



VICTOR EMANUEL NATURE TOURS

ITINERARY

BEST OF NORTHERN CHILE: ATACAMA DESERT, NORTHERN ANDES, AND PACIFIC COAST

MARCH 14–28, 2026

©2025



Mountain Caracara © Fernando Diaz

The exciting program for this tour, VENT's first-ever tour of northern Chile, takes us on a breathtaking journey to enjoy the wonderful birds and wildlife of some of this captivating country's most unspoiled landscapes. With a focus on this remarkable area's natural history, this new itinerary also incorporates touches of history and culture, along with unparalleled opportunities to view Chile's famously dazzling night skies.

Our tour begins in San Pedro de Atacama, one of the driest places on Earth. Here in the Atacama Desert, wind-sculpted rock and botanical lushness contribute to vivid landscapes that are home to an array of hawks, pigeons, ground-tyrants, and finches. The Horned Coot, Andean Gull, Chilean and Andean flamingos, and Lesser Rhea all thrive amid the shimmering lakes, high grasslands, and snow-capped volcanoes of Los Flamencos National Reserve. We'll continue to the geysers of El Tatio, where plumes of steam shoot into the crisp morning air. In the evening, we'll enjoy world-class stargazing under some of the clearest skies on the planet, guided by expert astronomers using high-powered telescopes.



Vicuñas in the Altiplano © Fernando Díaz

Passing through the Atacama Desert, we'll arrive at Iquique, on Chile's Pacific coast. A boat trip out to the Humboldt Current will feature an exceptional assembly of albatrosses and other seabirds, along with a fine assortment of marine mammals. En route to Arica, we'll stop to marvel at the Atacama Giant, an enormous pre-Columbian figure etched into the hillside, thought to have served as an astronomical marker. Here we will search for the Chilean Woodstar, the country's most endangered bird. A visit to the Museum of San Miguel de Azapa introduces us to the fascinating legacy of the Chinchorro people, whose burial practices and artifacts offer deep insight into the early civilizations of South America.

Our journey concludes with several days in the Lluta River Valley and the wilderness parks of Lauca and Las Vicuñas. These reserves, high in the wild altiplano, are home to vicuñas, vizcachas, and a dazzling array of birdlife that includes waterfowl, flamingos, gulls, cinclodes, canasteros, and ground-tyrants, among the many other specialties of northern Chile.

Whether you're a seasoned birder or a traveler in search of a truly multidimensional experience, this innovative tour promises unforgettable encounters with the birds, wildlife, and culture of a genuinely extraordinary destination.

March 14–15, Days 1–2: Departure from home; arrival in Santiago, Chile. Participants will depart the USA on March 14 and arrive in Santiago on the morning of March 15 at Santiago's 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, **La Quinta by Wyndham Santiago Aeropuerto**.

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. The hotel features a bar, restaurant, indoor pool, and fitness center and spa. Surrounded by shopping, the hotel is also close to the Pudahuel subway station, providing easy access to Chile's vibrant capital city for those who wish to do some exploring on their own.

At 6:00 pm, we will meet in the lobby for a tour welcome and orientation and to enjoy our first dinner together in Chile, a chance to get to know each other and to discuss our plans for the exciting days ahead.

NIGHTS: Aboard international flight (March 14)
La Quinta by Wyndham Santiago Aeropuerto (March 15)

March 16, Day 3: Flight to Calama, and San Pedro de Atacama. We will leave our hotel early this morning for the two-hour flight to Calama. Capital of El Loa Province, Calama is a city of some 150,000, and has been continuously inhabited since Chile's prehistoric period. The country's longest river, the 275-mile Loa, flows through the city—which is, paradoxically, one of the driest settlements in the world, with an average of just 0.2 inches of rainfall a year.

From Calama, we will drive 90 minutes to San Pedro de Atacama, the small Andean town that serves as the gateway to the vast Atacama Desert. At an elevation of 8,000 feet, San Pedro enjoys a cool and dry climate, with March temperatures averaging 75° F in the afternoon and falling to a chilly 46° at night. In comparison to the parched conditions of nearby Calama, San Pedro is virtually dripping, with an average annual rainfall of 1.5 inches, most of which falls in January and February.

To help accustom ourselves to the high altitude, we will devote the rest of the day here to some easy-paced birding around San Pedro. Early winter is an excellent season for such fine local specialties as the handsome West Peruvian and Eared doves and Variable Hawk; today's outings are also likely to yield our first encounters with cinclodes, canasteros, ground tyrants, and other evocatively named South American groups.



