



# MAJESTIC CENTRAL CHILE

*October 30 - November 9, 2026*



*Diademed Sandpiper-Plover, Yeso Valley, Chile © Andrew Whittaker*

Chile is among the world’s most spectacular countries, renowned—and beloved—for its vivid landscapes, varied culture, and amazing wildlife. From the Atacama Desert in the far north to the steppes of Patagonia in the far south, Chile offer limitless opportunities for discovery and exploration.

This new tour to beautiful Chile showcases the marvelous avian diversity and spellbinding scenery of the country’s middle section, from the soaring Andes to the rich Pacific coast. From Santiago, we’ll travel into the mountains above the city, seeking our first Andean Condors among an array of shrike-tyrants, canasteros, and finches. We’ll journey south through the fertile Central Valley to Altos de Lircay National Reserve, home to glorious beech forests, shimmering lakes, and snow

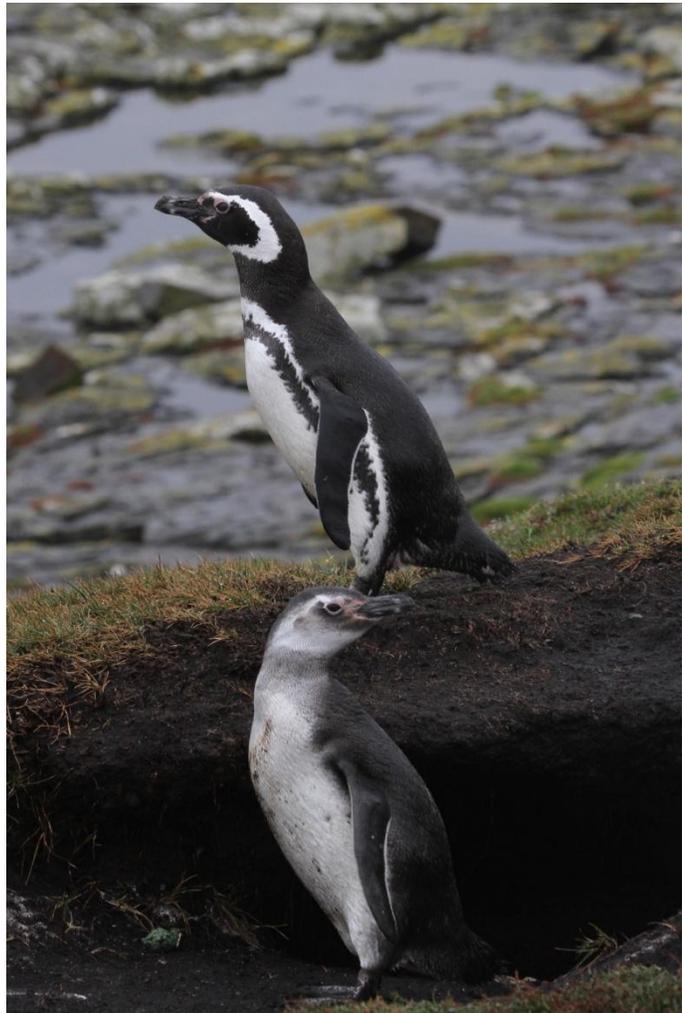
peaks. Magellanic Woodpeckers are common; Torrent Ducks, Burrowing Parakeets, and White-throated Hawks can be seen; and Green-backed Firecrowns abound at lodge feeders.

The breathtaking Valley known as El Yeso is home to a number of Chile's endemic birds, including Crag Chilia and Moustached Turca. One of the most beautiful of all shorebirds, the Diademed Sandpiper-Plover, breeds along high-elevation streams. We will also be looking for singing Gray-breasted Seedsnipe, White-sided Hillstar, and Rufous-tailed Plantcutter.

The shores of the Pacific Ocean offer equal doses of fine scenery and birding. We'll seek such remarkable birds as Humboldt Penguin, Peruvian Pelican, Incan Tern, and

Peruvian Booby. Among the landbirds are several endemics, including Seaside Cinclodes, Chilean Mockingbird, and Dusky-tailed Canastero. In the rich Maipo Estuary and Laguna Cartagena Marshes, we may encounter Stripe-backed Bittern, Ticking Doradito, Many-colored Rush-Tyrant, and the rare Black-headed Duck.

A major highlight of our time on the coast will be a pleasant half-day boat trip out to the famous Humboldt Current. The seas here simply team with life, featuring a stellar mix of seabirds and marine mammals unique to the southern Pacific. As many as five species of albatrosses are possible, including the silvery Salvin's, Black-browed, Northern Royal, Buller's, and even Chatham Albatross. Peruvian Diving-Petrel, an assortment of neat shearwaters and storm-petrels, and



*Magellanic Penguin © Andrew Whittaker*

Westland, Juan Fernandez, and Masatierra petrels are also possible on this comfortable pelagic excursion. We have good opportunities for Marine Otters and South American Sea Lions, while other possibilities include Sperm Whale and Dusky and Chilean dolphins.

Our tour also includes a short visit to the house of Pablo Neruda, the beloved “national poet” of Chile, who won the Nobel Prize in Literature in 1971.

Those eager to experience more of Chile beyond the central tier of the country can join our connecting tour, Wild Patagonia & Southern Chile. With a different suite of birds and landscapes our objective, we’ll seek the birds and wildlife of several distinct regions of the country’s far south: the temperate forests of Chile’s Lake District, around Puerto Montt; Tierra del Fuego, South America’s Land of Fire; and Torres del Paine National Park, home to wild Pumas and some of the world’s grandest scenery.

## October 30–31, Days 1–2: Departure from home; arrival in Santiago, Chile

Participants will depart the USA on October 30 and arrive in Santiago on the morning of October 31 into Arturo Merino Benítez Airport (airport code SCL). Most flights from the United States arrive in Santiago between 6:00–10:00 a.m. Upon arrival, please proceed outside of the baggage claim area, where you will be met by a representative of our ground operator who will provide transportation to our hotel, **Sheraton Santiago Hotel & Convention Center**.

After checking in, you will have the rest of the day to yourself, with time to rest following the international flight. Lunch is on your own. This evening, we will meet in the lobby at 6:00 p.m. for a tour welcome and orientation, followed by dinner together.

The hotel features spacious rooms, a restaurant and bar, and a swimming pool among many other amenities. Additionally, the hotel grounds are certainly worth a walk as a number of locally common birds may be found including Southern Lapwing, Chimango Caracara, White-crested Elaenia, Tufted Tit-tyrant the endemic Chilean Mockingbird, Austral Thrush, Black-chinned Siskin and Long-tailed Meadowlark.

Home to over 6 million people, Santiago is one of South America's most modern and cosmopolitan cities. This vibrant capital stands on a rich inland plain, the Santiago Basin, bounded by mountains on three sides.

**Travel notes:** We recommend arriving in Santiago a day or more before the formal start of our program to minimize the risk of flight misconnections or other travel delays, or simply to be well-rested for the start of our tour. Most flights to Santiago are overnight flights. Upon request, VENT will be happy to assist with air ticketing and additional arrangements.

**NIGHTS:** Aboard aircraft, in transit to Santiago (October 30)

Sheraton Santiago Hotel & Conference Center, Santiago (October 31)

## November 1, Day 3: The Andes: Yerba Loca Reserve, Farellones, and Valle Nevado

We'll get an early start to our adventure this morning, leaving the hotel just after breakfast to avoid the city traffic.

