

An aerial photograph of Santiago, Chile, showing a dense urban landscape with a mix of modern skyscrapers and older buildings. The Transamerica Tower is the most prominent structure in the center. The city is surrounded by green hills and mountains in the background under a blue sky with light clouds.

SANTIAGO AREA BY AREA

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Santiago at a Glance

The capital, Santiago, is the largest city in Chile, home to more than one-third of the country's population. Urban Santiago covers an area of 248 sq miles (641 sq km) across a basin between the Andes to the immediate east and the coastal cordillera to the west. The Río Mapocho bisects the city, and Santiago's main points of interest lie along the river. These include the neighborhoods of Las Condes, Vitacura, Providencia, Bellavista, and Santiago Centro (also known as downtown Santiago). Residential areas fan out into the foothills of the Andes, and toward the west, away from Parque Metropolitano de Santiago.



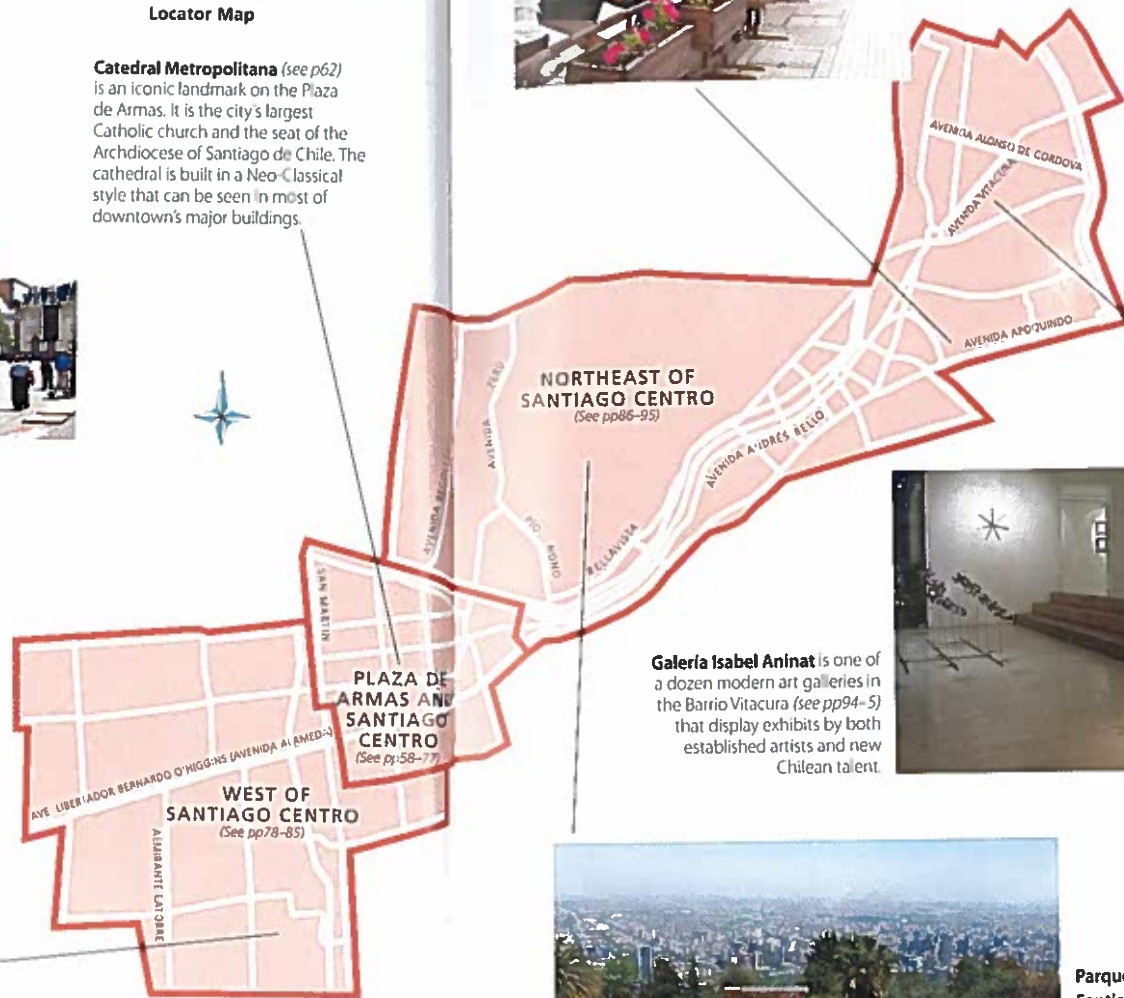
Catedral Metropolitana (see p62) is an iconic landmark on the Plaza de Armas. It is the city's largest Catholic church and the seat of the Archdiocese of Santiago de Chile. The cathedral is built in a Neo-Classical style that can be seen in most of downtown's major buildings.



Club Hípico's architectural grandeur (see p85), set amid the faded elegance of the República neighborhood, is a testament to Santiago's economic boom during the late 19th century.



Locator Map



Galería Isabel Aninat is one of a dozen modern art galleries in the Barrio Vitacura (see pp94-5) that display exhibits by both established artists and new Chilean talent.



Parque Metropolitano de Santiago (see pp88-9) is a forested recreational park and the lungs of Santiago. The park features walking trails, a botanical garden, swimming pools, the city zoo, and a cable car for aerial views.



Barrio El Golf (see p94) is part of the larger neighborhood of Las Condes, which is nicknamed Sanhattan for its modern, glitzy skyscrapers. Dozens of excellent restaurants line Avenida Isidora Goyenechea and Avenida El Bosque in Barrio El Golf.

PLAZA DE ARMAS AND SANTIAGO CENTRO

Established in 1541 by Pedro de Valdivia, the Plaza de Armas began as the civic and commercial nucleus of Santiago. The area around it became site of the court of law, the cathedral, the governor's palace, and the residential homes of Chile's principal conquistadores. Over the years, many of

these buildings fell victim to earthquake or fire, and what remains today dates largely from the 18th century. The plaza and Santiago Centro are now the major social hub of downtown Santiago, where locals and visitors alike relax and are entertained by street performers.

