

## Chile: Coastal Vistas & Vineyards

### Bike Vacation + Air Package

Central Chile is a cyclist's paradise. Sweeping coastlines rise to Andean hills. The spectacular Route of the Sea leads to quaint fishing villages. And lush vineyards produce world-renowned wines. The snow-capped Andes preside over this magnificent itinerary, from the elegant estates of Zapallar and dramatic setting of seaside Valparaíso to the pastoral viniculture of the Casablanca Valley. From Pacific byways where penguins and sea lions reside, to inland foothills, you'll discover the passionate Chilean spirit – in the warm hospitality you'll experience as you set out to sea with a local fisherman, create your own wine blend with an expert sommelier, visit a fifth-generation winery and savor seaside spas, an historic wine hacienda and comfortable inns. This is a Chile bike tour like no other!

### 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

Discover the elegant mansions of Zapallar during a leisurely spin through the "French Riviera of South America"

Savor freshly caught seafood expertly prepared throughout your trip

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

Meet fifth-generation vintners over lunch at a Chilean winery and sample their wines

Blend your own wine with a sommelier, then have it bottled and labelled to go

Indulge all your senses during a guided walk through Santiago's colorful La Vega Central Market

### What to Expect

This tour offers easy terrain and short mileage rides throughout, and is ideal for beginner cyclists. Longer mileage options with easy-to-moderate terrain offer fun for more avid bikers with rides in the afternoons.

Many of the scenic coastal rides are on primary roads (Ruta del Mar coastal highway) with traffic.

Coastal traffic can be especially busy during Chile's summer months of January thru February.

**IMPORTANT NOTE:** Guests who prefer less traffic should consider travelling during the LOW Season months of October thru December and later in March and April. Our VBT support shuttle is always available for those who would like assistance with hills or do not feel comfortable with some of the more heavily trafficked roads. In order to provide a variety of scenery and rides, there is considerable shuttle transfer time required on this tour. Transfers can range from 45 minutes to 2.5 hours.

**Tour Duration:** 9 Days

**Average Daily Mileage:** 11 - 34

**Average Cycling Time:** 01:00 - 04:00

## Climate Information

### Average High/Low Temperature (°F)

Jan 85°/54°, Feb 84°/53°, Mar 80°/49°, Apr 72°/45°, Oct 71°/45°, Nov 77°/48°

### Average Rainfall (in.)

Jan 0, Feb 0.1, Mar 0.2, Apr 0.5, Oct 0.5, Nov 0.2

## DAY 1: Depart home / Fly overnight to Santiago

Depart home for Chile. The particulars of your arrival overseas are detailed with your flight itinerary.

## DAY 2: Arrive in Santiago

Upon arrival at Santiago's International Airport, proceed to immigration for passport control. You will be given an immigration document that you will need to keep with your passport during your stay in Chile. Upon departing Chile, you must return this document to the immigration officer, as it is an official means of monitoring your entry/departure dates in Chile. After clearing immigration, claim your luggage and clear customs. Please note that Chile is very strict with the importation of any fruits or vegetables and imposes strict fines for illegal importation of food items, so ensure that you have eaten or disposed of any foods prior to clearing customs.

If your luggage is lost or delayed, fill out a PIR form before leaving the customs area—VBT representatives are not allowed in the customs area. Make certain your VBT luggage tags are affixed to your bag so your VBT representative can identify you as you enter the arrival hall. Your VBT representative will be holding a VBT sign and will help you transfer via van (approximately 30 to 45 minutes, depending on traffic) to your centrally located hotel in Santiago. If for some reason you cannot find your VBT representative, please ask the airport information desk to assist you in calling the VBT transfer company for assistance. The transfer company is Turismo Sikleta and the 24-hour emergency telephone number is (+56) 9 95450529.

VBT provides you with City Information that includes recommendations on what to see and do in Santiago. You have the rest of the day free to relax or explore. Just a block away, the city's verdant urban park, the Parque Forestal, provides footpaths along the Mapocho River should you want to stretch your

legs after your journey.

Accommodation: The Singular Santiago, Santiago

Included Meals: Breakfast

## **DAY 3: Warm-up ride / Transfer to Pacific Coast / Welcome reception and dinner in Zapallar**

Meet one of your VBT trip leaders at The Singular Santiago hotel at 8:45 a.m. When you depart the hotel this morning, please be dressed in your cycling attire for your warm-up ride. You shuttle (approximately 1-1/2 hours) to the starting point of your ride, where you meet your second trip leader.

