some call “The Hamptons of Chile.” The town is now home to lavish estates with immaculate flower gardens.

Despite its exclusivity, Zapallar retains the timeless charm of the old world, as you'll see while cycling from your hotel to its small fishing port. Here, fishermen continue to work much as they have for centuries. Experience this seafaring tradition firsthand as you venture out to sea with a local captain in his small boat. On the open water, you'll help collect traps containing crab—and perhaps even the rare rock shrimp, found only in these waters.

Back on land, continue riding through the town's winding streets, lined with cypress and eucalyptus trees, and stop by Hildesheim—one of Zapallar's most iconic homes. Named after a German town, this charming structure is a faithful replica of a 16th-century Bavarian house.

Next, ride to Cachagua, a small seaside town south of Zapallar known for its Humboldt penguins. Years ago, injured or lost migrating penguins began washing up on the shores of a nearby island. Local residents stepped in to protect and feed them, and the delightful creatures have since become a cherished fixture—one of the few remaining Humboldt penguin colonies in South America. Today, the island is a protected national park, home to thousands of Humboldt penguins and other bird species. Your ride brings you to Cachagua Beach, the best vantage point for viewing this tiny offshore sanctuary. Don't forget your binoculars for a closer look!

Continue cycling south to reach Maitencillo, a scenic haven for surfers, paragliders, cyclists, joggers, and

skaters. Stop here for lunch on your own and the chance to sample *helado* (ice cream) or a *cerveza* (beer) from one of the many beachside kiosks. Later, shuttle (approximately one hour) south along the Pacific Coast Highway to your next destination: Concón. Your unique seaside accommodations—partially built into massive stone boulders—offer spectacular views of the ocean and crashing waves below.

This evening, enjoy dinner on your own at one of Concón's marina restaurants or opt for seaside dining at your hotel.

### Today's Ride Choices

Morning: Zapallar to Maitencillo Beach — 19.8 km (12 miles)

### What to Expect:

Today's rides take you along the small neighborhood roads of Zapallar and Cachagua. Some roads in Cachagua are packed dirt but are generally manageable on road bikes. The ride to Maitencillo includes a gradual, sustained uphill.

Cumulative Distance Range: 19.8 km (12 miles)

Included Meals: Breakfast

## DAY 4: Viña del Mar / Valparaíso Walking Tour

Enjoy a leisurely morning ride from your hotel, pedaling along a scenic coastal route to a site where sea lions—fed and protected by the Marine Biology University of Valparaíso—can be seen sunbathing on offshore rocks. Don't forget your binoculars for a closer look. Later, cycle into Reñaca Beach, one of the most popular beaches in Viña del Mar, and take time to explore the area before biking back to the hotel. Along the way, you'll pass the towering dunes of Concón—an ideal photo opportunity.

This afternoon, shuttle approximately 45 minutes to Viña del Mar, one of Chile's most vibrant cultural centers. This charming town, set against a spectacular coastal backdrop, is known as the "Garden City"—a name you'll understand when you see the *Reloj de Flores*, a large clock made entirely of flowering plants. From here, board the local metro for a short ride to the neighboring city of Valparaíso.

Valparaíso, a major Chilean port, was once a key stopover for 19th-century ships sailing from the Atlantic

to the Pacific via the Straits of Magellan. It also played a vital role during the California Gold Rush of the 1850s. Today, Valparaíso is a UNESCO World Heritage site, recognized for its unique urban layout and colorful hillside architecture. During your walking tour, you'll explore its cobblestone alleyways and distinctive neighborhoods. There will also be time to browse local boutiques and art galleries before enjoying dinner on your own at one of the city's many restaurants overlooking the port.

### Today's Ride Choices

Morning: Concón Loop — 18.8 km (11 miles)

### What to Expect:

Today's easy, leisurely loop ride along a two-lane seaside road begins and ends at your hotel. The route is entirely flat and offers several scenic coastal viewpoints—perfect for photo opportunities.

Cumulative Distance Range: 18.8 km (11 miles)

Included Meals: Breakfast

## **DAY 5: Casablanca Wine Valley / Kingston Family Winery Picnic Lunch and Wine Tastings**

This morning, leave the cool coastal climate and travel inland for approximately one hour to the Casablanca Wine Region. Although relatively new to viticulture—the first vines were planted in the 1980s—this scenic valley is now renowned for its white wine grapes, particularly Sauvignon Blanc and Chardonnay. Your ride today follows shaded roads through eucalyptus forests and offers expansive views of vineyards and olive groves. You'll be rewarded with a tasting of regional wines and a sumptuous picnic lunch at the fifth-generation American-Chilean Kingston Family Winery.

After lunch, continue inland to the foothills of the Andes (travel time approximately two hours, depending on traffic). Your home for the next two nights is the regal Hotel Casa Real. Surrounded by the Santa Rita vineyards, this estate has been producing wine since 1880. With only 16 luxurious rooms, the Tuscan-inspired villa will be exclusively yours.

After settling into your accommodations, enjoy a welcome reception on Casa Real's veranda, followed by an elegant candlelit dinner in the villa's intimate dining room.