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See also Street Finder maps 2 & 3

◀ The magnificent central nave of Catedral Metropolitana

For keys to symbols see back flap

Street-by-Street: Plaza de Armas

The symbolic heart of Santiago, the Plaza de Armas (Arms Plaza) was designed to suit the Spanish norm of leaving one block of a city grid empty for use as a parade ground. Government offices ringed the plaza during the Colonial years, and in the 17th century, it became a thriving commercial area with shopping galleries stretching around the perimeter. In 2000, the square was cleared, leaving only a handful of tall trees and palms, to create more open spaces in the city. Today, it is a vibrant social center drawing people who come here to rest on park benches, play chess, or enjoy the lively atmosphere and street performances.



1 **Palacio de los Tribunales de Justicia**
Chile's Supreme Court occupies a Neo-Classical building with French influences. An architectural masterpiece, its vaulted glass-and-metal ceiling runs the length of the edifice.



2 ★ **Museo Chileno de Arte Precolombino**
Housed in the Palacio de la Real Aduana, the Museo Chileno de Arte Precolombino highlights the arts and symbols of pre-Columbian cultures in the Americas.

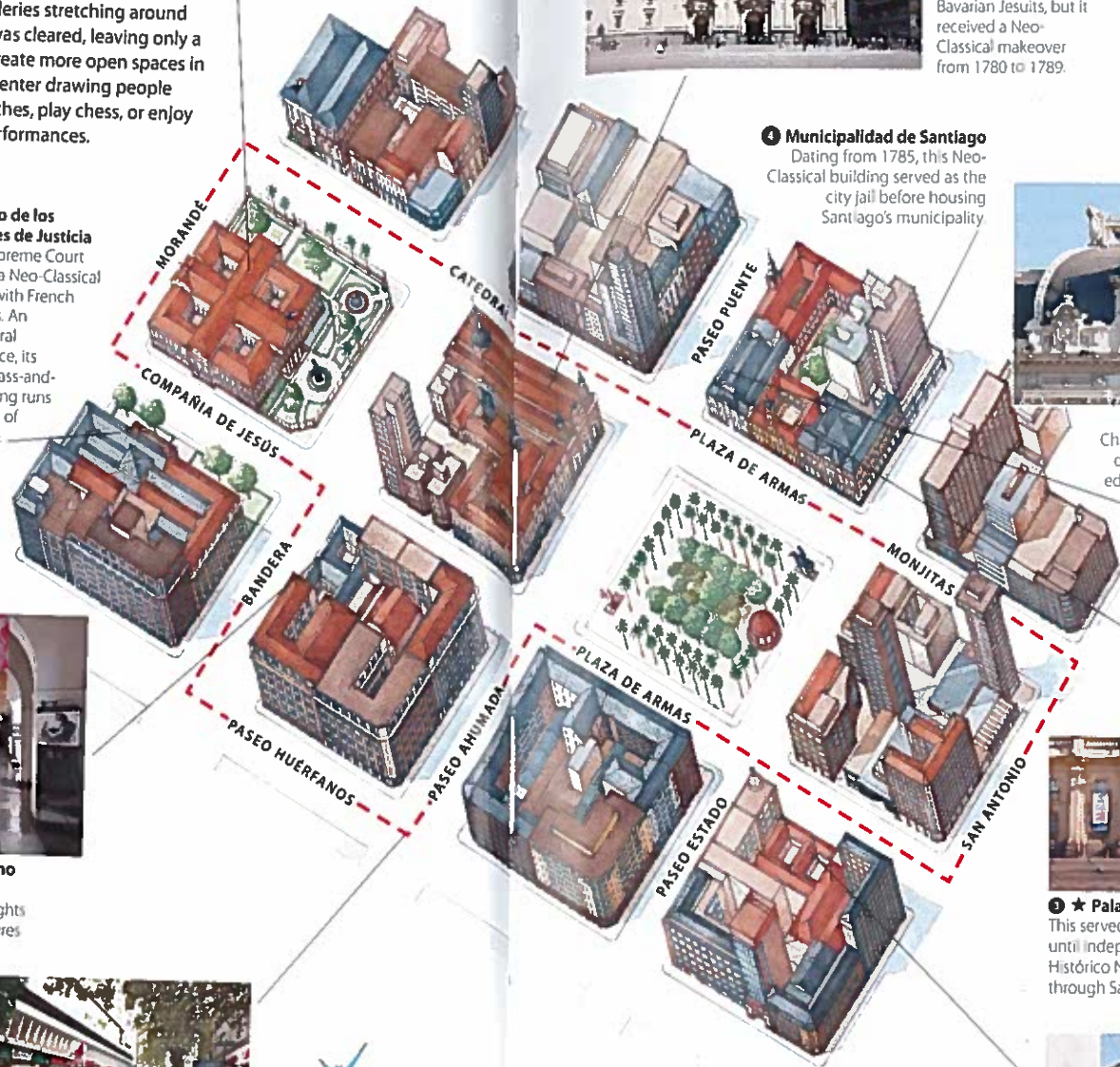


3 ★ **Paseos Ahumada and Huérfanos**
These two bustling pedestrian walkways are lined with shopping centers, cafés, and restaurants.

For hotels and restaurants in this area see p276 and p290

4 **Ex Congreso Nacional**

This venerable edifice was constructed 1858–76 in the Neo-Classical style, with striking Corinthian columns.



4 **Municipalidad de Santiago**

Dating from 1785, this Neo-Classical building served as the city jail before housing Santiago's municipality.



5 **Correo Central**
Chile's Correo Central (Post Office) occupies a French Neo-Classical edifice built in 1882 on the site of Pedro de Valdivia's residence.



6 ★ **Palacio de la Real Audiencia**
This served as Chile's Supreme Court until independence in 1810. The Museo Histórico Nacional within offers a walk through Santiago's Colonial past.



7 **Casa Colorada**

One of the last 18th-century structures left in Santiago, Casa Colorada features a second story, uncommon in its day. It now houses the Museo de Santiago.



1 **Catedral Metropolitana**

Consecrated in 1775, Catedral Metropolitana is the fourth church to be built on this site. This cathedral was originally designed by Bavarian Jesuits, but it received a Neo-Classical makeover from 1780 to 1789.



Locator Map

See also Street Finder maps 2 & 3

● Catedral Metropolitana

Plaza de Armas. **City Map** 2 E2.
 ☞ Plaza de Armas. **Open** 9am–7pm daily. 📍

Set on the western side of the Plaza de Armas, the Catedral Metropolitana was inaugurated in 1775 and is the fourth church to be built on this site, after previous structures were destroyed in earthquakes. The cathedral is considered the most important in Chile and is the seat of the Archdiocese of Santiago de Chile. The original design was conceived by Bavarian Jesuits, whose influence can be seen in the cathedral's imposing, handcarved cedar doors and wooden pews, despite the church having undergone an endless series of renovations and architectural alterations.