Variable Hawk © Jean Paul de la Harpe

We may also find time for some relaxing in our excellent San Pedro hotel, which has an outdoor pool, a restaurant and coffee shop, and comfortable lounge chairs to soak in the afternoon sun.

NIGHT: Hotel La Casa de Don Tomás, San Pedro de Atacama

March 17, Day 4: Miscanti and Miñiques lagoons, and Los Flamencos National Reserve. After breakfast in our hotel, we will head south and up this morning to visit the lagoons of Miscanti and Miñiques, about ninety miles from San Pedro. These twin lakes, set in a sparkling mountainous landscape at an elevation of more than 13,000 feet, are famous as the Chilean stronghold of the very scarce and local Horned Coot, whose entire population in the country may number no more than 300 pairs. This is the second-largest coot species in the world, outweighed only by the appropriately named Giant Coot. Where most members of the genus sport a forehead shield, in the Horned Coot, the head is ornamented by a bizarre set of tufted wattles and a fleshy caruncle, making this bird as memorably distinctive as it is rare.

The coot shares its stunning home with such beautiful and sought-after species as Andean Goose, Golden-spotted Ground Dove, and Andean Gull. Among other land birds, we will



Andean Gull © Jean Paul de la Harpe

be looking for the Bright-rumped Yellow-Finch, Black Siskin, and a full suite of elegant sierra finches, including the Black-hooded, Plumbeous, and Ash-breasted Sierra Finches.



Miscanti and Miñiques Altiplano Lagoons (with Vicuña)
© Florencia Gehrung

After lunch beneath the sapphire skies of the Atacama, we will explore some of the other seven units of Los Flamencos National Reserve, famous worldwide for its eponymous flamingos and an impressive range of other species characteristic of these high-elevation desert wetlands and salt flats. Surrounded by some of the driest ground on earth, the azure lagoons are home to Puna Ibis, Puna Teal, and Puna Plover; Andean Avocet and Tawny-throated Dotterel fill out the list of lovely desert waders. We even have a chance here at the sometimes elusive Rufous-bellied Seedsnipe, largest of the four species in this weird family of quail-like shorebirds. We may also be visited by the odd Mountain Parakeet, which gleans seeds and fruit from the low, sparse vegetation.



Andean Avocet © Fernando Diaz

On the nearly bare ground surrounding the lakes, we will be on the lookout for Straight-billed Earthcreeper—a pudgy, long-tailed terrestrial furnariid—and the attractive, junco-like Red-backed Sierra Finch. Pairs or small flocks of the ground-dwelling Andean Negrito hunt the edges, energetically chasing their insect prey through the air or over the open ground.

We will return to San Pedro for dinner and a well-deserved night's rest in the tranquility of the Chilean desert.

NIGHT: Hotel La Casa de Don Tomás, San Pedro de Atacama

March 18, Day 5: Geysers of El Tatio and an evening of stargazing. We will make a very early departure today to witness the morning eruptions of the stunning El Tatio geysers, 50 miles north of San Pedro, near Calama. Situated a full 14,000 feet above sea level and covering some 12 square miles, El Tatio is the largest geothermal field in the Southern Hemisphere. In the past, when conditions were moister, El Tatio also had glaciers, their terminal moraines an odd site in the parched desert of today. The dry grasslands surrounding the geysers are home to Chinchillas, Viscachas, and Vicuñas, which eke a spare living out of the tussock grasses and cushion plants of this otherworldly landscape.

On our return drive to San Pedro, we will stop in one of the Atacama's most picturesque villages. Machuca, 50 miles north, is a pastoral settlement of two dozen houses surrounding an ancient church; the town's kitchens are famous for their outsize sopapillas. Tradition meets innovation here in a most piquant way: all of the residences in this ancient village are powered by solar panels. Among the birds we might meet up with on our visit are Chilean, Andean, and James's flamingos and Horned, Slate-colored, and Giant coots.



Giant Coot © Fernando Díaz

The Vados del Putana also lie along our route. This high-elevation oasis, at a wide spot in the shallow Putana River, offers spectacular views of the Andes and the Putana volcano. The emerald waters of the lush Putana wetlands, in starkest contrast to the surrounding desert, support a very diverse fauna and flora, including more than 90 species of birds, and a brief stop here brings with it chances at Silvery Grebe, Cream-winged and White-winged cinclodes, and a fine variety of ground-tyrants, sierra finches, and yellow- finches.