It is just a short distance out of town that we begin to climb the scenic foothills of the Andes. Each of our stops along the highway holds the promise of a first encounter with the special birds of the Mediterranean-like woodland and scrub known as *matorral*. A variety of raptors may be seen overhead while an impressive assortment of terrestrial species scamper around beneath the vegetation. Among those ground-dwellers, we will be looking especially for three endemic tapaculos: Dusky Tapaculo, Moustached Turca, and striking but skulky White-throated Tapaculo. The latter two have amazingly loud, musical songs, while the little Dusky Tapaculo utters a trilling *churr* that gives it its Chilean name, Churrin.

We'll also watch for Chilean Tinamou, the endemic Dusky-tailed Canastero, Black-chested Buzzard-Eagle, Austral Pygmy-Owl, Striped Woodpecker, Chilean Mockingbird, Diuca Finch, and the striking Rufous-tailed Plantcutter, a member of the cotinga family. The cute Fence Degu, an endemic rodent, may also be seen sunning on rock walls.



*Long-tailed Meadowlark (male) © Andrew Whittaker*

We'll continue to gain elevation into Yerba Loca Reserve. At about 7,200 feet, Yerba Loca is a good place to look for such sought-after species as Striped Woodpecker, Patagonian Tyrant, and Long-tailed Meadowlark. Overhead, we can hope for fine looks at an Andean Condor or a Black-chested Buzzard-Eagle. Among the mammals, we will keep a special eye out for the Culpeo (Andean Fox). Our final destinations for the afternoon are the mountain town of Farellones and the Valle Nevado, the Valley of Snow. The road to Farellones is marked by some 40 switchbacks before reaching the Valle Nevado, at an elevation of 9,000 feet.



*Andean Condor (male) © Andrew Whittaker*

Pullouts at the switchbacks offer excellent birding and breathtaking scenery. Snow-covered Andean peaks surround us while blue-hued mountain streams ripple down the slopes and millions of hillside poppies blaze a vivid orange. We may also find the turquoise flower spikes of the puya, an impressive bromeliad whose blossoms are a favorite nectar source for Giant Hummingbirds.

We'll be looking for a number of very local species here, including Black-winged Ground-Dove, Cordilleran and Sharp-billed canasteros, Scale-throated Earthcreeper, Black-fronted and White-browed ground-tyrants, Black-billed Shrike-Tyrant, Greater Yellow-Finch, Yellow-rumped Siskin, and Band-tailed, Mourning, and Plumbeous sierra finches. These high elevations are also home to the White-sided Hillstar, an amazing hummingbird, and we will pay particular attention to the Rufous-banded Miners as we try to pick out their rarer look-alike, the Creamy-rumped Miner. In good weather, we should have exceptional studies of Andean Condors, the largest of the Americas' flighted birds, at their daytime roost and in flight. With luck, we may encounter a Lesser Horned Owl or the comical Coruro, a chunky rodent with big yellow teeth, endemic to Chile.

**NIGHT:** Sheraton Santiago Hotel & Conference Center

## November 2, Day 4: Santiago to Talca

Today we will head south through a rich agricultural landscape, famous for its excellent vineyards. With a climate similar to that of California and Bordeaux, this part of Chile produces grapes of the highest quality; the cabernet sauvignons, chardonnays, merlots, and sauvignon blancs grown here are especially renowned.

Our way south toward the city of Talca takes us between shimmering volcanic peaks to the east and the coastal mountains to the west. We will stop for lunch about 30 miles southeast of Talca, then pay a visit to Colbún Lake, a reservoir on the Maule River that provides water for agriculture and for hydroelectric power. Colbún's shoreline, open water, and surrounding vegetation are also home to a fine variety of birds. Among the many possibilities are the local Chiloé Wigeon,

Spectacled Duck, Black-faced Ibis, Andean Gull, Chilean Pigeon, and, best of all, a superb colony of colorful Burrowing Parakeets, big and bright and noisy as macaws.



*Colorful Burrowing Parakeets breed along riverbanks. © Andrew Whittaker*

As we continue to our secluded forested lodge, we will watch the river for Torrent Ducks, often in attendance with the cutest of ducklings; in the southern subspecies found here, adult males are all black beneath. The final stretch of our drive takes us up through forested foothills to the tiny community of Vilches and our lovely family-run lodge. We'll spend two nights in this forested hotel complex, with birds right at our doorstep.

**NIGHT:** Hotel Picamaderos, Vilches

## November 3, Day 5: Altos de Lircay National Reserve

The Altos de Lircay National Reserve, also known as the Vilches Protected Area, is a 37,000-acre preserve created in 1996 to protect the sensitive vegetation, wildlife, and other natural wonders of the precordillera of San Clemente. By any measure, this ancient mountain range is a spectacular place, its magnificent *Nothofagus* Forest dissected by deep gorges. Much of the park is above tree

line, with the highest sector reaching over 7,300 feet, offering stunning views of giant snow-capped volcanoes and of the Lircay River as it flows through a channel of lava.

After breakfast today, armed with a picnic lunch, we will strike out on the reserve's well-kept forest trails and dirt roads, looking for wonderful birds among giant coigüe (genus *Nothofagus*) and roble (genus *Lophozonia*) trees, some covered with an odd orange fungus that, in season, is a local delicacy. Majestic orchids brighten the forest understory.

Our first objective will be to track down the endemic Chestnut-throated Huet-huet (pronounced *wet-wet*); we will turn its loud vocalizations to good purpose as we search for this large and remarkably colorful member of the tapaculo family. Another of South America's truly



*Green-backed Firecrown (male)*  
© Andrew Whittaker

great birds, the spectacular Magellanic Woodpecker, is fairly common here. We will also keep our eyes peeled for the rare White-throated Hawk, Striped Woodpecker, Austral Pygmy-Owl, Austral Parakeet, Fire-eyed Diucon, Black-chinned Siskin, and Diuca Finch. Blue-tailed Tree Iguanas and lovely Culpeo Foxes often visit the picnic area.

We will devote the later afternoon to an exploration of the hotel gardens and adjacent woodlands, where we may encounter Chilean Pigeon, Thorn-tailed Rayadito, the nuthatch-like White-throated Treerunner, Magellanic Tapaculo, Tufted Tit-Tyrant, and Patagonian Sierra Finch. Green-backed Firecrowns provide nonstop action at the lodge's hummingbird feeders. After a wonderful dinner, a nighttime excursion may reward us with views of the seldom seen Rufous-legged Owl, a lovely bird often found on the hotel grounds.

**NIGHT:** Hotel Picamaderos, Vilches

## November 4, Day 6: Return to Santiago

Today will largely be dedicated to making the return trip to Santiago. We'll likely have time this morning for a bit of final birding around the hotel. En route to Santiago we may have time to bird at a lake where we might see our first Spectacled Tyrant or the striking Band-tailed Sierra-Finch; waterfowl can also be abundant here.

On returning to Santiago, we will transfer to La Quinta by Wyndham, Santiago Airport where a room has been reserved in your name. Upon arrival at the hotel, we will break until dinner, at which time we will discuss plans for the following day.

**NIGHT:** La Quinta by Wyndham, Santiago Airport

## November 5, Day 7: El Yeso Valley



*The endemic Crag Chilia © Andrew Whittaker*

We'll leave Santiago after an early breakfast, head south and east through rich farmland and the Maipo River valley. As we start to gain altitude, we'll pass through the valley's picturesque "capital," San José de Maipo. Following the river, we have a good chance of finding the stunning Torrent Duck, often with ducklings in this season. Once at our destination, El Yeso Valley, we will bird our way up a rough and rocky road.