The grand interior is 295 ft (90 m) long and divided into three naves. The right nave holds an urn that guards the hearts of war heroes who fought the Concepción battle during the War of the Pacific (1879–83). It also holds the vestige and altar of Santa Teresa de los Andes, Chile's first saint. Highlights in the central nave include the organ, imported from London in 1850; the cathedral's original 18th-century pulpit; and the central altar, constructed in Munich in 1912. Behind the altar is the crypt where Chile's past cardinals and archbishops are buried. The left nave is the Iglesia de Sagrario (Tabernacle Church), a national monument



The Baroque façade of the Catedral Metropolitana

and site of the first parish that was founded in the country. The cathedral's Capilla del Centesimo Sacramento (the Hundredth Sacrament Chapel) is covered in beautiful silverwork crafted by Jesuits.

The cathedral houses Jesuit artwork and other religious imagery in the **Museo de Arte Sagrado**, a small yet atmospheric museum reached through the church.

● Correo Central

Plaza de Armas 983. **City Map** 2 E2.
 Tel (02) 2956-5153. ☞ Plaza de Armas. **Open** 9am–6:30pm Mon–Fri, 10am–2pm Sat. 📍 correos.cl

Historically known as the site of the first house built in early Santiago, the Correo Central was initially the residence of the city's founding father, Pedro de Valdivia. Later it served as the Governing Council, and following independence, as the presidential residence until 1846. In 1881, a fire destroyed



Old post-office artifacts at the Correo Central

For hotels and restaurants in this area see p276 and p290

part of the edifice. Soon after, the government planned a grand post office at the Plaza de Armas, enlisting the help of architect and musician Ricardo Brown, who adapted his design using the actual base and partial walls of the existing building. He expanded the walls to a thickness of 4 ft (1 m) and topped the roof with metal. In 1908, in a bid to beautify the building, architect J. Eduardo Ferham renovated the façade in Renaissance style, adding a third floor and a glass cupola.

Today, the Correo Central has a small postal museum and stamp collection on the first floor to memorialize the history of Correos de Chile (Post Office of Chile).

● Palacio de la Real Audiencia

Plaza de Armas 951. **City Map** 2 E2.
 Tel (02) 2411-7010. ☞ Plaza de Armas. **Open** 10am–5:30pm Tue–Sun. 📍 cameras without flash allowed. dlbam.cl

Built between 1804 and 1808, the Neo-Classical Palacio de la Real Audiencia has been witness to some of the most important events in Chile. In 1811, the palace was the site of Chile's first National Congress, and later it housed the governmental offices of Chile's first president and liberator, Bernardo O'Higgins. During the 20th century, the edifice housed the City Hall and the post office.

Located in this old palace, the **Museo Histórico Nacional**

charts Chile's history through a chronological display of exhibits from the Colonial period to the military coup of 1973. Exhibit rooms are spread around a central courtyard and feature rare 18th-century paintings and furniture such as a sacristy wardrobe. Built in Baroque polychrome modeled in a Spanish-Renaissance style, the wardrobe guarded sacred ornaments for Catholic ceremonies. Reproductions of home interiors depict daily life in Colonial Chile, as do traditional clothing and agricultural instruments. There are also sections dedicated to transportation and education. The temporary exhibit hall, called Sala Plaza de Armas (Heritage Square), features displays about Chilean culture and customs.



Sacristy wardrobe, c.1760, at the Museo Histórico Nacional

● Municipalidad de Santiago

Plaza de Armas s/n. **City Map** 2 E2.
 Tel (02) 2713-6602. ☞ Plaza de Armas. **Closed** to the public. municipalidadesantiago.cl

Although Santiago's municipal building is closed to the public, its exterior architecture is easily appreciated from the Plaza de Armas. Originally founded in 1548 as the *cabildo*, or Colonial town hall, this was also the site of the city's first jail. Three buildings on the site were subsequently destroyed by earthquakes or fire. In 1785, Italian architect Joaquin Toesca,

who had already put his signature Neo-Classical stamp on many of Santiago's buildings, rebuilt the town hall. In 1883, following the transfer of the jail to new premises, the town hall offices expanded, but within a decade the edifice succumbed to a major fire. Renovations began apace and by 1895 the Santiago Municipality was installed in the restored building. This still maintained the previous structure's Neo-Classical style, but now displayed touches of Italian Renaissance, in the form of arched doorways and three enormous frontal windows framed by columns. Today, the front façade bears a coat of arms given by Spain.

● Casa Colorada

Merced 860. **City Map** 2 E2. Tel (02) 2386-7400. ☞ Plaza de Armas. **Closed** for restoration until further notice. 📍 📷 📺 munistgo.cl

One of the few remaining Colonial structures in the capital, the Casa Colorada (Red House) is highly regarded as a pristine example of Colonial architecture designed for the bourgeoisie of Chile. Built in 1770, it was the home of Don Mateo de Toro y Zambrano (1727–1811), a wealthy entrepreneur and the first Count of the Conquest, a title he bought from the Spanish Crown. Toro y Zambrano went on to serve as a senior military leader and Royal Governor during Spanish rule. On September 18, 1810, he was elected the first president of the



Modern-day façade of the Municipalidad de Santiago

newly formed government junta during Chile's fledgling struggle for independence. In 1817, after the Battle of Chacabuco (see p48), revolutionaries José San Martín and Bernardo O'Higgins stayed at the Casa Colorada, followed by Lord Cochrane (see p207).

The Casa Colorada is unique in that it has two floors, which was unusual at the time. The family originally lived on the second floor and rooms on the first floor were used as Don Mateo's offices. The building was built with a brick façade painted red (hence the name) and reinforced with decorative stone along the base, arched windows with forged iron balconies, and a central patio. Casa Colorada is now home to the prestigious **Museo de Santiago**, which charts the city's history from Colonial times to independence. Deferred maintenance, exacerbated by the earthquake of 2010, has closed the museum until at least 2016.



Wax dolls in a tertulia (social gathering) at the Museo de Santiago, Casa Colorada

Museo Chileno de Arte Precolombino

Inaugurated in 1981, the highly regarded Museo Chileno de Arte Precolombino is dedicated exclusively to the study of the artistic and symbolic legend of cultures throughout Latin America. The museum is housed in the impressive Neo-Classical Palacio de la Real Aduana, which was built between 1805 and 1807 as the Royal Customs House, and which later served as the National Library and Court of Law. The permanent exhibits are divided into six cultural regions. Of special interest is the valuable collection of pre-Columbian textiles and excellent ceramics. There are also interesting temporary exhibitions.