Once back at our hotel, we will have some time off to unwind and relax before dinner and a very special stargazing event. Thanks to the extremely low humidity and sparse settlement, the skies of the Atacama Desert are famously dark; in fact, the region is often styled the Astronomy Capital of the World. Tonight's new moon makes this the darkest night of the month, a perfect opportunity to observe the stars, the planets, and other celestial bodies and phenomena through powerful telescopes set up beneath some of the clearest skies on earth.

NIGHT: Hotel La Casa de Don Tomás, San Pedro de Atacama

March 19, Day 6: Iquique. We will check out this morning and continue our northward journey through the vast Atacama, toward the coastal city of Iquique, almost 200 miles beyond Calama. Our route takes us along the Pan-American Highway, which runs some 19,000 miles from Prudhoe Bay to Ushuaia. We will cover only a tiny fraction of that, of course, but the road leads us past ghost towns from the heyday of the international saltpeter trade, which thrived through the nineteenth and much of the twentieth centuries, when the availability of synthetic ammonia spelled doom for the mining towns.

Much of our drive traverses the Pampa del Tamarugal, a 5,000-square-mile plateau at a modest average elevation of 3,600 feet. This northern section of the Atacama Desert is named for the Chilean endemic tamarugo, a sturdy and hardy relative of the mesquites and acacias that is one of the few trees able to

withstand the harsh environment of these dry, saline landscapes. The highly local Tamarugo Conebill hunts the twigs and branches of the trees for lycaenid butterfly caterpillars, which make up more than 80% of the bird's diet. The nesting season of this intriguing species ends in March, after which some individuals move north and upslope into the Andean forests of northern Chile and Peru; others linger on the breeding grounds.

Our lovely hotel is about 80 miles east of the coast. After checking in, we may have some time for a swim or a rest before gathering for an excellent dinner in the hotel's restaurant.

NIGHT: Hotel Tantakuy, Tarapacá

March 20, Day 7: Pelagic birding from Iquique. The effects of the Humboldt Current are largely responsible for the aridity of the Atacama Desert: the cold, low-salinity waters of the current cool the air above them so much that the moisture in the air forms clouds and fog, but only rarely condenses into rain.

At the same time, the waters of the Humboldt Current itself, emerging from the seabed off southern Chile and sweeping vital nutrients north, create a remarkably productive marine ecosystem, abounding in life from plankton to swordfish. Naturally, this wealth of oceanic life attracts an equally fascinating array of seabirds, and we will embark early this morning on a six-hour pelagic trip from the port of Iquique. Chile's seabirding is widely acknowledged as some of the very best the world has to offer, and even half-day trips into the Humboldt Current have produced more than 50 species of marine and pelagic birds, among them albatrosses, shearwaters, petrels, storm-petrels, diving-petrels, cormorants, and gulls and terns.



Peruvian Diving-Petrel © Fernando Diaz

At this date, we can hope to encounter Bullock's and Salvin's albatrosses, Peruvian Diving-Petrel, Humboldt Penguin, Red-legged Cormorant, or Inca Tern. We will be paying special attention to Chile's unique constellation of stellar storm-petrels, including Elliot's, Markham's, and perhaps Hornby's storm-petrels among the possibilities. White-chinned Petrel and Southern Giant-Petrel have also been recorded on trips from Iquique, and given the well-known propensity of so many seabirds to stray wildly from their

“normal” ranges, virtually anything is possible this morning. Happily, an excellent [summary of seabird occurrences off Chile is available online](#), a good resource to review before our excursion: feathered fortune favors the prepared.



Inca Tern © Fernando Diaz

We will be back on shore slightly after 12:30 pm, and lunch at a seafood restaurant will deepen our feeling of kinship with the ocean birds. The rest of the day will be devoted to the desert coast, in search of waterbirds such as Blackish Oystercatcher, Gray and Belcher’s gulls, and Inca Tern; we will also be on the lookout for Seaside and Gray-flanked cinclodes.

NIGHT: Hotel Tantakuy, Tarapacá

March 21, Day 8: The Atacama Giant and Arica. We will check out from our hotel this morning to continue north, with a stop to admire one of the most impressive of South America’s geoglyphs, the astonishing Atacama Giant. Some 5,000 “earth drawings” are known from the Atacama, but this one dwarfs all the others, stretching nearly 400 feet across the parched hillside of Cerro Unita. Said to have been carved into the rock between 600 and 1000 years ago, the figure’s function remains unknown but is, inevitably, conjectured to have been astronomical.