Leave the hustle and bustle of the Santiago metropolitan area and shuttle northwest toward the Pacific Coast. Crossing the coastal mountain range, you travel through the agricultural heartland of Chile. The Mediterranean-like climate of the central region is ideal for growing avocados, peaches, walnuts, olives, almonds, citrus fruits, flowers for export and, of course, grapes for producing the country's excellent wines. Begin your Chile bike tour with a warm-up ride traversing this farmland on a scenic and seldom-traveled country road. Following your ride and lunch, continue your journey with a shuttle (approximately 1 hour) to the quaint coastal fishing town of Zapallar and your charming inn overlooking the Pacific.

You meet tonight for a cocktail reception before enjoying a delicious welcome dinner at the hotel.

Today's Ride Choice:

Cumulative Distance Range: 19.9 km (12 miles)

*Morning*

Warm-up: 19.9 km (12 miles)

**What to Expect:** The warm-up ride will give you the opportunity to become familiar with your bike as you ride fairly level country roads with little traffic. There will be an occasional uphill climb and some roads with more traffic than others, but today's ride will be a great introduction and provide a preview of the upcoming rides on this tour.

Accommodation: Hotel Isla Seca Zapallar, Zapallar

Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

## **DAY 4: Playas Salinas de Pullally / Papudo**

Following breakfast, set out on a morning ride along Chile's scenic *Ruta del Mar*, or Route of the Sea. Enjoy marvelous vistas as you pedal along Chile's central coast. Later, turn off the Ruta del Mar and

follow a narrow, paved road past small farms to Playas Salinas de Pullally. This beautiful beach was named for the salt dunes that attracted indigenous populations in the past. Today the beach is a refuge to surfers and kayakers. There'll be time to explore before you enjoy your included box lunch.

Following lunch, cycle on an easy, quiet rural road before shuttling back to your hotel (approximately 40 minutes). Those looking for a longer ride this afternoon may return to the hotel via a rewarding scenic route.

This afternoon, relax in the hotel's pool or venture down a hillside path through tall pines to walk along the seaside Rambla, a series of coastal stone walkways built around giant boulders. Nearby, there's a popular beach where you may join local residents sunbathing and swimming in the calm waters of a horseshoe-shaped cove.

This evening, enjoy dinner at your leisure at your inn's small restaurant or on the outside terrace. Or you may opt to walk along the scenic Rambla to a seaside restaurant where you may sample freshly caught seafood.

Today's Ride Choices:

Cumulative Distance Range: 33.2, 43.2 or 56 km (20, 26 or 34 miles)

*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)

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, there's one last gradual climb. Then the ride becomes flat all the way to the beach and to the end of the short option. The long option includes a few ascents which make the ride back to the hotel bit challenging. Please note: there is typically heavy traffic on the coastal Ruta del Mar during the summer months of January and February. This may cause longer transfer times and less desirable riding conditions for guests choosing the longer afternoon ride.

Accommodation: Hotel Isla Seca Zapallar, Zapallar

Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch

## **DAY 5: Zapallar and Cachagua by bike / Humboldt Penguins / Fisherman's Catch / Transfer to Concón**

This morning, you set off on your bicycle to explore Zapallar, a quaint seaside town of historic mansions. The village was settled more than 100 years ago by an affluent Chilean who wanted to develop a modest South American version of the French Riviera. He offered land to his affluent friends and relatives on the condition that they build within a couple years, which they gladly did. Descendants of the original families still own many of the homes, but only the very rich can afford to live in what some have called “The Hamptons of Chile.” Today, this elite town boasts lavish estates with impeccable flower gardens.

Still, Zapallar boasts the timeless charms of the old world, as you will see for yourself as you cycle from your hotel to its small fishing port. Fishermen still work as they have for centuries here. Experience the seafaring tradition firsthand when you venture out to sea with a captain in his small boat. Out on the open water, you help collect traps with crab and possibly the rare rock shrimp found only in these waters. Back on land, continue cycling amid the winding streets lined with cypress and eucalyptus trees, stopping by one of the most famous houses, *Hildesheim*, named after a German town. This charming building is a perfect replica of a 16th-century Bavarian house.

Next, ride to Cachagua, a small seaside town south of Zapallar famous for its Humboldt penguins. Years ago, after lost or injured migrating penguins started showing up on the shores of a nearby island, concerned residents started protecting and feeding them. Since then, the delightful creatures have become a prized fixture—one of the few Humboldt penguin communities left in South America. Today, the unspoiled island sanctuary is one of Chile’s treasured national parks and home to thousands of Humboldt penguins and other birds. Your afternoon ride delivers you to the Cachagua beach that offers the best views of this tiny island just offshore. Don’t forget your binoculars for a more up-close observation.