Ceramic Art

The Bahía, Tolita, and Jama-Coaque cultures of coastal Ecuador produced elaborate human and animal figurines, and representations of temples, in addition to ornate everyday items such as tripod vases and yucca graters.



★ Chinchorro Mummy

Now extinct, the Chinchorro (see p165) lived in northern Chile and southern Peru, where they practiced mummification for over 3,500 years. They used sticks, vegetation, and mud to preserve bodies 2,000 years before the Egyptians began mummifying their dead.

Gallery Guide

The first floor has a temporary exhibition hall where in-depth displays focus on a particular culture. Galleries on the museum's second floor feature permanent exhibitions on indigenous groups from across the Americas. There is a café and a space for outdoor events at the museum's entrance patio.

For hotels and restaurants in this area see p276 and p290

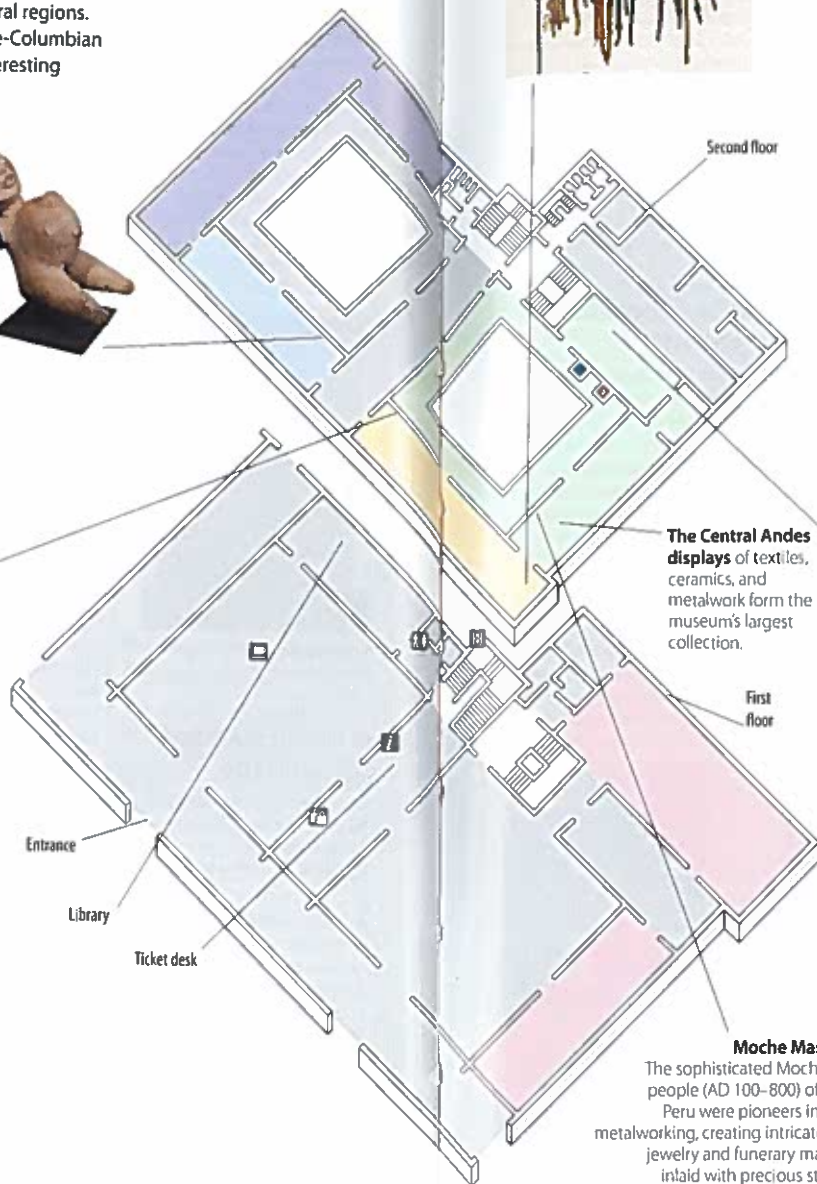


Neo-Classical façade of the palatial building housing the museum



★ Incan Quipu

The expansive Incan empire kept complex judicial data and business transactions on record using the quipu, a knotted counting instrument that could only be deciphered by the record keeper.



Second floor

The Central Andes displays of textiles, ceramics, and metalwork form the museum's largest collection.

First floor

Library

Ticket desk

Entrance



★ Andean Textiles

The early domestication of alpacas and llamas allowed Central Andean cultures such as the Paracas and Nazca (100 BC–AD 300) to create aesthetic textiles. Culturally and politically symbolic designs conveyed a user's ethnic identity.



Moche Masks

The sophisticated Moche people (AD 100–800) of Peru were pioneers in metalworking, creating intricate jewelry and funerary masks inlaid with precious stones.

Key

- Mesoamerican
- Caribbean
- Intermediate
- Amazonian
- Central Andes
- Southern Andes
- Temporary exhibition space
- Non-exhibition space

VISITORS' CHECKLIST

Practical Information

Bandera 361. City Map E2.
Tel (02) 2928-1522. Open 10am–6pm Tue–Sun. Free for students & children by prior arrangement only.
www.precolombino.cl

Transport

Plaza de Armas.

Sergio Larraín García-Moreno

Hailed as a charismatic bon vivant and visionary advocate of Latin American and European art, Sergio Larraín García-Moreno (1905–99) was the founder of the Museo Chileno de Arte Precolombino. An architect with a passionate interest in archaeology and ancient American cultures, Larraín began to trade and sell modern art to buy pre-Columbian relics. He convinced the Santiago Municipality and the city mayor to let him convert the old, fire-damaged Royal Customs House into a museum, and employed experts to procure artifacts from private collections located across Europe and the Americas. The museum opened with 1,500 exhibits in 1981; today the collection is double in size.



Chilean collector Sergio Larraín García-Moreno

① Paseos Ahumada and Huérfanos

City Map 2 E2. Plaza de Armas. 