South of the city of Arica, about 140 miles from Iquique, we will carefully search for the tiny Chilean Woodstar. This critically endangered hummingbird owns the unenviable distinction of being the most severely range-restricted bird species of the continent’s entire Southern Cone. Its range continues to shrink: once possibly found in nearby Peru as well, it is now strictly a Chilean endemic, limited entirely to thickets in three northern river valleys. The woodstar was still fairly common as recently as 20 years ago, but a 2020 study found the global population to have diminished to as few as 210 individuals. This startling decrease is thought to be the result of habitat loss, pesticides, and competition with other hummingbird species.



Chilean Woodstar © Fernando Diaz

The near-threatened Markham's Storm-Petrel is even more mysterious. The species was long virtually unknown even at sea, and it was not until this century that it began to give up its secrets, with the discovery in the 2010s of its astonishing nesting behavior: these tiny seabirds breed in caves beneath the saltpeter deposits of the Atacama Desert, sometimes as far as 15 miles from the open waters where they feed.

We will have the privilege to visit a colony of these amazing birds to learn more about their fascinating behavior and ecology. Some pairs may be busily engaged in raising young, while others may not begin nesting activity until months later; the reasons for this allochrony are, like so much else about this species, still unclear.

We will end our full day on the coast at Arica, settling in to our hotel for dinner and a good night's rest before continuing our explorations in the morning.

NIGHT: Hotel Apacheta, Arica

March 22, Day 9: Chaca and the San Miguel de Azapa Museum. Just to the south of Arica, the Chaca Valley and other nearby fertile habitats are home to good numbers of birds, among them the woodstar and both Tamarugo and Cinereous conebills. We will also be looking for the "Peruvian" White-crested Elaenia, Pied-crested Tit-tyrant, Raimondi's Yellow-Finch, and Peruvian Pipit; nearer the coast itself, we may run into Grayish Miner.

After lunch, we will visit the San Miguel de Azapa Archeological Museum on the east side of Arica. English-language audio guides provide full information about the exhibits, which cover the period from about 7,000 BC to the Spanish invasion of the 1540s. A new hall, set in the museum grounds' olive trees, is dedicated to the coastal culture known as the Chinchorro, expert fishermen and textile artists who lived on the shores of northern Chile and Peru until about 1500 BC. The Chinchorro are famous today especially for their mortuary practices, which involved producing "mummies" several thousand years before the Egyptians hit

upon a similar method of preserving their dead. The displays here include mummies of both adults and children, clothing, ornaments, and life-size dioramas.

We will return to our Arica hotel for dinner and the night.

NIGHT: Hotel Apacheta, Arica

March 23, Day 10: The Lluta River, Molinos, and Putre. As we climb into the valley of the Lluta River, the landscape will shift dramatically on our approach to the pre-puna slopes of the Andes. We will pass hillsides etched centuries ago with geoglyphs by the first inhabitants of the desert on our way to this prime locality for observing the birds of extreme northern Chile. The characteristic scrub of this high-elevation habitat is ideal for finding distinctive passerines such as White-browed Chat-Tyrant, Canyon and Creamy-breasted canasteros, and Black-throated Flowerpiercer. Here, too, we can hope to encounter the beautiful Andean Hillstar, a stocky hummingbird that has been found as high as 16,400 feet above sea level.

After what is sure to be an exciting morning in the Lluta Valley, we will move on to Molinos, an agricultural area good for a very different suite of attractive birds, including Spot-winged Pigeon, Oasis Hummingbird, and Groove-billed Ani. The Vermilion Flycatchers here are of the South American *obscurus* group of subspecies: typical males are somewhat drabber than those of other races, and we may even meet with melanistic individuals, in which the rose or crimson of the crown and underparts are replaced by chocolate brown.

We will make our way to Putre, a historic town in the shadow of mighty 19,200-foot Volcán Taapacá. Putre is known particularly for the ornate facades of its beautiful houses and its peaceful atmosphere. We plan to arrive in this, our base for the next days, in time for dinner this evening.

NIGHT: Hotel Q'antati, Putre

March 24–25, Days 11–12: Lauca National Park and Las Vicuñas National Reserve. We have a full two days to explore these stunning altiplano parks and their wildlife. Together with Salar de Surire, the two refuges form the Lauca Biosphere Reserve, 1400 square miles of meadows, gorges, lava outcrops, and sparkling saltpans; freshwater and saline lakes and marshes and perennially flowing rivers and streams complete the delightful mosaic of habitats.