Our first stop will be an attempt at the endemic Crag Chilia, a local inhabitant of steep-sided, rocky valleys. Here, too, we will find the first of several tapaculos, the endemic and very loud Moustached Turca. These large, chunky ground-dwellers hop and run quickly over the rocky



*Gray-breasted Seedsnipe © Andrew Whittaker*

ground, foraging like towhees as they move along: this is bold behavior for a tapaculo. In damp meadows, we'll seek Yellow-rumped and Thick-billed siskins (the latter rare), Mountain Parakeet, White-sided Hillstar, Giant Hummingbird, and Chilean Flicker. We will keep our eyes open on rocky outcrops for the Southern Mountain Vizcacha, a large half-squirrel-half-wallaby-like rodent.

The scenery becomes even more spectacular as we climb higher and emerge into a huge glacial valley, a wonderful natural amphitheater. Stunning snow-capped peaks and immense scree slopes line the valley sides. The still waters of turquoise lakes mirror the breathtaking scenery, making for a photographer's dream! It is here that we'll set about the day's main task, finding the enigmatic and often confiding Diademed Sandpiper-Plover, one of the world's most beautiful shorebirds. A few pairs nest here each year along the crystal-clear streams and saline edges of high-elevation bogs. We will carefully and deliberately work our way through the area until we succeed in finding our quarry. The search for the sandpiper-plover will bring the added pleasure of singing Gray-breasted Seedsnipe in their vertical flight displays. We often encounter both Andean and Upland geese here as well.



*Reservoir in El Yeso Valley © Andrew Whittaker*

Our picnic lunch will be set in scenery glorious even by Chilean standards. Our explorations will turn up a fine variety of other target species, among them Crested Duck, Andean Condor, Mountain Caracara, White-sided Hillstar, Sharp-billed and Cordilleran canasteros, Buff-winged and Gray-flanked cinclodes, Scale-throated Earthcreeper, Rufous-banded Miner, and possibly its highland counterpart, the Creamy-rumped Miner. In grassy areas, we will learn how to distinguish the Cinereous, Spot-billed, and White-browed ground-tyrants. Wherever a supply of seeds is to be found, we should expect Gray-hooded and Plumbeous sierra finches.

By early to mid-afternoon, we'll retrace our route out of the valley and back to Santiago, with stops to look for any expected species that have evaded us. We'll arrive at the hotel in the late afternoon, with time to freshen up before dinner.

**NIGHT:** La Quinta by Wyndham Santiago Airport, Santiago

## November 6, Day 8: Santiago to the Maipo Estuary; Pablo Neruda House; Concón via Laguna Cartagena

Setting our sights on coastal environments, we'll head from Santiago for points west. Our first destination is the Maipo River Wetland and Estuary, where we will spend most of the morning. In the afternoon we will work our way north to the coastal communities of Viña del Mar and Concón by way of Laguna Cartagena. In between we will take in a bit of history with a stop at the home of Pablo Neruda, Chile's most famous and beloved poet.

About an hour and forty-five minutes west of Santiago exists one of Chile's most important bird refuges, the Maipo River Wetland and Estuary. This area, where the Maipo River flows into the Pacific Ocean, is of such great conservation importance that it has been made part of the Western Hemisphere Shorebird Reserve Network (WHSRN). In an area of 345 acres are a sand bar, estuary, grasslands, marshes, shrublands, dunes, and beach—a vital nesting area for gulls, terns, and skimmers, and a sanctuary for wintering shorebirds from North America.



*Many-colored Rush-Tyrant © Andrew Whittaker*

We will spend a couple of hours at this site, where the reed-margined lakeshore provides cover for the dazzling Many-colored Rush Tyrant. We will make a special effort to see the recently described Ticking Doradito, which should be newly arrived and in song. The Dusky Tapaculo, a Chilean endemic, is here, too, and the drab Wren-like Rushbird's unbirdlike metallic clicking will

be a constant background noise. We also hope to see Collared Plover, the unique desert-nesting Gray Gull, hordes of Black Skimmers freshly arrived from the Amazon, the rare Snowy-crowned Tern, Correndera Pipit, and boreal migrants such as Hudsonian Godwit, Whimbrel, Red Knot, Sanderling, and Baird’s Sandpiper.

The well-kept trails of Laguna Cartagena Reserve offer close-up views of an abundance of waterfowl, and the photographic opportunities here are excellent. The many secluded pools are ideal for viewing species typical of reedbeds and of open water alike. We have chances here for Red Shoveler, Chiloé Wigeon, White-cheeked and Yellow-billed pintails, Silvery and White-tufted grebes, the elegant “White-backed” Black-necked Stilt, Chilean Swallow, Diuca Finch, and Yellow-winged Blackbird.



*Chiloé Wigeon © Andrew Whittaker*

In complement to our birding endeavors, our day will include a stop at one of the homes of Pablo Neruda, a man often referred to as the national poet of Chile. A writer from the age of 13, Neruda established himself early on as a person of prodigious talent, writing poems covering many themes. His verses about birds and nature represent some of his most endearing works, but a number of Neruda’s most important—and searing—pieces were rooted in his political views. Neruda’s success and popularity with the pen ultimately led him into the world of politics where he worked as a diplomat in more than one administration. Neruda was awarded the Nobel Prize

for literature in 1971. The great Colombian writer Gabriel Garcia Marquez declared Neruda “the greatest poet of the twentieth century, in any language.” Neruda’s involvement with the Communist government in Chile, and his subsequent association with the socialism of Salvador Allende made him *persona non grata* in the years of the dictatorship of Augusto Pinochet in the early 1970s. The cause of Neruda’s death in 1973 has long been a source of controversy. Neruda had three houses, all of which now operate as museums. One of these is on the coast, and which we will visit.

During his career, Pablo Neruda wrote several poems about his favorite Chilean foods, so we will have lunch at Pablo Neruda’s restaurant, where we will enjoy Neruda’s favorite, delicious dishes.

Our next stop will be at a small marsh where we have a good chance to see the retiring Stripe-backed Bittern, a bird we’ve had great success with on previous tours. Another species found here includes the wonderful Plumbeous Rail.

We’ll work our way north along the coast, with lunch at a picturesque restaurant; famous for its excellent seafood, the restaurant is also a great spot to see the endemic Seaside Cinclodes.

We’ll reach the coastal resort communities of Viña del Mar and Concón in midafternoon. The first settlers of this area were the native “changos,” fishermen who dominated the region as high as the valley of Peuco before the arrival of the Spanish. Today, this is a tourist destination par excellence, attracting visitors from all around the world and well known for its lovely gardens, beaches, and high-rise buildings; wealthy Santiago residents commute here for weekends.

Our hotel for the next two nights overlooks coastal rocks and the sea, where we can enjoy the resident Red-legged Cormorants and Inca Terns, perhaps the most beautiful members of their respective families. Outside, we often have luck in finding Gray Gull and Marine Otter. The hotel layout is such that sunsets may be viewed from the outdoor deck.

**NIGHT:** Radisson Blu Accua, Concón

## November 7, Day 9: Half-day Pelagic Trip; Cachagua and Return to Concón

Today we will enjoy an action-packed (and optional) half day offshore in the Humboldt Current, which surges north from Antarctica. Taking us into the most nutrient-rich waters in the world, with an abundance of ocean life, this is truly the crème de la crème of pelagic trips.