Pedestrianized in 1977 by closing 12 blocks to motor vehicles, Paseo Ahumada and Paseo Huérfanos are two walkways flanked by numerous shopping galleries, restaurants, electronics stores, and commercial businesses. Catering to a bustling downtown population, the *paseos* take on a lively ambience, with thousands of people walking to and fro all day. Street performers add to the excitement of a stroll here.

Paseo Ahumada stretches from Avenida del Libertador Bernardo O'Higgins, popularly called Avenida Alameda, to the Mercado Central (see pp76-7). It is cut across by a number of streets, most notably by Agustinas, whose junction with Ahumada is the site of the former Hotel Crillón. The first story of this edifice is occupied by **Galería Crillón**, one of many downtown *galerías* – labyrinthine shopping centers brimming with stores selling everything from handicrafts to designer wear.

Paseo Huérfanos runs parallel to Agustinas and crosses Paseo Ahumada near the historic **Banco de Chile**. Built in 1921–25 by Viennese architect Alberto Siegel, the bank boasts ornate interiors and old-fashioned teller windows that are worth a look.



Pedestrians taking a break on the busy Paseo Ahumada

③ Palacio de los Tribunales de Justicia

Compañía de Jesús, esq. Morandé. City Map 2 E2. Plaza de Armas. Open 9am–2pm Mon–Fri. Note: IDs to be left at the front desk.

Constructed between 1905 and 1930, the Palacio de los Tribunales de Justicia exhibits both Neo-Classical and Greco-Roman features. The colossal building stretches from *calle*s Morandé to Bandera, covering an area of around 43,000 sq ft (4,000 sq m). Since



Sculpture of a condor, Tribunales de Justicia

its early days, it has often been the scene of public protests. In 1818, Chile's First National Government Assembly was convened here. Designed by

the French architect Emilio Doyere, the building is entered through a marble stairway that is flanked by two fine caryatids. Although the edifice has a somber, institutional façade, its interior offers a stunning example of 20th-century architecture. An open three-story central hall is encircled with wraparound interior balconies and topped with a vaulted glass-and-metal ceiling. Located above the entrance is a bas-relief of a condor clutching a book inscribed with the letters LEX, the Latin term for Law.

Today, the palace houses Chile's Supreme Court, the Court of Appeals, the Military and Police Courts, as well as the Supreme Court Library.

③ Ex Congreso Nacional

Catedral 1158. City Map 2 E2. Plaza de Armas. Open 9am–2pm last Sun of May.

An imposing Neo-Classical structure with massive columns similar to those of the Pantheon in Rome, the Ex Congreso Nacional was designated a National Monument in 1976. Beginning in 1858, the building's construction experienced a series of delays and was only completed in 1876, under the direction of architect Manuel Aldunate. In 1895, the building nearly burned to the ground and was rebuilt by architect Emilio Doyere in 1901.

Congressional sessions were held in this building until the dissolution of the Congress by former dictator Augusto Pinochet in 1973. Today, it houses the Santiago offices of the Senate as well as the Chamber of Deputies.

The edifice is surrounded by lush, exotic gardens that are open to the public. The statue of the Virgin that dominates the grounds was placed in memory of the 2,000 people who were killed in a fire at the Iglesia Compañía de Jesús in 1863, which was located nearby



Formal gardens fronting the entrance to Ex Congreso Nacional

For hotels and restaurants in this area see p276 and p290

③ Palacio Alhambra

Compañía de Jesús 1340. City Map 2 D2. Tel (02) 2698-0875. La Moneda. Closed for restoration. snba.cl

An extraordinary architectural gem, the Palacio Alhambra stands out in a neighborhood dominated chiefly by Neo-Classical structures and modern storefronts. Built between 1860 and 1862, Alhambra was modeled after the eponymous Moorish palace in Granada, Spain. The architect Manuel Aldunate designed the *palacio* for Francisco Ossa Mercado, a wealthy silver mine owner, politician, and military lieutenant. Aldunate traveled to Spain to study the original Alhambra Palace. Upon his return, he created a smaller version of it with elaborate plaster ceilings and carved pillars, and replicated the lion fountain from its Court of Lions.

Following Ossa's death, the *palacio* was bought by Don Julio Garrido Falcón, a millionaire and renowned Chilean philanthropist, who donated the building to the National Society of Fine Arts in 1940.

Today, the palace houses the Society's offices and operates as a cultural center offering art classes and hosting exhibitions. Due to restoration work, it is closed to the public until further notice.



Moorish motifs and arches at Santiago's Palacio Alhambra

③ Cancillería

Teatinos 180. City Map 2 E2. Tel (02) 2827-4200. La Moneda.

Chile's Ministry of Foreign Relations, or Cancillería, is located in an impressive 17-story building that was formerly the Hotel Carrera.

Open from 1940 to 2003, this was the grandest hotel of its time. It was designed by architect Josué Smith Solar (with help from his son José), who was already well known for his design of the Club Hípico (see

p85). The hotel's guests included Fidel Castro, Henry Kissinger, Charles de Gaulle, Nelson Rockefeller, Indira Gandhi, and Neil Armstrong, among others.

Hotel Carrera was most famous for its proximity to the Palacio de La Moneda (see p68) of the Americas.



Carving on Palacio Alhambra



Opal-glass mural behind the gleaming marble columns in Cancillería's lobby



The palace guard outside the stately Neo-Classical Palacio de La Moneda

12 Palacio de La Moneda

Avenida Alameda, between Calles Morandé & Teatinos. **City Map** 2 E3. **Tel** (02) 2690-4000. **La Moneda**. **Open** 10:30am–6pm Mon–Fri. **Note**: book 1 wk in advance by email (visitas@presidencia.cl); passport needed to gain entry.

The immaculately preserved Palacio de La Moneda is Chile's presidential headquarters. Built between 1784 and 1799 by the Spanish, it was inaugurated in 1805 as the Casa de Moneda, the nation's mint. From 1845, it housed the republican government offices, and also served as the presidential residence till 1958. Designed by Italian master architect Joaquín Toesca (1745–99), the palace was the largest building erected in any of Spain's colonies during the 18th century, and is considered one of the finest examples of Neo-Classical architecture in Chile.

At the northeastern side of the Palacio de La Moneda is the **Plaza de la Constitución**, an expansive grassy space crisscrossed by walkways and fronted by a triangular cement esplanade. Visitors can present their passports here to enjoy a stroll through the palace's patios. This easy access might seem odd to visiting foreigners used to more stringent security at other presidential headquarters.