Snow-capped volcanoes in the altiplano © Fernenado Diaz

Lauca and Las Vicuñas are famous worldwide for the ease with which many of the area's birds and mammals can be observed. This is due in large part to the area's remoteness and to the light human impact on the reserves: the only permanent residents here are the 200 Aymara people following traditional lifeways on the puna, and tourists are relatively scarce and mostly Chilean.



James's Flamingos © Fernando Diaz

Among the unique habitats to be seen here are the Andean bofedales, complexes of small, shallow wetlands surrounded by cushion plants and tuft-forming grasses. The green, peaty surfaces of the bofedal offer an attractive contrast to the turquoise of the open lakes, the stark grays of the mountain slopes, and the parched yellows and browns of the drier surrounding vegetation.

Bofedales are said to exhibit the highest levels of bioproductivity anywhere in the puna, and the combination of water, mineral nutrients, and relatively moist air means that an impressive 60+ plant species are known from these wetlands in Chile. Frogs and toads, snails, and crustaceans live in the water, a precious resource that also attracts deer, vicuñas, Pumas, and rodents.

Birds, too, are common in these habitats, and our sightings over our two days here may include Andean Goose, all three of the high-elevation flamingo species, Andean Lapwing, Mountain Caracara, and Glacier Finches. White-tufted Grebes dive for fish in the deeper pools, and with luck, we may even tally the gorgeous Diademed Sandpiper-Plover on stony ground near the bofedales. We will be especially alert to the possibility of the shy Puna and Ornate tinamous.



Glacier Finch © Fernando Diaz

NIGHTS: Hotel Q'antati, Putre

March 26, Day 13: Polylepis woodlands and the return to Arica. Our gradual descent from the high elevations of the Andes and puna will start with a visit to the fascinating polylepis woodlands. Polylepis trees, endemic to South America's mountains, are members of the rose family, growing from knee-high to, in some places, 40 feet. Generally forming small, dense pockets of woodland, some species are threatened by human harvesting, and all are believed to be "weak competitors," meaning that as other trees advance upslope with global warming, they may replace stands of polylepis entirely. Here in Chile, these imperiled forests are the home of such sought-after birds as Giant Conebill, D'Orbigny's Chat Tyrant, and Thick-billed Siskin. Among the mammals we will be looking for is the rare Taruca, a medium-sized gray deer whose fawns are usually born in March.

It is slightly more than a two-hour drive back to Arica, where we will check in to our hotel before gathering for a festive final dinner together.

NIGHT: Hotel Apacheta, Arica

March 27, Day 14: To Santiago; departures for home. An early flight will return us to Santiago. As most flights from Santiago to the US do not depart until very late in the evening, we have arranged for hotel rooms to be available from 3:00 this afternoon until our transfers to the airport.

DAY ROOM or NIGHT: La Quinta by Wyndham Santiago Aeropuerto

March 28, Day 15: Arrival at home. Flights from Santiago to the USA departing in the night of March 27 will arrive today, March 28.

ESSENTIAL TOUR INFORMATION

TOUR SIZE: This tour will be limited to 10 participants.

TOUR LEADERS: This tour is led by **Raymond van Buskirk** and local leader **Eduardo (Lalo) Navarro**.



Raymond L. VanBuskirk has been leading tours for over a decade throughout the Western Hemisphere, from Alaska to Chile and most parts in between. An expert birder, he has guided travelers 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, spending a great deal of time in the Pacific studying pelagic species, and has also led tours in Asia and in Africa. Raymond's longtime commitment to ornithology has led him to research positions 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. Helping to guide the next generation of birders, he has been a regular instructor at the ABA's youth birding camps and at Maine's Hog Island Audubon camps.

Raymond is committed to including everyone in birding, and he 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 home in St. Louis, Missouri, with his partner, Marissa; his 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: The fee for this tour is **\$13,995** per person in double occupancy from Santiago, Chile. This includes all meals from dinner on Day 1 to dinner on Day 13, twelve nights shared accommodations, day-room use on Day 13, domestic flights, ground transportation during the tour, tipping, park entrance fees, and guide services provided by the tour leaders. It does not include airfare from your home to Santiago, Chile, and return, alcoholic beverages, special gratuities, phone calls, laundry, or items of a personal nature. Rates are based on group tariffs; if the tour does not have sufficient registration, a small-party supplement may have to be charged.