After an early breakfast, we'll embark on our private boat (with a bathroom) for five or six hours of nonstop excitement. Spring, when the seas are typically very calm, is the perfect time to go offshore. No place on earth offers more productive seabirding than the Humboldt Current, where any trip can turn up a wonderful cross-section of sub-Antarctic seabirds and warm-water petrels. On a "good" day, the number of birds out here reaches the thousands!



*The Salvin's Albatross is always the most common of the albatross. © Andrew*

Our objectives will include Pacific specialties and southern-tier pelagic birds. Among the many possibilities are a marvelous variety of albatrosses, including the lovely Salvin's (the most common), Black-browed, the immense Northern Royal (whose 12-foot wingspan must be seen to be believed), the less common Buller's, or even the rare Chatham Albatross.

Other species seen in these waters include Northern Giant-Petrel, Pink-footed and Sooty shearwaters, Wilson's and the rare Elliot's storm-petrels, the sought-after Peruvian Diving-Petrel, and Westland, White-chinned, Juan Fernandez, and Masatierra petrels (the last two rare). Chumming from the back of the boat should attract a tremendous flock following us, affording great views and superb photographic opportunities. Closer to shore, we can expect Inca Tern,

Peruvian Booby, and the gorgeous Red-legged Cormorant. Marine mammals can also be good here, and with a little luck, we might see Dusky and Common Dolphins or South American Fur Seals; even Humpback and Sperm whales are occasionally found here.

We'll be back at the dock in time for a tasty seafood lunch in a nearby restaurant. Afterward, we'll drive the short distance to a mixed colony of Humboldt Penguins and Peruvian Pelicans. There is also a good chance of seeing the playful Marine Otter. We will return to our hotel to rest up and enjoy a good dinner.

**NIGHT:** Radisson Blu Accua, Concón

## November 8, Day 10: La Campana National Park and Bатуco Lagoon Nature Reserve; return to Santiago; departure for home

On our final day together, we will experience a classic day of birding in foothill and coastal habitats. Our destinations are La Campana National Park and Bатуco Lagoon Nature Reserve.

La Campana National Park is a protected natural area in central Chile located in the Valparaíso Region northwest of Santiago. The park covers 31 square miles and was established in 1967 to protect the region's unique botanical ecosystems.

The location of the park, in Chile's Mediterranean zone, in tandem with its unique plant compositions makes this area a fantastic place for birding, a place that hosts many of Chile's specialty birds. Here, we may find Mustached Turca, Chilean Tinamou, Chilean Pigeon, Striped woodpecker, Chilean Flicker, Austral Pymy-Owl, and Giant Hummingbird among many others.

Bатуco Wetlands is the largest inland wetland in central Chile and one of the country's most species-rich hotspots. The main lagoon has an excellent boardwalk where we can search for many waterfowl species, including specialties like Black-headed Duck and Rosy-billed Pochard. In the extensive reedbeds we can find Many-colored Rush-Tyrant, Wrenlike Rushbird, and Yellow-winged Blackbird.

We expect to arrive back in Santiago and **La Quinta by Wyndham, Santiago Airport** in the mid-to late afternoon, where day rooms have been reserved. In the evening, we'll gather for a final field checklist session and a farewell dinner. Those departing for home will be transferred to the airport after dinner with time to check-in for international flights. International flights to the USA generally depart late at night (or just after midnight), arriving in the United States the following morning. Those continuing on with the next tour will spend the night in the hotel.

**DAY ROOM/NIGHT:** La Quinta by Wyndham, Santiago Airport

## November 9, Day 11: Arrival home

Flights that departed Santiago the previous evening will arrive in the USA this morning.

### Essential Tour Information

**TOUR SIZE:** This tour is limited to 10 tour participants.

**TOUR LEADERS:** This tour will be led by **Raymond VanBuskirk** and **Eduardo “Lalo”**



**Raymond L. VanBuskirk** is an expert birder who has been guiding tours for over a decade. Raymond has led tours throughout the Western Hemisphere from Alaska to Chile and most parts in between. He has guided in almost every country in Central America, across the Caribbean, and down both sides of the Andes in Colombia, Ecuador, Peru, and Chile. Raymond's experience is not limited to the New World—he has traveled widely across the globe, has spent a great deal of time in the Pacific studying pelagics, and has led tours in Asia and Africa.

Raymond has had a longtime commitment to ornithology. In addition to guiding, he has conducted research with USFWS in the Arctic Ocean, North Pacific, and New Mexico. He has held

leadership roles in the Central New Mexico Bird Alliance and Western Field Ornithologists. Raymond also helped guide the next generation of birders by being a regular instructor at the ABA's youth birding camps and at the Hog Island Audubon camps in Hog Island, Maine.

Raymond is also committed to including everyone in birding, and organizes and leads annual conferences for QBNA, an informal club for LGBTQIA+ birders. When not leading tours or conducting research, Raymond can be found at his home in St. Louis, Missouri with his partner, Marissa; stepdaughter Savannah; and their dog and two large snakes.



**Eduardo Navarro, or Lalo**, was born in Santiago, but grew up in Punta Arenas, in Chilean Patagonia. Surrounded by wilderness, it was simply impossible for these landscapes not to awaken a curiosity for exploration. Lalo studied veterinary sciences in Santiago, where he created the first student group that brought together people with a passion for nature, remaining active to this day. At university he participated in

conservation efforts in Bolivia, the altiplano, and Chilean Patagonia, sparking an interest in travel and other cultures. Around the same time, he started rock climbing, and once he finished his studies, he took his backpack and began traveling and climbing around the world. Starting with Australia and New Zealand, then discovering the markets and beaches of Southeast Asia, he walked through rice plantations in China, hiked between the world's highest peaks in the Himalayas in India and Nepal, and visited cities and parks in Europe—always with binoculars around his neck, searching for new birds. Lalo lived in Australia for a year and a half and helped with migratory bird surveys around Sydney.

### **TOUR COSTS & PAYMENT INFORMATION**

**TOUR FEE:** \$\_\_\_\_ per person based on double occupancy. This includes all meals from dinner on Day 2 through dinner on Day 10, accommodations as stated in the itinerary, all ground

transportation during the tour, boat excursions as described, and guide services provided by the tour leaders. It does **not** include airfare to nor from the starting/ending city; however, flights within the tour, if applicable, are included. The fee also excludes laundry, personal expenses, alcoholic beverages, and other items of a personal nature. For information about gratuities, please see the “TIPPING” sub-section below. If the minimum group size is not met, each participant will be charged a small-group supplement—shared equally and communicated in advance—to allow the tour to proceed.

**SINGLE SUPPLEMENT:** If you request single accommodations, a single supplement of \$\_\_\_\_\_ will be added to your tour fee.

**REGISTRATION & DEPOSIT:** You may register for this tour through the VENT [website](#) or by calling our office (512-328-5221). The initial deposit for this tour is **\$1,000** per person. A second deposit of **30% of the remaining tour fee** is due 180 days prior to departure (May 3, 2026). We accept MasterCard and Visa for both deposits.

**PAYMENTS:** All tour payments may be made by credit card (MasterCard or Visa), check, money order, or bank transfer (contact the VENT office for bank transfer information). These include initial deposits, second deposits, interim payments, final balances, special arrangements, etc. Full payment of the tour fee is due 120 days (July 2, 2026) prior to the tour departure date.