Continue cycling south to reach Maitencillo, a scenic haven for surfers, paragliders, cyclists, joggers, and skaters. Stop for lunch on your own and a chance to sample *helado*, ice cream, or a *cerveza*, beer, from one of the many local kiosks on the beach. Later, shuttle south (approximately 1 hour) along the Pacific Coast highway to your next destination, Concón. The unique situation of your seaside accommodations—partially built into huge stone boulders—provides the rooms with spectacular views of the ocean and the crashing waves below.

Dine on your own by the marina of Concón or enjoy seaside dining at your hotel.

Today’s Ride Choice:

Cumulative Distance Range: 19.8 km (12 miles)

*Morning*

Zapallar to Maitencillo Beach: 19.8 km (12 miles)

What to Expect: Today's rides will be on the small neighborhood roads of Zapallar and Cachagua. Some of the neighborhood roads in Cachagua are packed dirt but should not pose a problem for road bikes. The ride to Maitencillo features a gradual but long uphill.

Accommodation: Radisson Acqua Hotel & Spa Concón, Concón

Included Meals: Breakfast

## DAY 6: Viña del Mar / Valparaíso walking tour

Take a leisurely morning ride from your hotel this morning. Enjoy the sound of the crashing waves as you cycle along a lovely coastal route to a site where sea lions—fed and protected by the Marine Biology University of Valparaíso—sunbathe on offshore rocks. Don't forget your binoculars for more interesting observation. Later, pedal into Reñaca beach, one of the famous beaches of Viña del Mar, and explore the area before biking back to the hotel. Along today's route, you pass the magnificent towering dunes of Concón, a terrific photo opportunity.

Later this afternoon, shuttle approximately 45 minutes to one of Chile's most vibrant cultural centers, Viña del Mar. This lovely town with a spectacular coastal setting is known as the "Garden City," as you'll understand upon seeing the Reloj de Flores—a large clock made of flowering plants. From here, you board the local metro to the next town, Valparaíso.

Valparaíso is a major Chilean port and was a popular stopover for late-19th-century ships sailing from the Atlantic to the Pacific Ocean through the Straits of Magellan. The city also supported and supplied the California Gold Rush of the 1850s. Declared a UNESCO World Heritage site due to its unique urban design and distinctive architecture, its cobblestone alleyways and hillside buildings are the focus of your walking tour today. There'll be time to browse the tiny boutiques and art galleries and to enjoy dinner on your own in one of the restaurants overlooking the port.

Today's Ride Choice:

Cumulative Distance Range: 18.8 km (11 miles)

*Morning*

Concón Loop: 18.8 km (11 miles)

What to Expect: Today's easy leisurely loop ride on the two-lane seaside road begins and ends at your hotel. The entire ride is flat and provides several coastal viewpoints for photo opportunities.

Accommodation: Radisson Acqua Hotel & Spa Concón, Concón

Included Meals: Breakfast

## DAY 7: Casablanca Wine Valley / Kingston Family Winery picnic lunch and wine tastings

This morning, you leave the cool coastal climate and travel inland approximately 1 hour to the Casablanca Wine Region. The valley is relatively new to wine growing; its grapes were planted as recently as the 1980s. This scenic area is widely known for its white wine grapes, especially Sauvignon Blanc and Chardonnay. Your ride today traces shaded roads through eucalyptus forests to expansive vistas of vineyards and olive groves. You'll be rewarded with a tasting of some of the region's 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 (transfer time approximately 2 hours, depending upon traffic). Your home for the next two nights is the regal Hotel Casa Real. Surrounded by the Santa Rita vineyards, the family here has been making wine since 1880. With only 16 luxurious rooms, this Tuscan-inspired villa will be exclusively yours.

After settling into your accommodations, you are treated to a welcome reception on Casa Real's veranda, followed by a gracious candlelit dinner served in the villa's intimate dining room.

Today's Ride Choices:

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

*Morning*

Casablanca Valley: 20.3 km (12 miles)

Casablanca Valley Plus: 18 km (11 miles)

What to Expect: Today's short option is mainly flat and very easy, while the longer option includes some short inclines and a fun ride through a eucalyptus forest.

