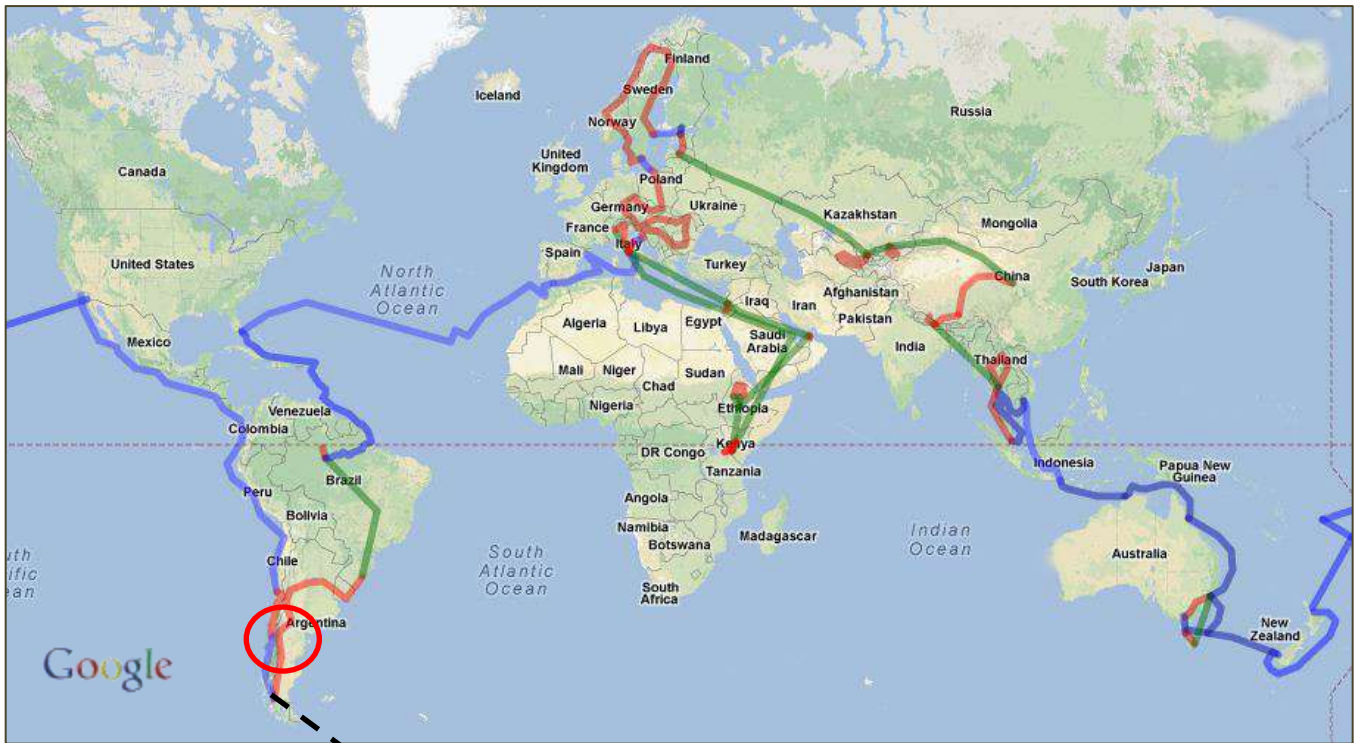




Trekking the Planet

Discovering the Cultural and Natural Significance of the World



Where are we now?

- Darren and Sandy are in Puerto Natales, Chile, located at 51° S and 72° W.
- We have traveled approximately 66,273 miles (106,700 kilometers) from our starting point in California.