SINGLE SUPPLEMENT: The single supplement for this tour is **\$1,095**. You will be charged a single supplement if you desire single accommodations, or if you prefer to share but have no roommate and we cannot provide one for you.

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 **\$3,000** is due 210 days prior to departure (August 16, 2025). We accept MasterCard and Visa for both deposits. If you choose not to register online, you may pay your deposit by credit card, check, money order, or bank transfer. If not paying online, or by card, your tour space will be held for 10 days pending receipt of your deposit.

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 150 days (October 15, 2025) 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 impose 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: Refunds, if any, for any cancellation by a participant are made according to the following schedule: If participant cancels 210 days or more before the tour departure date, a cancellation fee of **\$500** per person will be charged unless the deposit is transferred to a new registration for another VENT tour that will operate within the next 12 months from the date of participant tour cancellation, in which case the cancellation fee will be **\$100** per person. If cancellation is made between 209 and 151 days before departure date, the deposit is not refundable, but any payments covering the balance of the tour fee will be refunded. If cancellation is made fewer than 150 days before departure date, no refund is available. **For participants' protection, we strongly recommend the purchase of travel insurance that covers trip cancellation/interruption.**

| <u>If participant cancels:</u> | <u>Participant's refund will be:</u> |
|--|---|
| 210 days or more before departure date | Your deposit(s) minus \$500* |
| 209 to 151 days before departure date | No refund of the deposits, but any payments on the balance will be refunded |
| 150 days or less before departure date | No refund available |

*Unless the deposit is transferred to a new registration for another VENT tour that will operate within the next 12 months from the date of participant tour cancellation, in which case the cancellation fee will be \$100 per person. To qualify, cancellation must occur 180 days or more before departure date; deposit transfers must be made at the time of cancellation; and one transfer per deposit.

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 read the remainder of this 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 your luggage to one medium-sized bag and one carry-on. The airlines 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 \(TSA\)](https://www.tsa.gov) for information pertaining to permissible carry-on items.

TRAVEL DOCUMENTS:

PASSPORTS: A passport is required for entry to Chile. It must be valid for the full duration of your time in the country. If you need to obtain or renew a passport, you should get it well in advance of your trip departure date.

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, most post offices, or your county clerk's office. You may also visit <https://www.state.gov/travel/> 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 please do not pack it in your checked luggage.

On arriving in Chile, you will be issued a **tourist card**, good for 90 days (extensions are available). You must keep this card and present it at the airport on leaving the country at the end of your visit.

VISAS: Visas (are/are not) required for entry by United States citizens. Non-United States citizens should check with their consulate/embassy for instructions. On arriving in Chile, you will be issued a tourist card, good for 90 days (extensions are available). You must keep this card and present it at the airport on leaving the country at the end of your visit.

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 will likely be cold at times in the mountains, especially at high elevation and in the mornings. 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.
- **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, especially at the highest elevations. A jacket may also be useful on our boat trip, when conditions at sea could be quite cool.
- **Warm, waterproof gloves and mittens** – Strongly recommended. Although the days warm quickly, the air could be quite cool at higher elevations.
- **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. A broad-brimmed hat, like a tilly hat, provides the best protection, but please bring a baseball cap at the very least.

- **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 the cooler temperatures possible at the highest elevations.
- **Swimsuit** – Bring a swimsuit if you like to swim, as most of our hotels have pools.

FOOTWEAR: For footwear, we recommend a good trail-walking shoe or sturdy 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:

- **Backpack** – good for carrying extra clothing, field guides, supplies, and optical equipment during our 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: Average March highs in Santiago and in the Atacama Desert region are in the mid-70s (°F), with lows falling to 40 at night. Along the coast, such as at Arica and Iquique, daytime highs reach the middle to upper 70s. At higher elevations in the Andes, high temperatures also reach the mid-70s, but the mornings are often much cooler at this time of the year, with temperatures dropping to around 50, and even into the upper 40s. The entire north of Chile is among the driest regions in the world, and, for this reason, sunny days are the norm. Any precipitation that falls is likely to be in the form of a brief shower. The humidity is usually extremely low.

SUN EXPOSURE: The sun's ultraviolet rays are dangerous, even in the austral fall and winter. Anytime you are outdoors for even a very short time, protect your skin, including your lips, eyes, nose, and ears.

