

PRIVATE JOURNEYS WITH JOURNEY LATIN

ACTIVE CHILE: ANDEAN SKIING AND ATACAMA DESERT ADVENTURES

12 days from £6,820pp

CHILE / SANTIAGO AND THE VINEYARDS / ATACAMA DESERT

WITH OVER 40 YEARS EXPERIENCE, NO-ONE KNOWS LATIN AMERICA LIKE WE DO

EXPERIENCE SOMETHING EXTRAORDINARY

WHY US

We are the UK's No.1 specialist in travel to Latin America and have been creating award-winning holidays to every corner of the region for over four decades; we pride ourselves on being the most knowledgeable people there are when it comes to travel to Central and South America and passionate about it too.

OUR JOURNEY

As our name suggests, we are single-minded about Latin America. This is what sets us apart from other travel companies – and what allows us to offer you not just a holiday but the opportunity to experience something extraordinary on inspiring journeys throughout Mexico, Central and South America.

WE LOVE LATIN AMERICA

A passion for the region runs through all we do

All our Consultants have lived or travelled extensively in Latin America

Up-to-the-minute knowledge underpinned by 40 years' experience

TRAVEL WITH CONFIDENCE

Fully bonded and licensed

ATOL-protected

On your side when it matters

Book with confidence, knowing every penny is secure

THE REAL LATIN AMERICA

Our insider knowledge helps you go beyond the guidebooks

We hand-pick hotels with character and the most rewarding excursions

Let us show you the Latin America we know and love



OVERVIEW & OUTLINE ITINERARY

Seize the opportunity to ski in Portillo, Chile, where the season begins in July. Then head up to the Atacama Desert for limitless outdoor fun.

DAY 1	Transfer to your hotel in Santiago.
DAY 2	Transfer to Portillo ski resort in the Andes.
DAY 3-4	Three full days to ski at your leisure in Portillo.
DAY 6	Transfer to Santiago airport and fly to the Atacama Desert.
DAYS 7-10	Explore the volcanoes, salt flats, canyons and geysers around San Pedro de Atacama.
DAY 11	Fly to Santiago and overnight near the airport.
DAY 12	Depart Santiago

ITINERARY

Few places on Earth match up to the variety Chile can offer in one holiday. As summer gets into full swing in Europe and North America, Chile's higher Andean slopes are blanketed in a fresh carpet of snow and winter sports enthusiasts head for the ski runs high above Santiago. Chile's well-established ski resorts have always welcomed a steady trickle of adventurous international visitors between late June and mid-September. Our holiday offers you the opportunity to ski this year in the Andes, where you'll spend 4 days at the resort of Portillo. There's another excellent reason to head for Chile in the northern summer: it's the dry season in the high-altitude Atacama region, on the border with Bolivia. For the actively inclined, this is an invigorating spot to go walking, biking or horse riding among volcanoes, altiplanic lakes and horizon-stretching salt flats. This holiday operates every Friday between July and September.

DAY 1

Transfer to your hotel in Santiago.

Upon arrival in Chile's capital Santiago, you'll be taken by private transfer to your comfortable hotel in Vitacura on the city's outskirts. The afternoon is free to settle in and enjoy the hotel facilities. You may explore the city at your leisure or we can organise an optional walking tour upon request.

DAY 2

Transfer to Portillo ski resort in the Andes.

A transfer of just over 2 hours (160km) takes you high up into the Andes along the scenic highway connecting Chile with Argentina. Arriving at Portillo, check in to your hotel (after 2pm) and familiarise yourself with the set up here. An orientation tour is usually offered in the evening. We strongly advise you take time to acclimatise: Portillo is at 2,855m above sea level, not too far from Aconcagua – the highest peak in the Andes at just under 7,000m. (Please speak to us if you would like to extend your stay at Portillo).

DAY 3-4

Three full days to ski at your leisure in Portillo.

Portillo is all yours for the next three days. You can ski in and out of the hotel and there's about 500 hectares of skiable terrain to suit all levels here. Experienced skiers will feel most at home. There are 14 lifts and 45 runs: the resort classifies 15% of its terrain as suitable for beginners, 30% intermediate, 30% advanced and 25% expert. Some guests also snowboard at the resort and heli-skiing is on offer between July and September at extra cost. Equipment can be rented and you can sign up for ski classes, also at additional cost.

DAY 6

Transfer to Santiago airport and fly to the Atacama Desert.

Check out and transfer back to Santiago airport for a 2-hour flight to Calama in the Atacama Desert. Arriving in this sun-parched landscape is a dazzling contrast to the slopes of Portillo. You'll be transferred across the desert (1 hr) to the adobe oasis town of San Pedro de Atacama.

DAYS 7-10

Explore the volcanoes, salt flats, canyons and geysers around San Pedro de Atacama.

San Pedro de Atacama, at 2,400m above sea level sits amidst superb scenery. Although this is the Atacama, the transitional terrain here on the border with Bolivia is a far cry from the flat, featureless desert one might expect. Instead, you'll find salt-encrusted canyons, a chain of 6000m volcanoes, salt flats, geysers and altiplanic lagoons – and yes, there is the chance to run down a giant sand dune if the urge takes you. During these 4 days you'll be able to choose from a selection of small-group included activities – from scenic overland drives to short walks and longer treks, biking and horse riding. Excursions can reach altitudes of 4,500m or more, and your team of guides will be able to advise you in which order it's best to do them. Incidentally, the night sky is famous here, and you can also visit a local observatory. Be sure also to make time to enjoy the hotel's excellent indoor and outdoor pools and spa.

DAY 11

Fly to Santiago and overnight near the airport.

