

WorldDenver Presents:

STAYCATIONS

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CHILLING IN CHILE

Look! In the sky! Is it a bird, plane, or maybe even a UFO?! Welcome to the Republic of Chile, one of the only governments in the world with an official department dedicated to research into Unidentified Flying Objects. Talk about close encounters of the Chilean kind! Chile is also home to the Atacama Desert, the driest place on Earth, and one of the best places for stargazing and observing the Milky Way. The internationally funded Atacama Large Millimeter Array (ALMA) project was inaugurated in 2013, with the aim of looking at the first stars and galaxies that emerged from the cosmic “dark ages” around 13 billion years ago.

CULTURE

Chile is also home to the tallest building in South America, the Costanera Gran Torre. With 64 floors and two observation decks on the top two floors, visitors can enjoy jaw-dropping views of the city and the surrounding Andes Cordillera. Stretching 4,620km (2,647mi) north-to-south, Chile is the longest country in the world, and 150 of its citizens live even further south than Chile’s southernmost point of Cape Horn. In fact, Chile has one of the only two permanent civilian bases on the continent of Antarctica. Named “Villa Las Estrellas,” the small town is home to a school, a hospital, a post office, and even a small souvenir store. Explore the Museo Histórico Nacional to learn about sculptures, paintings, and artifacts of important figures that helped Chile to emerge and develop into the nation as it is today. This State funded museum holds over 555,000 artifacts of historical importance alongside the history of Chile’s independence and growth.

CUISINE

Breakfast in Santiago, Chile’s capital city, is nothing without a chunk of fresh white bread. As the world’s second-largest bread consumer (Germany is the first!), Chileans enjoy an incredible \$1300 million U.S. dollars worth of bread annually. That’s a lot of bread! The popularity of bread likely dates back to the late 19th and early 20th century, when Europeans immigrated to Chile through the port city of Valparaíso. One theory says a pair of brothers named “Marraquette” arrived from France and started baking bread, and their recipe came to be called marraqueta. The popular four-roll shape is made by pressing together two balls of dough, then nearly splitting them down the middle lengthwise before baking. Marraqueta generally contains only water, flour, salt, and yeast, and is baked in an oven with a pan of water, which creates steam for a hearty crust, similar to what Americans would recognize as French bread. This bread is eaten with almost every meal, and is so paramount to Chilean national

identity that there is an annual baking competition in Santiago to find the best locally made marraqueta in the city. The judges look at the bread's volume, color, shine, crunchiness, and thickness of the crust. Do you think you have what it takes to compete? Try it now!

BEVERAGE

Did you join us on our trip to Machu Picchu? If so, you may remember how a couple of mint juleps, a murder, and a train ride led to the advertisement of the (Peruvian) Pisco Sour in 1927. However Chile begs to differ and claims Pisco, the brandy used for the cocktail, is Chilean, and thus it does not matter where the cocktail was created. In Chile, the drink is prepared similarly, but with Chilean pisco, pica lime, and without the bitters and egg white. One could say that Peruvians get to claim the Pisco Sour cocktail, while Chile actually produces Pisco, but either way, both nations can agree in celebration of the invention of South America's most famous grape brandy. Try one for yourself, and let us know if you like the Peruvian or Chilean version better!