People and Culture

- Prior to the arrival of the Spanish in the 16th century, the Incas ruled northern Chile while the indigenous Mapuche inhabited central and southern Chile. Although Chile declared its independence in 1810, victory over the Spanish was not achieved until 1818. In the War of the Pacific (1879-83), Chile defeated Peru and Bolivia and won its present northern regions.
- Chile has a population of about 17 million. The growth rate is less than one percent. Eighty-nine percent of population lives in cities. Santiago is the capital with approximately six million people.
- Seventy percent of the population is Roman Catholic with 15% Evangelical.
- Chile has a strong economy with a high level of trade. Exports account for more than one quarter of its economy. Copper alone provides one-third of government revenue.
- Most Chileans find that a wedding is not complete without a church ceremony. Because Chile is a class-conscious society, people in general marry persons from similar social and educational backgrounds. Chile is the only country in South America without a divorce law.



*On "the Hill" in Valparaiso
(source: Flickr.com/Alex E. Proimos)*

Rapa Nui People

The Rapa Nui, or Rapanui, are the native Polynesian inhabitants of Easter Island, which is claimed by Chile. The Rapa Nui people make up 60% of Easter Island's population, with some living also in mainland Chile. They speak the Rapa Nui language. At the 2002 census there were 3,304 island inhabitants—almost all living in the village of Hanga Roa on the sheltered west coast.



*sources: Wikipedia.org,
Flickr.com/Adrian Milliner*



Click above to listen to traditional Chilean folk music - English translation available (5:29)



*The little yellow-shouldered bat is native to Chile
(source: [Flickr.com/Ilan Ejzykowicz](http://Flickr.com/Ilan_Ejzykowicz))*

Atacama Trench

Atacama Trench (also known as the Peru-Chile Trench) is an oceanic trench in the eastern Pacific Ocean, about 100 miles (160 kilometers) off the coast of Peru and Chile. It reaches a maximum depth of 26,460 feet (8,065 meters) below sea level and is approximately 3,666 miles (5,900 kilometers) long.

source: Wikipedia.org



*El Tatio geyser field located in northern Chile at an elevation of 13,780 feet (4,200 meters)
(source: Flickr.com/mazzali)*

Nature and Environment

- Chile is located in southern South America, bordering the Pacific Ocean (west), Argentina (east) as well as Peru and Bolivia (north). Chile has one of the longest coastlines in the world at 4,039 miles (6,500 kilometers) long, but only 265 miles (430 kilometers) at its widest point east to west.
- Chile experiences significant volcanic activity due to the more than three-dozen active volcanoes situated within the Andes Mountains. Lascar is the most- active volcano in the northern Chilean Andes and last erupted in 2007. Llaima is also very active last erupted in 2009. Chaiten's 2008 eruption forced major evacuations.
- Chile's climate varies, ranging from one of the world's driest deserts – the Atacama – in the north, through a Mediterranean one in the center of the country, to a rainy temperate climate in the south.
- The highest lake in the world is on Ojos del Salado, which is the world's highest volcano. Ojos del Salado is located on the border between Argentina and Chile. The crater lake is located at 20,965 feet (6,390 meters) above sea level and is approximately 300 feet (100 meters) in diameter.

Our Plans

- We have just arrived in Puerto Natales and will be completing our final trek in Torres del Paine. This is the furthest south we will be on our entire expedition. Soon, we will board a ferry that will take us north towards the capital city of Santiago.
- After that we will be boarding a ship to travel up the Pacific Coast, visiting places along the way in South and North America.
- What would you like to know about Chile? Send us your ideas and we will try to include them!

More Information

- <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/ci.html>
- <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chile>
- <http://www.lakescientist.com/learn-about-lakes/lake-facts.html#highest>
- <http://kadmiels.hubpages.com/hub/Twenty-five-Interesting-Fact-About-Chile>
- <http://wanttoknowit.com/interesting-facts-about-chile/>
- <http://www.everyculture.com/Bo-Co/Chile.html>
- <http://www.southamerica.cl/Chile/Food.htm>

Torres del Paine National Park

Torres del Paine National Park was declared a Biosphere Reserve by UNESCO in 1978 and is a popular hiking destination. There are clearly marked and well-maintained paths and many refugios which provide shelter and basic services. Views are breathtaking.



*sources: Wikipedia.org,
Flickr.com/SzymonKochanski*

Our Partners



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