**EXTRA ARRANGEMENTS:** Should you wish to make arrangements to arrive early or extend your stay, please contact the VENT office at least two months prior to your departure date. We can very easily make hotel arrangements and often at our group rate, if we receive your request with enough advance time.

**EXCHANGE RATE SURCHARGES:** Tour prices are based on the rate of exchange at the time of itinerary publication. If rates change drastically, it may be necessary to impose a surcharge. If a surcharge is necessary, every effort will be made to minimize the amount. In many cases, these additional foreign exchange rate surcharges have been passed on to VENT by its vendors and suppliers.

**FUEL SURCHARGES:** Our prices are based on fuel prices at the time of itinerary publication. While we will do everything possible to maintain our prices, it may be necessary to institute a fuel surcharge.

**TIPPING:** An important part of the value of a VENT tour is knowing that tips for local service providers at our destinations—restaurant staff, hotel staff, drivers, local guides, and various other support staff—are included in your tour fee. If you would like to offer any of your local guides an additional tip, \$5 to \$10 a day is a common amount.

Tips for your VENT tour leader(s) are **not** included, but it is customary to tip one or both if you feel that you have received exceptional service. To assist in your planning, we recommend tipping your VENT tour leader(s) \$15 to \$20 per day, or the equivalent of approximately 2–4% of the tour fee.

If you plan to give tips by cash, they should be given directly to your tour leader at the end of the tour and **not** sent to the VENT office. Some of our tour leaders use mobile payment applications such as Venmo, PayPal, and Wise. If you would like to use this method, please ask your tour leaders directly whether they can accept tips through such an application.

We emphasize that tipping is optional and that these amounts are only recommendations. The amount you decide to tip is based entirely on your experience and at your discretion.

## **CANCELLATION & REFUNDS**

### **CANCELLATION BY PARTICIPANT:**

- **More than 120 days prior to the tour start date:**A refund of all monies paid will be issued, less 50% of the deposit (including initial and second deposit)
- **120 days or fewer prior to the tour start date:**No refund will be provided.
- **Optional add-ons:**Some tours offer optional add-ons that are designated as non-refundable. Any such add-ons are clearly identified as non-refundable at the time of booking. By selecting and purchasing an optional add-on, the participant acknowledges and accepts its non-refundable status. Fees paid for non-refundable add-ons are not refundable under any circumstances, regardless of when the tour is cancelled.

This cancellation policy applies to all participants and all tours (Pre-Tours and Extensions are considered self-contained tours separate from the main tour). Because unexpected events can occur, we strongly recommend the purchase of travel insurance.

#### **CANCELLATION BY VENT:**

If VENT cancels a tour prior to departure without cause or good reason, VENT will provide the participant a full refund, which will constitute full settlement to the participant.

If VENT cancels or delays a tour or any portion of a tour as a result of any Force Majeure event, VENT will use its reasonable best efforts to refund any payments on the balance of the tour fee to participant; provided that, VENT will have no obligation to provide a participant with a refund and will not be liable or responsible to a participant, nor be deemed to have defaulted under or breached any applicable agreement, for any failure or delay in fulfilling or performing any term of such agreement. A ***“Force Majeure”*** event means any act beyond VENT’s control, including, without limitation, the following: (a) acts of God; (b) flood, fire, earthquake, hurricane, epidemic, pandemic or explosion; (c) war, invasion, hostilities (whether war is declared or not), terrorist threats or acts, riot or other civil unrest; (d) government order, law or actions; (e) embargoes or blockades; (f) national or regional emergency; (g) strikes, labor stoppages, labor slowdowns or other industrial disturbances; (h) shortage of adequate power or transportation facilities; and (i) any other similar events or circumstances beyond the control of VENT.

This VENT Cancellation & Refunds policy does not apply to air tickets purchased through VENT or to any special arrangements, such as additional hotel nights, that fall outside of the services described in the tour itinerary.

**Victor Emanuel Nature Tours is not a participant in the California Travel Consumer Restitution Fund. California law requires certain sellers of travel to have a trust account or bond. This business has a bond issued by Travelers in the amount of \$50,000. CST #2014998-50.**

## **TRAVEL INSURANCE**

**MEDICAL EVACUATION INSURANCE/PROTECTION REQUIREMENT:** This tour visits remote locations where immediate access to primary medical care may not be available. **For this reason, travel insurance/travel protection which covers you for emergency evacuation is required for participation on this tour.** This coverage is included in the **Ripcord Rescue Travel Insurance™** program. Alternatively, comparable service can be obtained through **Medjet** and its **MedjetAssist** plan. If you choose not to purchase insurance/travel protection through Ripcord or Medjet, you are required to obtain it through another provider. Please refer to the TRAVEL INSURANCE/TRAVEL PROTECTION section for additional information.

**SUGGESTED OPTIONS:** To safeguard against losses due to illness, accident, or other unforeseen circumstances, we strongly recommend the purchase of travel insurance as soon as possible after making a deposit. VENT has partnered with **Redpoint Travel Protection** as our preferred travel insurance provider. Through Redpoint, we recommend its comprehensive Ripcord plan, which includes a medical evacuation benefit. With this in mind, it is important to note that medical evacuation is not offered by Redpoint as a stand-alone policy or benefit. For travelers not interested in comprehensive travel insurance, VENT recommends **Medjet** and its **MedjetAssist®** plan. Medjet is not an insurance company, and Medjet Assist is not an insurance product; rather, Medjet is a membership-based air-medical transport company specializing in moving hospitalized travelers from an admitting hospital to a medical facility of choice. Medjet does not provide medical evacuation service from the point of injury or illness; yet, the MedjetAssist plan offers robust enough travel protection to satisfy the medical evacuation insurance requirement in place for many VENT tours.

### **About Redpoint Travel's Ripcord Plan**

Ripcord is a completely integrated travel insurance program with single contact for emergency services, travel assistance, and insurance claims. Critical benefits include comprehensive travel insurance for trip cancellation/interruption, medical evacuation from your point of injury or illness to your hospital of choice; medical expense coverage, death of pet, and much more. Optional expanded insurance coverage is available and includes items such as

evacuation coverage in case of a natural disaster or political or security reasons, waiver for pre-existing medical conditions exclusion, and a “Cancel for Any Reason” benefit. Ripcord is available to U.S. and non-U.S. residents.\*

For a price quote or to purchase travel insurance, please visit: [Ripcord Travel Insurance](#); or click the **Ripcord** logo on our website (click Help > Preparation and Insurance > Trip Insurance); or call +1-415-481-0600. Pricing is based on age, trip cost, trip length, and level of coverage.

\*To be eligible for the pre-existing medical condition exclusion waiver and the optional Cancel for Any Reason (CFAR) upgrade, you must purchase your policy within 15 days of making your first trip payment. The CFAR benefit provides reimbursement for 75% of covered costs, and increases the policy premium by approximately 50%. Policies may be purchased either for the full value of the tour fee at the time of deposit or in segments as individual tour payments are made (deposit, second deposit, final balance, additional arrangements, etc.). The “pay as you go” approach reduces up-front expense and ensures that the amount paid toward your full policy premium is in proportion to the amount paid toward the full tour fee. If you choose to “pay as you go,” you must cover each deposit or payment within 15 days, and insure all non-refundable trip costs in order to maintain the CFAR benefit. Please refer to the policy for a full description of coverage.