Accommodation: Hotel Casa Real, Santiago

Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

## DAY 8: Andean foothills / Santa Rita Vineyards / Wine making / Chilean barbecue farewell dinner

After breakfast, begin your ride through the Santa Rita Vineyards. Your scenic morning follows country roads flanked by magnificent ancient trees. Pass local farmers in their ponchos, many still using horses as their means of transportation. Feel free to stop and sample delicious *pan amado*, homemade bread,

and fresh *empanadas*, savory turnovers, along the way to the village of Champa. Shuttle or continue riding back to Casa Real where you will enjoy a picnic lunch in the lovely Casa Real gardens.

Later, you may tour the impressive Museo Andino, or Andean Museum, located just steps away in the vineyard. The museum houses more than 1,800 pieces of art from several Andean cultures, as well as artifacts from as far away as Easter Island and the Atacama Desert. Perhaps enjoy a relaxing 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 where the “lost Carmenere grape” was recently discovered. In 1863, the phylloxera aphid invaded European vineyards, destroying all the grapes by 1870. However, European vinifera was grafted to American rootstock, which was impervious to the insect, and eventually the European vineyards bounced back. The Carmenere grape was thought to be lost forever until it was discovered in 1994, here in Santa Rita’s vineyards.

Later, learn about blending wines from an expert Santa Rita sommelier. Create your own wine blend to your specific palette’s desire. Your concoction will be bottled and labeled as your very own. Afterward, celebrate your week with a typical Chilean barbecue on the lovely patio of the Casa Real (weather permitting).

Today’s Ride Choices:

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

*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 mainly flat and very easy.

Accommodation: Hotel Casa Real, Santiago

Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

## **DAY 9: Transfer to Santiago / La Vega Market / VBT Bicycle Vacation ends / Begin your Post-Trip Extension in Patagonia**

After an included breakfast this morning, transfer approximately 45 minutes to Santiago for a walking tour of La Vega, Santiago’s Central Market. Lunch is on your own here, so you can follow your own whims. Later, you transfer to the Holiday Inn Santiago International Airport, where a dayroom is provided until you depart for your overnight flight home. Your flights may arrive at your final destination in North America the following day.



VBT transfer times and departure points are finalized in advance and cannot be modified for individual guests. If you extend your stay beyond the scheduled program dates, return transportation to the airport will be at your own expense.

VBT Post-Trip Extension guests: After an included breakfast, transfer to the Santiago International airport for your flight to Punta Arenas airport in Patagonia. Your flight schedule does not allow you to participate in the Santiago's Central Market walking tour. After you collect your luggage and exit the luggage area, The Singular Patagonia representative will meet and assist you to your accommodations. Travel time from the Punta Arenas airport to The Singular Patagonia is approximately two hours. Take the remainder of the afternoon to enjoy the hotel's facility and plan your optional excursions with the hotel's professional tour staff before dinner on your own at the hotel.

Please note: Your hotel provides daily optional excursions (at an additional cost) to Patagonia sites. You may book the excursions of your choice once you arrive at the hotel.

Air Package Accommodation: Santiago Airport Terminal Hotel – Holiday Inn Express (Day Room),  
Santiago

Post-trip Accommodation: The Singular Patagonia

Included Meals: Breakfast

## Accommodations

May vary depending on departure date.

### Radisson Acqua Concon Hotel & Spa (Days: 5,6)

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: 7,8)

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.

### **Holiday Inn Santiago - Airport Terminal (Day: 9)**

The only hotel located within the Santiago Airport, the Holiday Inn Express is a perfect spot for a dayroom to rest up and refresh prior to an overnight flight to the US. The air-conditioned hotel offers full services, with a restaurant-bar, free WiFi internet access throughout, and a gym, heated indoor pool, Jacuzzi, and sauna. The entire hotel is non-smoking, and the spacious rooms offer either king or twin beds.

### **The Singular Santiago (Day: 2)**

The Singular Santiago, a blend of early 20th-century and neoclassical French architecture, enjoys a central location alongside a green and inviting park, the Parque Forestal. The trendy restaurants and cultural sites of the Lastarria district are also right outside your door. Sip wine or cocktails in the rooftop bar and savor dazzling views. Enjoy exemplary dining in the restaurant. And admire the cityscape from the elevated terrace or the rooftop pool. Visual and performance arts are just a short walk away at the Museum of Fine Arts, the Museum of Visual Arts, the Gabriela Mistral Center, and other institutions. The Singular Santiago is air-conditioned.

### **Hotel Isla Seca Zapallar (Days: 3,4)**

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.