## Today's Ride Choices

Morning: Casablanca Valley — 20.3 km (12 miles) | Casablanca Valley PLUS — 18 km (11 miles)

## What to Expect:

Today's short option is mostly flat and very easy, while the longer option includes a few short inclines and a fun ride through a eucalyptus forest.

Cumulative Distance Range: 20.3 — 38.3 km (12 — 23 miles)

Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

## DAY 6: Andean Foothills / Santa Rita Vineyards / Winemaking / Chilean Barbecue Farewell Dinner

After breakfast, begin your ride through the scenic Santa Rita Vineyards. This morning's route follows quiet country roads lined with magnificent, ancient trees. Along the way, you'll pass local farmers in ponchos, many of whom still travel by horseback. Feel free to stop and sample delicious *pan amasado* (homemade bread) and fresh *empanadas* (savory turnovers) as you make your way to the village of Champa. Shuttle or continue riding back to Casa Real, where you'll enjoy a picnic lunch in the villa's beautiful gardens.

Later, you may visit the impressive Museo Andino (Andean Museum), located just steps away in the vineyard. The museum showcases more than 1,800 pieces of art and artifacts from various Andean cultures, as well as items from Easter Island and the Atacama Desert. You might also opt for a swim in the pool or a stroll through the expansive gardens, where you can admire the second-tallest bougainvillea in the world. Or, walk through the Santa Rita vineyards to the monument marking the rediscovery of the "lost Carmenere grape."

In 1863, the phylloxera aphid devastated Europe's vineyards, wiping out grapevines by 1870. Though European *vinifera* was later revived through grafting onto American rootstock, the Carmenere grape was thought to be extinct—until its surprising rediscovery in 1994 here in the Santa Rita vineyards.

Later, enjoy a hands-on wine blending session with a Santa Rita sommelier. Learn the art of balancing varietals and create your own custom blend, which will be bottled and labeled for you to take home.

This evening, celebrate your unforgettable week with a traditional Chilean barbecue on the lovely patio of Casa Real (weather permitting).

#### Today's Ride Choices

Morning: Santa Rita Vineyard to Champa — 29.1 km (18 miles) | Champa to Santa Rita Vineyard — 32.6 km (20 miles)

#### What to Expect:

Both the short and long options are mostly flat and very easy.

Cumulative Distance Range: 29.1 – 61.7 km (18 – 38 miles)

Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

## **DAY 7: Travel to Santiago / Historical City Center Walking Tour / Your VBT Vacation Ends**

After an included breakfast this morning, travel approximately 45 minutes to Santiago for a guided walking tour of the city's historic center. Following the tour and lunch on your own, continue to the Santiago Airport, where your tour concludes at 3:00 p.m.

Important: Departure flights before 6:00 p.m. are not recommended. If you have an earlier flight, you will need to arrange your own transportation to the airport.

Please note: VBT transportation times and departure points are finalized in advance and cannot be modified for individual guests.

Included Meals: Breakfast

## **Accommodations**

May vary depending on departure date.



### **Hotel Isla Seca Zapallar (Days 1-2)**

Hotel Isla Seca Zapallar is a unique, European-style boutique hotel designed to reflect the history of the city. This 4-star luxury property has stunning ocean views and offers first-class service. The hotel's restaurant has an exquisite menu prepared from fresh and local ingredients. Rooms are decorated in a classic and cozy style; 400-thread-count cotton sheets, lush pillows, and French amenities are just a few of the special touches you'll enjoy. The hotel's location puts you a short walk away from the nearby coastal path that leads to Zapallar's beautiful swimming beach. Note that the Hotel Isla Seca Zapallar is not air-conditioned.

### **Radisson Acqua Concon Hotel & Spa (Days 3-4)**

The Radisson Acqua Concón Hotel & Spa enjoys a stunning location, set among dramatic seaside boulders. Attractive sea-view rooms are generously outfitted with all the modern amenities, including complimentary WiFi, flat-screen televisions, free bottled water, and spacious desks. The hotel's roof terrace offers outdoor sunbathing by its intimate pool. On cooler days, enjoy the indoor pool carved into the hotel's rock foundation. During your stay, treat yourself at the Acqua Spa, soothe body and mind with an indoor seawater pool, and indulge in a selection of massage services, beauty techniques, and skin treatments. Note that the Radisson Acqua Concón Hotel & Spa is not air-conditioned.

### **Casa Real (Days 5-6)**

This Tuscan-inspired hotel is nestled in a beautiful natural environment. Located in the heart of a century-old, 120-acre (49-hectare) park, the regal hacienda was once the manor house of the Santa Rita Winery and is imbued with its history and traditions. The park boasts the second-tallest bougainvillea in the world, as well as numerous gardens and paths for tranquil walks. You might also relax in the small swimming pool and pool house. The hacienda's small chapel was restored by a craftsman from the Vatican's Sistine Chapel. As the villa has just 16 rooms, your group has the entire place to itself. Note that the Hotel Casa Real is not air-conditioned.