Redpoint considers COVID-19 illness as any other seasonal respiratory illness. Providing only a positive Covid-19 test result will likely not be considered a covered event per the terms and conditions of the company's policy. Redpoint maintains a [Coronavirus FAQ page](#) on its website that addresses questions and concerns travelers may have regarding COVID-19 and Redpoint's policy. We strongly recommend that you visit the page for an overview of relevant topics.

### **About Medjet’s MedjetAssist Plan**

MedjetAssist is a membership program that functions like AAA for motorists. The company’s primary service is air medical transport. Critical benefits of MedjetAssist include a staff on call and ready to provide assistance 24 hours a day, 7 days a week; all-expenses-paid air medical transport in the United States and internationally to medical facility of choice, regardless of medical necessity; repatriation of remains; and no exclusions for pre-existing conditions.

For travelers under 75, MedjetAssist may be purchased as Short-Term Memberships of 8, 15, 21, and 30 days, or Regular Annual Memberships from 1 to 5 years. For travelers 75–84, Medjet offers a Diamond Membership that is the same program but with a few additional conditions.

For a price quote or to purchase MedjetAssist, please visit: [Medjet.com/VentBird](https://www.Medjet.com/VentBird) or call 1-800-527-7478. Pricing is based on type and term of membership.

### **GETTING THERE & REQUIRED TRAVEL DOCUMENTS**

**AIR TRAVEL:** Victor Emanuel Travel is a full-service travel agency and wholly owned subsidiary of Victor Emanuel Nature Tours (VENT). Victor Emanuel Travel will be happy to make any domestic or international air travel arrangements from your home and return. Per person fees apply for each set of travel arrangements: \$50 domestic; \$75 international.\* Many of our travelers choose to make their own air travel arrangements, but we emphasize the benefits to using our services. If you book your air arrangements yourself, Victor Emanuel Travel is unable to provide support in managing any flight delays and/or cancellations that could occur before and during a tour. When you purchase air tickets through Victor Emanuel Travel, our staff has ready access to your air ticket record and can provide assistance as problems arise. Please feel free to call the VENT office to confirm your air arrangements. **Please be sure to check with the VENT office prior to purchasing your air ticket to confirm that the tour is sufficiently subscribed to operate. VENT cannot be held responsible for any air ticket penalties.**

\*An air ticket will be purchased by Victor Emanuel Travel on behalf of the traveler with the traveler's consent. A purchase is considered final upon receipt of payment. If a ticket is subsequently reissued at the behest of the traveler (i.e. voluntary change of plans), the same fee rates apply for the reissue process, in addition to any fees that may be charged by the airline.

**BAGGAGE:** Please limit luggage to one medium or large bag and one carry-on. The enforce now strictly enforce baggage regulations. Excess baggage charges, which can be substantial, are the personal responsibility of each participant. Please consult your pre-departure materials and/or airline to find out specific weight restrictions.

As a precaution against lost luggage, we suggest that you pack a change of clothes, toiletries, medications, important travel documents, optics, and any other essential items in your carry-on bag.

Due to ever-changing circumstances in the government's attempts to improve airport security, we recommend that you check the website of the [Transportation Security Administration \(TSA\)](#) for information pertaining to permissible carry-on items.

#### **TRAVEL DOCUMENTS:**

**PASSPORTS:** A passport is required for entry into Chile and must be valid for the duration of your stay. Please check the expiration date on your passport. You will also want to make sure that you have at least two blank pages in your passport for stamps. A tourist card is issued at the international port-of-entry.

If you need a passport, you should get it well in advance of the tour departure date. Allow four to six weeks to obtain a passport. For additional fees, a passport can be issued on an expedited basis. In the United States this can be done at the nearest passport office, many post offices, or the county clerk's office. You may also visit <http://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en.html> for information on how to get or renew a passport.

As a safety measure, photocopy the first two pages of your passport. Keep the photocopies in a safe place, so if your passport is lost you will have proof of identification. Your passport should be signed and easily available at all times. You will need it for check-in at the airport on your first day of departure, so **do not pack it in your checked luggage.**

**VISAs:** Visas are not required for U.S. and Canadian citizens for entry into Chile for a stay of up to three months. Note that the "reciprocity" fee that formerly applied to all U.S. and

Canadian citizens entering Chile has been eliminated. Rules and regulations pertaining to non-U.S. citizens may vary; please check with the consulate or embassy of Chile.

## **WHAT TO BRING**

**CLOTHING:** This program is a very casual birding and natural history trip. We suggest you bring primarily field-type clothing and be prepared to dress in layers, as it could be cold at times on our excursions into the mountains. Casual attire will be appropriate for all occasions. The following items are recommended:

- **Pants:** A couple of pairs of pants are essential. Many people prefer lightweight pants made of cotton or other material, but denim, though not as comfortable, is certainly acceptable. Lined thermal pants are great against the cool winds sometimes encountered in El Yeso and in the mountains above Santiago.
- **Field Clothing:** Outdoor stores such as Cabela's and REI carry field clothing that many birders find appealing. Pants and shirts made of lightweight durable and dull colored materials with multiple pockets and ventilated seams are popular.
- **T-shirts (long- and short-sleeved):** Simple cotton shirts for wearing under warmer outerwear.
- **Jackets:** A warm, water- and wind-proof jacket is essential for the Andes.
- **Rain Pants:** Can do double duty as both rain protection and an extra layer in lieu of long underwear on cold or windy days.
- **Warm, waterproof gloves and mittens:** Strongly recommended. Although Chile warms up quickly in the spring, cold weather is very much a possibility, particularly in the mountains.
- **Warm Socks:** Thin cotton or polypropylene socks are a good choice, in combination with a few pairs of wool socks. It is important to have clean, dry socks when in the field.
- **Hats, scarves, and gaiters:** A hat for protection from the sun is essential, while a warm pull-down hat and scarf or neck gaiter will come in handy in windy conditions.
- **Outerwear:** A warm jacket is strongly recommended. A polar fleece is recommended when a jacket may not be necessary. It is important to come to Chile well-prepared with insulation against cold temperatures.

**FOOTWEAR:** For footwear, we recommend a good trail-walking shoe or light hiking boot (waterproof or Gore-Tex) when in the field. Athletic shoes are acceptable but will not keep your feet dry and can become soiled in muddy conditions. A good walking shoe (such as an athletic shoe) may be preferred for down times or when traveling between destinations. Rubber boots are not necessary.

**EQUIPMENT:** Having the right equipment makes the travel experience more enjoyable. Below is a list of items that will ensure you are well prepared:

- **Daypack:** Good for carrying extra clothing, field guides, supplies, and optical equipment during all land excursions
- **Notebooks and pens**
- **Travel alarm clock**
- **Polarized sunglasses with good UV protection**
- **Sunscreen, lip balm, skin lotions:** Sunscreen of at least SPF 30 is strongly recommended.
- **Personal toiletries**
- **Water bottle:** Please bring your favorite water bottle as it helps to reduce waste.
- **Cameras, lenses, memory cards, and extra batteries**
- **Collapsible walking stick:** A highly recommended item for those who have trouble walking.
- **Folding stool:** Recommended for those who have trouble standing for more than 10 or 15 minutes at a time. The typical folding stool is small, lightweight and portable, consisting of three aluminum legs connected by a central bolt, with a sturdy but pliable material seat.
- **Tissue packs**

**Binoculars:** We strongly recommend you bring a pair of good binoculars of 8x32, 8x42, or 10x42 magnification. Please do not bring mini binoculars of any kind. Some people like them because they are small and lightweight; but they have an extremely small field of view and very poor light gathering power. You will find that 8x32 binoculars are compact and light enough.