Severe sunburn is potentially very painful and will affect your level of enjoyment. Be sure to bring an ample supply of high-SPF sunscreen and lip balm. We strongly recommend ultraviolet-blocking, polarized sunglasses as well.

CONDITIONS: Our days will be full of exciting new experiences, but the overall pace of this tour ranges from relaxed to moderate. We will make excursions to high elevations, where we will pay particular attention to maintaining good hydration and taking advantage of appropriate opportunities for rest. Please see the section hereafter entitled ALTITUDE.

Most of the wildlife and bird species we will be looking for are relatively easy to observe, including many of the endemics and regional specialties. A few groups, such as tinamous and seedsnipes, typically require more patience to locate and see.

There are two internal flights on this tour. Ground transportation will be in sprinter vans or a small bus. Everyone will have a window seat on our drives, some of which approach five hours on good roads and highways. On our drives, we will make regular stops for restrooms.

Much of our birding will be along quiet roads and trails. Walking conditions are easy to moderate over mostly easy terrain. If you have mobility or stability challenges, a walking stick can provide extra support over bumpier ground.

The boat used on our six-hour pelagic trip from Iquique has seating for everyone, an indoor space for bags, and basic restroom facilities. Lifejackets, supplied by the boat company, must be worn through the entire voyage. If the day is clear, solar radiation will be very strong, making wide-brimmed hats and sunscreen absolutely essential. If the early morning is windy, it may be quite cool, and a second warm layer of clothing is always recommended. Waterproof or water-resistant jacket and pants keep out the wind and any splashes. Weather conditions can change quickly at sea, and there is always the possibility that the trip may take place on a day other than that indicated in the itinerary above.

To help prevent dizziness or motion sickness on the boat, try to get a good night's sleep the night before, and avoid alcohol that evening. A relatively light dinner and light breakfast will decrease the chances of somatch upset. There are medications that help, too; before traveling to Chile, consult your physician about dosages and side effects.

Most of our meals will be in our hotel restaurants. On some days, we will take boxed lunches with us to eat in the field. We try to be back at our lodging on most days with time for a drink, a swim, or simply a brief rest before dinner.

ALTITUDE:

This tour reaches significantly high elevations in the Andes, to almost 15,000 feet on a few of the days. The air is very thin at these elevations, and the risk of developing altitude sickness is real. We will always make a point of walking slowly, avoiding unnecessary exertion, staying well hydrated, and closely monitoring our responses to the relative lack of oxygen. Your guides will be outfitted with supplemental oxygen, available to anyone who shows signs of distress. **Please consult your physician about any concerns about travel at high elevation.**

Altitude sickness: Altitude sickness is a condition that can occur when the body doesn't have time to adjust to lower oxygen availability higher up in the atmosphere. The condition, which can occur anywhere above 7000 feet, can range in severity from mild to extremely dangerous. Acute altitude

sickness is most often revealed by a headache at high elevation, which may be accompanied by nausea and/or fatigue. These symptoms are a common experience even at ski resorts in the western United States, which are at a significantly lower elevation than the altitudes on the Best of Northern Chile tour. For example, these symptoms are not uncommon among people staying near the base of the mountains in Aspen, Colorado, or Mammoth Mountain, California, which are at only approximately 8000 feet altitude. Taking Tylenol or an NSAID and drinking copious amounts of water help with these symptoms, as does supplementary oxygen, but the symptoms may be avoided with a prophylactic medication prescribed by a physician.

There is a tendency to think “it won’t happen to me,” but it certainly can. To help prevent severe altitude sickness, avoid tobacco and alcohol consumption, increase your intake of fluids, and do not take sleeping pills. Altitude sickness seems to be more frequent in people suffering from diseases such as anemia, COPD, angina, heart failure, and cystic fibrosis, among others; a recent heart attack or stroke may also predispose you to dangerous altitude sickness.

For additional important information about altitude sickness, its causes, symptoms, and preventive measures, visit the [CDC website’s “High-Altitude Travel and Altitude Illness” page](#).

Though we avoid extreme exertion on our outings, this tour involves limited walking at high elevation, so good mobility, stamina, and balance are required to participate in this tour. If you have found high elevations challenging before, or have any health conditions that might be aggravated by high elevation, consult your physician.