You'll be transferred (around lunchtime) to the airport at Calama for your return flight to Santiago. Upon arrival it's just a short stroll from the airport building to your hotel for a final positioning night. Ideal for a short stay, there's a pool, a good restaurant and plenty of space to relax. If you'd prefer to spend this final night in the city instead, let us know and we'll arrange it.

DAY 12

Depart Santiago

WHAT'S INCLUDED IN THE PRICE

Services of our team of experts in our London office

Services of Journey Latin America local representatives and guides

All land and air transport within Latin America

Accommodation as specified

Meals as specified

Excursions as specified, including entrance fees

INCLUDED EXCURSIONS

Skiing at Portillo

Excursions and activities at Explora in Atacama

WHAT'S NOT INCLUDED IN THE PRICE

Tips and gratuities

Meals other than specified

International flights to Latin America

Airport taxes, when not included in the ticket

Optional excursions

ESSENTIALS

TRANSPORT

2 internal flights of 2 hours; 4 road journeys of between 1 and 2½ hours.

ACCOMMODATION

Comfortable hotels of a mid range to upper mid range standard in Santiago and Portillo. First class lodge in San Pedro de Atacama.

MEALS

Full board (9 nights) is included in Portillo and at Explora in Atacama (from dinner on day of arrival to breakfast on day of departure). Breakfast (2 nights) is included in Santiago. Drinks are included at Explora in Atacama.

GUIDES

We carefully select our local partners, some of whom we have worked with for over 25 years. Their English-speaking guides understand the expectations of our clients very well, and are consistently singled out for praise by the latter on their return.

SUMMARY OF NIGHTS

12 days, 11 nights. Santiago (1 night), Portillo ski resort (4 nights), San Pedro de Atacama (5 nights), Santiago (1 night).

This holiday operates every Friday between July and September

CURRENCY

The unit of currency in Chile is the Chilean peso.

DAILY SPEND

A guideline budget of around US\$50 per person per day should cover the cost of meals and drinks not included in the holiday itinerary.

HOW TO TAKE IT

In Chile, we recommend paying for your extras at hotels (including hotel restaurant bills) with US\$ cash or by credit card. Such transactions are usually exempt of IVA (sales tax).

Cash machines are available in all major cities and towns, and so taking a debit or credit card with a PIN number is the most convenient way of withdrawing money while on your trip, and in most shops and restaurants you can also pay by card. However, since cards can get lost, damaged, withheld or blocked, you should not rely exclusively on a card to access funds.

We recommend that additionally you take a reasonable quantity of US dollars cash (no more than is covered by your insurance), which you can exchange into local currency. Dollar bills should be in good condition, soiled or torn bills may be refused. You can take sterling, but the exchange rate is not always competitive or even available, restricting the number of places where you can change money.

RECOMMENDED TIPPING

Tips are expected and local guides often rely on their tip as a significant proportion of their income.

Most service industry workers will expect a tip of some kind and so it is useful to have spare change for hotel porters, taxi drivers and the like. It is common to leave 10 – 12% in restaurants.

INSURANCE

Travel insurance, including for winter sports, is essential. Chile's authorities currently require visitors to have travel insurance with coverage for all expenses associated with Covid-19.

Journey Latin America's recommended insurance company is Campbell Irvine, and their medical and repatriation cover is handled by International Medical Assistance.

Details of our recommended policy can be found on our Travel Insurance page.

AIRPORT TAXES

If you have purchased your flights through Journey Latin America, the international departure tax is usually included in the ticket, and prepaid on regional flights in Chile.

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Generally this holiday is suitable for all able, reasonably fit visitors, including families. If you have a disability or special requirements, please call us.

You will be staying at an altitude of over 2,800m in Portillo and 2,400m in Atacama. In Atacama, it is common to visit locations over 4,000m above sea level (eg Tatio Geysers). Local guides can advise you about precautions against any ill effects generated by the thin air at altitude; most people only feel a little breathless. (See "Altitude" paragraph below).

CLIMATE

This holiday can operate between July and September, which is winter in Chile. It's often sunny and you can expect daytime highs of around 14-16c in Santiago, falling to just above freezing at night.

San Pedro de Atacama enjoys mild and sunny days with temperatures of up to 21c, with very cold desert nights (often below zero). Snow can affect some of San Pedro's higher-level attractions in winter.

Portillo has an average annual snowfall of around 7 metres. It is important to note that temperatures and snow seasons in the Andes are very variable and this has been the case especially in the last few years. The resort uses both real and artificial snow depending on conditions. The season begins in late June and lasts through September. July and August are the main winter months in Chile.

CLOTHING AND SPECIAL EQUIPMENT

You can rent skis and snowboards, boots and poles at Portillo. We recommend organising this in advance.

If you intend to bring your own ski equipment please let us so we can make any necessary arrangements for transporting or safe keeping them once in Chile.

For San Pedro de Atacama, be sure to pack walking shoes with good support, as terrain can be unstable and rocky. Protection against the sun is essential throughout.

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Preventative vaccinations are recommended against the following: typhoid; polio; tetanus; hepatitis A. For specific requirements you must consult your GP.

You can also find helpful information on the Masta Travel Health website.

VISAS

Holders of a full British passport do not require a visa, although passports must be valid for at least 6 months after the trip begins. Anyone with a different nationality should enquire with us or check with the relevant consulate.

If flying to the US, or via the US you will need to fill in your online ESTA application.

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GET IN TOUCH WITH US...

Our friendly, knowledgeable team of travel experts are always happy to chat about holiday ideas and share helpful advice. Give us a call today and begin planning your perfect trip to Latin America.

GIVE US A CALL

We'd love to chat

0208 747 8315

OPENING HOURS

Monday – Friday: 9am – 6pm

Saturday & Sunday: Closed

SEND US AN EMAIL

tours@journeylatinamerica.com