**Spotting Scopes:** Your tour leaders will have scopes available for group use throughout the trip, but if you have one and wish to bring it, please feel free to do so.

## **DESTINATION INFORMATION & LOCAL CONDITIONS**

**CLIMATE & WEATHER:** This tour will operate during the austral spring, when the weather can vary markedly. The nature of this tour means we are certain to encounter a diversity of conditions. We're more likely to experience cooler conditions in the mountains and warmer, drier conditions around Santiago and at the coast. The coastal regions will be more moderate in temperature while the mountains will be cooler, especially in the early morning and at night, when temperatures can drop significantly. Around Santiago, temperatures may range from the 60s to low 80s (°F). and from the 50s to low 70s in the mountains.

Please note that conditions in Chile in the October/November period can run the spectrum from sunny and warm to overcast, windy, and cold. If spring arrives late, participants should be prepared for cold temperatures, heavy overcast, strong wind, and possible rain, particularly in the Andes. Snow is also possible (which did occur on our 2023 tour).

**CONDITIONS:** While birding will receive heavy emphasis, this program encompasses other aspects of natural history including scenery, mammal viewing, star-gazing, and doses of botany (the flowering plants can be incredible). Travel will be small bus or coaster and/or Sprinter.

Accommodations range from good to excellent. In all situations, we strive for "best available."

All activities take place within a few hours of Santiago. Accommodation and meals are good to excellent, and walking will take place mostly on flat and even terrain. Reaching the Yeso Valley

consists of round-trip travel from Santiago to the mountains and return. It is a long day, with 5.5–6 hours of travel time in the bus (2.5–3 hours each way). We will leave the hotel early (by 6:30 a.m.) and return in the late afternoon. Upon arrival in the valley, we will spend several hours birding the various microhabitats there in search of a variety of specialty and widespread birds, principally the Diademed Sandpiper-Plover. The elevation of the Yeso Valley is 2,980 m (~ 9,780feet). Our pelagic trip of five to six hours is on a larger boat, appropriate for the open ocean, with a bathroom. Water and snacks will always be available.

Walking conditions are generally easy, as our activities in most of the areas we visit are along flat roads and trails. There are some gradual climbs in Altos de Lircay National Park. No activities will take place above 3,300 feet elevation, and we have never had any problems with altitude sickness.

We emphasize that no one will be subjected to physical demands that exceed their capabilities. All walking will be done at a slow pace. Meals will also be good to excellent, and we will be able to enjoy high quality Chilean seafood on more than one occasion. **Those who are not fit for light to moderate physical activity, including those with physical disabilities that affect mobility and balance or other conditions associated with poor health, are advised not to join the trip.**

**Special Note:** This tour is intended as a natural history extravaganza, with virtually no time included for exploring the country's historical and cultural attractions. Participants with an interest in enjoying more of Santiago or visiting other parts of the country should come early or stay after the tour ends. Santiago is a European-flavored blend of colonial and modern architecture, reflected in its many churches, museums, theaters, and parks. Some of the city's famous landmarks you can visit on your own are the beautiful horse track Club Hipico, the Pre-Columbian Art Museum, and the summit of San Cristobal Hill, where an enormous statue of the Virgin Mary overlooks the city.

**FOOD & WATER:** Food is generally safe to consume at all locations we visit. Consuming tap water should be avoided. Bottled water will always be available. Your tour leaders will advise you of food and water safety considerations at all locations.

**CURRENCY & SPENDING:** Your trip to Chile includes all necessary expenses. You will want to bring enough cash to cover personal expenses not included in the program, such as gifts, laundry, special gratuities, meals on your own, and personal items. It is best to carry small denominations of cash as many places we visit may be unable to provide change for large bills. While U.S. dollars may be accepted in more populous areas, it is always convenient to have a supply of local currency for such items. It is best to acquire local currency before leaving home, or at the airport or a bank upon arrival in Santiago. Most places accept credit cards, especially Visa and MasterCard.

Should you extend your vacation in Chile beyond what is offered in the program, you'll want to obtain local currency. Please check with your bank and credit card issuer for more information regarding banking and the use of ATM and credit cards overseas.

The official currency of Chile is the Chilean Peso (CLP). You can check the latest currency conversion rate by visiting "XE—The World's Favorite Currency Site" at <http://www.xe.com/>.

**ELECTRICITY:** The electrical current in Chile is 220V (110-120V in the U.S.). Most electrical outlets are of the European standard socket "Type C or Type L." These outlets are ungrounded, with openings for two round pins. A less common outlet features openings for three flat blades, with two of the blades angled. Both types are in use in most of the hotels we will stay in. A few hotels may provide plug-in adapters that can accommodate standard American-type plug-ins with two flat pins of similar size (but not with one flat blade larger than the other). Many appliances now are dual designed to operate on European electrical voltages, but you definitely should bring adapters and an all-purpose transformer if there is any doubt whether your appliances are suitable for higher voltage.

**INTERNET ACCESS:** Internet and Wi-Fi service is available at all of the hotels.

**LANGUAGE:** Spanish is the language primarily spoken in Chile.

**TIME:** Chile is on Chilean Standard Time (CLT) and is 2 hours ahead of Eastern Standard Time (EST).

**LAUNDRY SERVICE:** Laundry service is available at all hotels we stay at more than one night, and will be available at extra charge.

## **HEALTH & SAFETY**

**HEALTH:** VENT follows Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommendations for standard travel precautions, which includes vaccination against a variety of preventable diseases. Among these so-called Routine Vaccinations are measles/mumps/rubella (MMR) vaccine, diphtheria/pertussis/tetanus (DPT) vaccine, poliovirus vaccine (boosters for adult travelers), and Varicella (Chickenpox). You should also be up-to-date with Hepatitis A and Hepatitis B vaccinations.

As of this writing, no major shots or inoculations are required for entry into Chile.

If you are taking personal medication, prescription or over-the-counter, be sure to bring an ample supply that will allow you to get through the tour safely. Please consult your physician as necessary. Remember to pack all medication in your carry-on baggage, preferably in original containers or packaging. As airline baggage restrictions can change without warning, please check with your airline for procedures for packing medication.

**COVID-19:** We continually emphasize that our number one priority is the health and safety of our customers and employees. Although VENT no longer maintains any of its COVID-era prevention protocols, we strongly recommend best practices for protecting yourself and your fellow travelers against COVID-19 illness. These measures include receiving the primary series vaccinations for those eligible, staying “Up to Date” with COVID-19 booster shots, wearing high filtration N-95 or KN-95 masks when in airports and on airplanes, and avoiding risky social settings in the lead-up to your tour. These recommendations are firmly rooted in CDC guidance for avoiding COVID-19.

**TYPHOID:** VENT recommends vaccination against Typhoid, a bacterial disease endemic to Chile, caused by *Salmonella typhi*. It is transmitted through consumption of contaminated food and water, typically when someone who is infected uses the bathroom and does not

wash their hands. Symptoms may include high fever, weakness, stomach pain, headache, diarrhea or constipation, cough, and loss of appetite.