FOOD & WATER: In northern Chile, the food and water are generally safe for visitors. Tap water is potable in most major cities such as Arica and Iquique, though many travelers prefer bottled or filtered water, which is widely available. Restaurants and hotels that work with international tourists maintain good standards of hygiene, so there will not be concerns when dining in the places included in our program. We recommend drinking only bottled water in more remote areas. **Bottled and/or purified water will always be available at all locations throughout the tour.**

CURRENCY & SPENDING: Your trip to Chile includes all necessary expenses. The official currency is the Chilean Peso (CLP). Credit cards are widely used, but you are likely to find cash more convenient for drinks, stamps, laundry, and other small personal expenses. Some shops accept major credit cards, while cash is the rule for many smaller vendors. It is best to carry small denominations of cash as places we visit may be unable to provide change for large bills. VENT recommends acquiring local currency before leaving home, or at the airport or an ATM upon arrival in Chile.

You can check the latest currency conversion rate by visiting [“XE-The World’s Favorite Currency Site”](#).

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

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: Wi-Fi is usually available in the common areas and in some guest rooms at our hotels. Neither internet nor cell phone coverage should be expected at more distant localities.

LANGUAGE: Spanish is the primary language spoken in Chile, but English is spoken by some of the staff at most hotels.

TIME: Chile is on Chilean Standard Time (CLT) and in March is 1 hour ahead of Eastern Standard Time (EST).

LAUNDRY SERVICE: Laundry service is available at our hotels at additional cost. To save time, though, it is best to pack enough clothing to get you through the entire tour.

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. 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.

BITING INSECTS: Mosquitos could be present during our time at the coast; otherwise, biting insects are not a concern on this tour. You might pack a repellent if you have concerns. Wearing pants, long-sleeved shirts and a hat is the recommended measure for preventing bites.

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. Canadian citizens should check the website of the [Public Health Agency of Canada](http://www.healthcanada.gc.ca).

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 which has a wide selection; www.buteobooks.com and www.nhbs.com which specialize in ornithology and natural history books; and www.abebooks.com for out-of-print and hard-to-find titles.

FIELD GUIDES:

BIRDS

Either of the following two field guides are excellent options for this tour.

Cifuentes, Gonzalo E. Gonzáles and Daniel E. Martinez 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. It is lightweight and portable.

Jaramillo, Alvaro., et al. *Birds of Chile*. Princeton: Princeton University Press. 2003. Also available in Spanish as *Aves de Chile* (Barcelona: Lynx, 2005). This excellent guide was/is the standard for bird identification in Chile, featuring excellent plates, text, and interesting taxonomic notes. It is also lightweight and easily portable.

Howell, Steve. *Oceanic Birds of the World*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2019. An excellent newer resource for seabird identification. Highly recommended.

GENERAL NATURAL HISTORY

Chester, Sharon. *A Wildlife Guide to Chile*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2008.

HISTORY AND CULTURE

Allende, Isabelle. *My Invented Country*. New York: HarperVia, 2020.

Collier, Simon and William Sater. *A History of Chile, 1808–2002*. Cambridge Latin American Studies 82. 2nd ed. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004.

Franco, Richard. *Imagining the Atacama Desert*. Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 2018.

Hutchinson, Elizabeth Quay, et al., *The Chile Reader*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2013 ed.

Scott-Stokes, Natascha. *Tales from the Sharp End*. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2024.

CORNELL LAB OF ORNITHOLOGY APPS & ONLINE RESOURCES

eBird: Among the largest and most successful citizen science projects in existence, eBird is an essential tool in promoting bird study and conservation. Among a range of benefits, eBird allows users to keep a variety of lists in a single application. When taxonomic splits are incorporated, lists are automatically updated. Additionally, trip leaders can share daily lists, so one only need accept a shared list and it will upload to your files! **Highly recommended.**

MERLIN BIRD ID: Merlin is an app designed as a birding coach for beginning and intermediate bird watchers. Excellent for use in the field, Merlin asks the observer a series of questions regarding his or her bird sighting, including date and location, and color, size, and behavior of a bird. Merlin then processes the viewer's responses to present a shortlist of possible identifications, from which the user can choose the likely bird. Species profiles include a brief physical description, photographs, and sound samples. The Photo ID feature allows anyone with a camera to snap a photo and obtain a list of suggestions. Merlin's Sound ID feature allows identification of birds through audible recognition. To use Merlin, download the app, followed by the appropriate regional "pack." The pack for this tour is **Chile**.

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 August 22, 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.

8/21/2025 – RWBL
8/22/2025-CD / DE