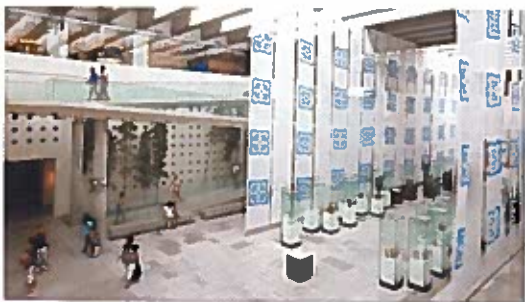
The plaza was designed in the 1930s to create Barrio Cívico, the country's political and administrative center; other civic buildings around the plaza include the Ministry of Foreign Relations, Ministry of Labor, the Intendente, and the Central Bank of Chile. At the plaza's southern corner is a statue of Chile's former president



Monument to Salvador Allende

Salvador Allende, who perished here during the coup d'état of 1973 (see p52) that ushered in the Pinochet regime. It is possible to watch the ceremonial changing of the guard that takes place at the plaza at 10am every other day. From the plaza, visitors can enter the palace's interior courtyards that comprise the Patio de los Cañones – named for the two 1778

Peruvian-made cannons that are on display here – and the Patio de los Naranjos, named for the orange trees that adorn it.



Contemporary interior of the Centro Cultural Palacio La Moneda

13 Centro Cultural Palacio La Moneda

Plaza de La Ciudadanía Nº 26. **City Map** 2 E3. **Tel** (02) 2355-6500. **La Moneda**. **Open** 9am–9pm daily. **ccplm.cl** **Note**: access is via elevators at ground level on the plaza or from sloping walkways at Calles Morandé and Teatinos.

A pet project of former president Ricardo Lagos, the cutting-edge Centro Cultural Palacio La Moneda was inaugurated in 2006 as part of the 2010 Bicentennial Project that introduced new museums and improved road infrastructure in the capital. The cultural center is located just southwest of the Palacio de La Moneda, in what once served as the palace's basement.

Designed by noted Chilean architect Cristián Undurraga, the cultural center features three subterranean floors that surround a spacious central hall made of cement and glass. Three large salons host international traveling exhibitions as well as shows by well-known Chilean artists. This facility also houses the Arts Documentation Center library; the National Film Archive, with a digital library and a movie theater that can accommodate over 200 people; a number of restaurants and cafés, and a superb *artesanía* store that showcases arts and crafts from the length of Chile. The sprawling Plaza de la Ciudadanía, landscaped with gorgeous walkways and reflecting pools, acts as the roof for the underground cultural center.



Fountain adorning the tree-lined walkway leading to Plaza Bulnes

14 Plaza Bulnes

Northern end of Paseo Bulnes. **City Map** 2 E3. **La Moneda**.

Named for the six-block pedestrian esplanade at the end of which it stands, Plaza Bulnes has been the site of military and patriotic celebrations during the years of the Pinochet dictatorship as well as a center for dissident protests that continued long after the return to democracy (see p53).

In 1975, General Pinochet established the controversial Eternal Flame of Liberty at the plaza. This flame was regarded by many as a visible monument to the dictatorship, and dissidents regularly attempted to extinguish it as a form of protest.

In 1979, the remains of revolutionary hero and Chile's first president Bernardo O'Higgins (see p157) were moved from the Cementerio General (see p90) to the plaza by the Pinochet regime. This was done in an attempt to create a patriotic altar that represented a supposed symbolic return to traditional historical values.

Plaza Bulnes was renovated in 2005 and now features an underground crypt holding the remains of Bernardo O'Higgins that can be viewed through a glass window. The Eternal Flame of Liberty was finally put out during the course of the renovations.

15 Bolsa de Comercio

La Bolsa 64. **City Map** 2 E3. **Tel** (02) 2399-3000. **Universidad de Chile**. **Open** 9:30am–5pm Mon–Fri. **bolsadesantiago.cl** **Note**: passport or ID needed to gain entrance.

Launched in 1884 with only 160 incorporated companies, Chile's stock market expanded rapidly to include twice the number of companies within a decade. The early years of the 20th century continued to be a time of tremendous good fortune for the Chilean economy, mostly due to the boom in metal and nitrate mining in the northern desert.

The financial nerve center of the capital, today this area is a micro-district comprising charming cobblestone streets and historic buildings. At the heart of this economic hub is the Bolsa de Comercio, Santiago's lively stock exchange. It is housed in a French Renaissance-style triangular structure, with Roman pillars and a slate roof with a cupola. This elegant old building was built in 1917 by Emilio Jecquier, who was already famous for his design of the Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes (see p75). Visitors need to show their passports or IDs to enter the interiors of the building and witness the hustle and bustle of the stock market business. Although considerable modern technology has been installed during the past few decades, the interiors of the Bolsa de Comercio retain their original splendor.



Historic structures lining a cobblestone street in La Bolsa

16 Club de la Unión

Avenida Alameda 1091. **City Map** 2 E3. **Tel** (02) 2428-4600. **Universidad de Chile**. **clubdelaunion.cl** **Note**: entry via invitation only.

The exclusive Club de la Unión is an architectural gem constructed between 1917 and 1925 by noted Chilean architect Alberto Cruz Montt (1879–1955) in French Neo-Classical style. The club boasts spacious dining rooms, halls, a private art gallery, and the longest carved oak bar in the country.