**SUN EXPOSURE:** The sun's ultraviolet rays are more dangerous in Chile than many other places in the world, due to the long daylight hours in a far southerly destination. The sun's ultraviolet rays are damaging to the eyes and skin with prolonged exposure. Anytime you are outdoors, you will want to protect your skin, including your lips, eyes, nose, and ears. Severe sunburn is potentially very painful and will affect your level of enjoyment. Always protect yourself when outdoors and be sure to bring an ample supply of high-SPF sunscreen and lip balm. We strongly recommend the use of ultraviolet-blocking, polarized sunglasses.

**BITING INSECTS:** Biting insects are not a serious problem in most places we visit on this tour, and there are no chiggers at all; however, we may encounter some mosquitoes in wetlands around Santiago. To protect yourself, we recommend wearing long-sleeved shirts and pants and applying insect repellent when necessary. Lotions are preferable to sprays, as they are less obtrusive to others and tend to come in smaller, more easily packed bottles. Cutter and OFF! are leading brands.

**INSECT REPELLENTS:** There are insect repellents for the skin and an insect repellent used to treat clothing that should not be applied to the skin.

Insect repellents for the skin are commonly available in three forms:

**DEET:** (N,N-diethyl-meta-toluamide): A chemical compound that is marketed under various brand names (OFF!®, Cutter™, Ultrathon™, etc.) and offered in a variety of formulations including sprays, lotions, time-release preparations, and disposable wipes. The formulations will state a percentage of the active ingredient DEET on the packaging. DEET may be applied to exposed skin directly and/or sprayed on clothing. Please be careful when applying DEET as it can damage plastics and lens coatings.

**Picaridin:** A synthetic formulation that is derived from piperine, a substance found in plants that produce black pepper.

**Herbal insect repellents:** Various mixtures of organic ingredients such as oils from eucalyptus, citronella, cedar, and other herbs. The herbal repellents are more difficult to categorize because of the difference in ingredients from one brand to another. There is considerable variation in their effectiveness.

Insect repellent for clothing is marketed in one approved formulation:

**Permanone® (Permethrin):** is an odorless spray-on repellent that may be used for pre-treatment of clothing, gear, and tents. It should not be used directly on the skin or sprayed on clothing while it is being worn. The pre-treatment process requires a number of hours to complete and must be done outdoors, so it is best completed in advance of travel. Do-it-yourself pre-treatment must be repeated more often than commercial treatment using Insect Shield® technology. It is available at various outdoor stores and can easily be found online.

**Insect Shield® apparel:** Clothing pre-treated with Permanone is made by a variety of manufacturers. It is available for purchase from some sporting goods suppliers. The clothing is advertised as retaining its repellency for up to 70 washings.

The US EPA offers a search tool to help choose a repellent that is best for a particular situation. For example, some repellents work for mosquitoes, but not for ticks.

<https://www.epa.gov/insect-repellents/which-insect-repellent-right-you>

In addition to your physician, a good source of general health information for travelers is the United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) in Atlanta Georgia. The CDC operates a 24-hour recorded Travelers' Information Line at 800-CDC-INFO (800-232-4636), or you can check their website at [www.cdc.gov/travel](http://www.cdc.gov/travel). Canadian citizens should check the website of the Public Health Agency of Canada: [www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/new\\_e.html](http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/new_e.html) (click on travel health).

## **SUGGESTED READING & TRIP PREPARATION**

A number of traditional booksellers and online stores list excellent inventories of field guides and other natural history resources that will help prepare you for this tour. We recommend [www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com) which has a wide selection; [www.buteobooks.com](http://www.buteobooks.com) and [www.nhbs.com](http://www.nhbs.com) which specialize in ornithology and natural history books; and [www.abebooks.com](http://www.abebooks.com) for out-of-print and hard-to-find titles.

## FIELD GUIDES:

**Birds:** Either of the following field guides are highly recommended for this tour.

Jaramillo, Alvaro. *Birds of Chile*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2003.

This excellent guide has long been the standard for bird identification in Chile. It is arguably the best all-around field guide to the birds of this country, featuring excellent plates, text, and interesting taxonomic notes. It is also lightweight and easily portable.

Cifuentes, Gonzalo E. Gonzáles and Daniel E. Martínez Piña. *Field Guide to the Birds of Chile*. Helm Field Guides. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2021.

An excellent newer guide showing new additions to the country's avifauna. Plates are excellent, especially non passerines. Text good, too, and updated showing all vagrants recently recorded. It's lightweight and easily portable.

## BIRDING RESOURCES AND GENERAL NATURE:

Chester, Sharon. *A Wildlife Guide to Chile*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2008. Excellent read and a perfect all-around natural history guide. Full of information and good illustrations; coverage ranges from plants, animals, fish, cetaceans, and butterflies to the country's various habitats, zones, and weather types.

## **HISTORY AND CULTURE:**

### **TERMS, CONDITIONS & RESPONSIBILITIES**

**Victor Emanuel Nature Tours, Inc.**, a Texas corporation, and/or its agents (together, "**VENT**") act only as agents for the participant in regard to travel, whether by railroad, motorcar, motorcoach, boat, or airplane and assume no liability for injury, damage, loss, accident, delay, or irregularity which may be occasioned either by reason of defect in any vehicle or for any reason whatsoever, or through the acts or default of any company or person engaged in conveying the participant or in carrying out the arrangements of the tour. VENT accepts no responsibility for losses or additional expenses due to delay or changes in airfare or other services, sickness, weather, strike, war, quarantine, terrorism, or other causes. All such losses or expenses will be borne by the participant, as tour rates only provide for arrangements for the time stated.

VENT reserves the right (i) to substitute hotels of similar category, or the best reasonable substitution available under the circumstances, for those indicated and (ii) to make any changes in the itinerary that are deemed necessary by VENT or which are caused by third party transportation schedules (i.e. railroad, motorcar, motorcoach, boat, airplane, etc.).

VENT reserves the right to substitute leaders or guides on any tour. Where VENT, in its sole discretion, determines such substitution is necessary, it will notify tour participants.

VENT reserves the right to cancel any tour prior to departure with or without cause or good reason. See the VENT Cancellation & Refunds policy set forth above.

Tour prices are based on tariffs and exchange rates in effect on                     , 2025 and are subject to adjustment in the event of any change thereto.

VENT reserves the right to decline any participant's Registration Form and/or refuse to allow any participant to participate in a tour as VENT deems reasonably necessary, in its sole discretion. VENT also reserves the right to remove any tour participant from any portion of a tour as VENT deems necessary, in its sole discretion, reasons for such removal include but are not limited to, medical needs, injury, illness, inability to meet physical demands of a tour, personality conflict or situations in which such removal is otherwise in the best interest of the tour, the tour group and/or such participant. A participant may also voluntarily depart from a tour. If a participant is removed from a tour or voluntarily departs from a tour, such participant will be responsible for any expenses associated with such removal or departure, including but not limited to, transportation, lodging, airfare and meals, and VENT will have no obligation to refund or reimburse any such removed or departed participant for any tour payments or deposits previously paid by such participant.

Baggage is carried at the participant's risk entirely. No airline company, its employees, agents and/or affiliates (the "**Airline**") is to be held responsible for any act, omission, or event during the time participants are not on board the Airline's aircraft. The participant ticket in use by any Airline, when issued, will constitute the sole contract between the Airline and the purchaser of the tickets and/or the participant. The services of any I.A.T.A.N. carrier may be used for VENT tours, and transportation within the United States may be provided by any member carrier of the Airlines Reporting Corporation.

View the complete [Terms and Conditions](#) on our website.

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