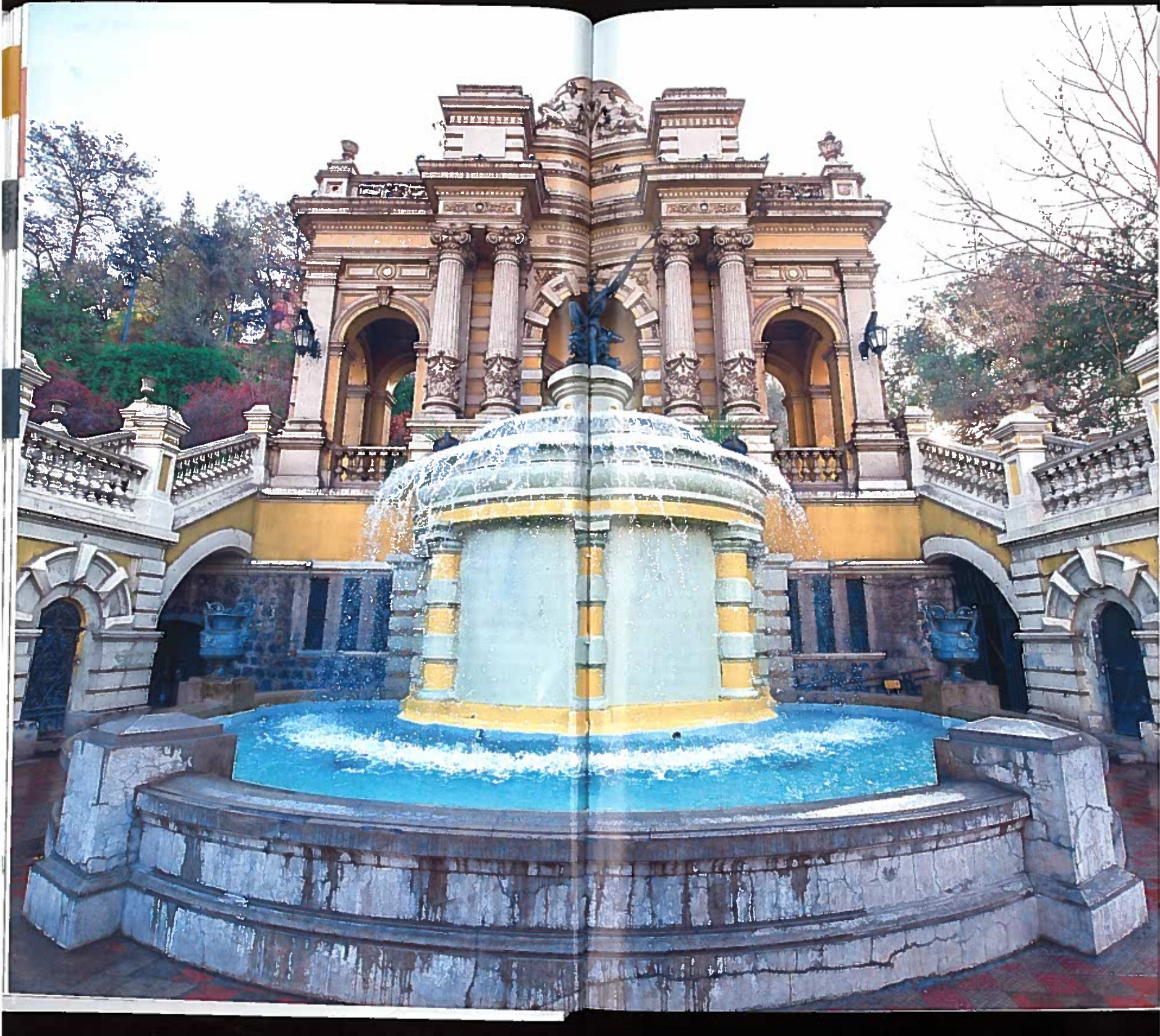


Club de la Unión signage

The ornate interior of the club features gleaming marble walls, antique furnishings, crystal chandeliers, and other finery. The club operated as a men's-only association until 2006, when it invited its first female member.



Bolsa de Comercio's interior, reflecting a mix of the old and new



► Barrio París-Londres

Londres and París. **City Map** 2 F3. Universidad de Chile.

With small, artfully designed mansions, the tiny neighborhood known as Barrio París-Londres is an architectural oasis in an area cluttered with parking garages and utilitarian buildings that hark back to the 1960s and 1970s. Laid out in 1922, the *barrio* was constructed over the gardens of the Convento de San Francisco. It was conceived by the architect Ernesto Holzmann, who believed that downtown Santiago lacked attractive neighborhoods that were within walking distance of services and shops. After purchasing the gardens of the Convento de San Francisco, he enlisted architects to create what he envisioned as a "model block residence," one he hoped to reproduce in other parts of the city.

The neighborhood is well preserved today, and is delightful for its elegant ambience, cafés, and courtyards. Within a four-block radius of winding, cobblestone streets are styles such as French Neo-Classical (Londres 70), Italian Renaissance (Londres 65), and Neo-Colonial (Londres 65).

The building at Londres 38 was infamous during the dictatorship years (1973-90) as a torture center.



An old mansion on a quiet, cobble street of Barrio París-Londres

For hotels and restaurants in this area see p276 and p290



Awe-inspiring magnificence of the Medina Library at Biblioteca Nacional

► Iglesia y Convento de San Francisco

Londres 4. **City Map** 2 F3. **Tel** (02) 2639-8737. Universidad de Chile. **Open** 9:30am-1:30pm & 3pm-6pm Mon-Fri, 10am-2pm Sat & Sun. museosanfrancisco.com

The oldest surviving building in Santiago, the Iglesia y Convento de San Francisco is a national monument with distinct architectural details from various eras. Pedro de Valdivia first erected a chapel here in the 16th century in honor of the Virgen del Socorro, whose image he had brought with him and who, he believed, had protected the conquistadores against Indian attacks. In 1618, the Franciscan Order established a church of stone walls and coffered ceilings, expanding the complex to include cloisters, gardens, and an infirmary. With the exception of the church's bell towers, the structure survived two major earthquakes. The current tower was designed by Fermín Vivaceta in 1857 in Neo-Classical style.

The giant stones used to build the walls of the original church are still visible, as are the nave's intricately carved woodwork and the grand doors carved from cedar. The convent's lush and tranquil patio and tiled roofs are early examples of the traditional architecture of Chile (see pp32-3) Set in the church is the **Museo San Francisco**, with

an extremely valuable series of 17th-century paintings that narrate the life of St. Francis de Assisi. Also on display are antique locks, paintings representing the life of the Virgen del Socorro, a graph indicating the lineage of the Franciscans, and the Salon Gabriela Mistral, which houses the poet's Nobel Prize medal (see p30).

► Biblioteca Nacional

Avenida Alameda 651. **City Map** 2 F3. **Tel** (02) 2360-5310. Santa Lucía. **Open** Dec-Mar: 9am-5:45pm daily; Apr-Nov: 9am-7pm Mon-Fri, 10am-2pm Sat. bibliotecanacional.cl

An imposing building that occupies a whole city block, the Biblioteca Nacional was built 1914-27 by architect Gustavo García Postigo in the style of the French Academy. Its interiors have marble staircases, bronze balustrades, painted murals, and carved wood detail in a highly



Gabriela Mistral memorial medal

ornamental style, unusual in a 20th-century building. The library boasts one of Latin America's most valuable collections of Colonial-era literary works – it is estimated that 60 percent of everything printed during this period can be found in the handsome **Medina Library** on the second floor. Works include *Mística Teología* from Mexico (1547), *La Doctrina Cristiana* from Peru (1584), and chronicles of explorers such as Sir Francis Drake.

► Teatro Municipal

Agustinas 794. **City Map** 2 F2. **Tel** (02) 2463-8888. Universidad de Chile Mon, Wed & Fri (email visitas@municipal.cl) municipal.cl

Built between 1853 and 1857, the Teatro Municipal is Chile's most important venue for classical music, opera, and theater. The theater was originally designed by architect Claude François Brunet des Baines in an elegant, French Neo-Classical style with a well-proportioned and symmetrical façade. Its first ever performance was an Italian production of Verdi's *Ernani*. Soon the theater became the cultural and social center of Santiago's elite, who contributed heavily to the production of important opera performances. In 1870, a raging fire nearly razed the theater. However, architect Lucien Henault successfully restored the building to its earlier splendor, and it was reopened in 1873.

The theater foyer, La Capilla, features two sculptures by Nicánor Plaza – *Prólogo* and *Epílogo*. The main concert hall has a capacity of 1,500, not including the private Sala Arrau salon on the second floor, with space for 250. The interior hall was designed after the Paris Opera house with lateral viewing boxes and a large ceiling cupola, whose grand crystal chandelier dates from 1930. The theater's massive curtain weighs 2,645 lb (1,200 kg) and was made in

Germany in 1995 using burgundy mohair velvet. Throughout the theater there are costume workshops, rehearsal studios, dressing rooms, and set design studios. The Philharmonic Orchestra, Santiago Ballet, and Municipal Theater Chorus are all permanent players at the theater. Many great artists have graced this stage, including Plácido Domingo, Igor Stravinsky, Anna Pavlova, and Chilean pianist Claudio Arrau.

► Iglesia San Agustín

Agustinas 828. **City Map** 2 E2. **Tel** (02) 2638-0978. Universidad de Chile.

The construction of the Iglesia San Agustín, formerly known as Templo de Nuestra Señora de Gracia, marked the founding of the Catholic Augustinian mission in Chile. Augustinians reached Chile from Peru in 1595 and erected their first church here in 1625. In 1647, an earthquake destroyed the church, along with most of the city. Rebuilt in 1707, the church was



Cristo de Mayo at Iglesia San Agustín

toppled again, by an earthquake in 1730. It was restored by architect Fermín Vivaceta, who added columns to the façade and bell towers. A curious aspect of San Agustín is the *Cristo de Mayo* statue. After the 1647 earthquake, priests salvaged the intact statue to find that Christ's crown of thorns had fallen around his

neck, which appeared miraculous given that the diameter of the crown was smaller than that of the head. Priests paraded through the rubble streets of Santiago to celebrate this event, and in the ensuing decades the commemoration of May 13 grew into the city's most venerable religious festival. Today, followers still celebrate May 13, but on a much smaller scale.



Colonnaded nave of the ornate Baroque Basilica de la Merced

► Basilica y Museo de la Merced

Mac Iver 341. **City Map** 2 F2. **Tel** (02) 2664-9181. Plaza de Armas **Open** 10am-2pm & 3-6pm Mon-Fri. museolamerced.cl

Established by the Order of the Blessed Mary of Mercy – who arrived with the first expedition to Chile – the Basilica de la Merced was built in 1566. During the city's early years, it was patronized by the elite, some of whom are buried within its walls. These include Governor Rodrigo de Quiroga and his wife Inés de Suarez, the first Spanish woman in Chile. The present-day basilica was built in 1760 and later adorned with Neo-Classical touches by architect Joaquín Toesca. The Baroque interiors feature a hand-carved pulpit and a Virgen la Mercedes from 1548. The church also boasts the largest organ in Chile. On the second floor of the basilica is the Museo de la Merced, an interesting collection of Easter Island artifacts, Colonial art, and 18th-century figurines.



Simple, classical lines of the whitewashed Teatro Municipal



Vast colonnaded nave of the Iglesia de Santo Domingo

④ Posada del Corregidor

Esmeralda 749 **City Map** 2 F1.
Tel (02) 2633-5573. ☑ Bellas Artes.
Open 9:30am–1pm & 2–6pm
 Mon–Fri, 10am–2pm Sat. ☑
www.santiagocultura.cl

A national landmark dating from 1750, the Posada del Corregidor is one of the few Colonial adobe buildings left in Santiago. Its thick adobe walls, stone foundations, and second-story wraparound balcony are outstanding examples of urban architecture in 18th-century Chile. In the 1920s, the *posada* became a social center for Santiago's bohemian set.

Although the building's name means the Magistrate's Inn, it was never actually the residence of a magistrate. The *posada* was christened as such – with a bogus plaque – in reference to the Colonial-era magistrate Luis Manuel Zañartu, whose descendant Darío Zañartu purchased the building in 1928.

Today it operates as an art gallery featuring temporary exhibits of emerging artists, but it once served as a dance hall of dubious reputation known as the Filarmónica. Although the *posada* suffered significant damage in the 2010 earthquake, it has since undergone extensive repairs and restoration. The wooden doors and corner pillar are distinctive, and the shady plaza alongside it, with its central fountain, makes an ideal spot for a breather while sightseeing.

④ Iglesia de Santo Domingo

Santo Domingo 961. **City Map** 2 E2.
Tel (02) 2698-5933. ☑ Plaza de Armas. ☑

The present-day Iglesia de Santo Domingo is the fourth church of the Dominican Order to be built on this site, on land that was initially granted by Spain to the church in 1557. The existing building was designed by architect Juan de los Santos Vasconcelos. Its construction began in 1747 – with the aid of Portuguese masons who were brought over to quarry stone – in a Doric Neo-Classical style that is distinct from other structures in downtown Santiago. In 1795–99, the Italian architect Joaquín Toesca intervened to complete the



Virgin of Pompeii, Iglesia de Santo Domingo

church's interiors and added brick towers in a Bavarian Baroque style. The church was finally inaugurated in 1808. Today, worshipers pray to the Virgin of Pompeii, whose statue occupies the central altar.

⑩ Mercado Central

San Pablo 967. **City Map** 2 E1.
Tel (02) 2696-8327. ☑ Cal y Canto.
Open 7am–5pm Sun–Thu, 7am–8pm
 Fri, 6:30am–3pm Sat. ☑
www.mercadocentral.cl

Built in 1872 for the National Exposition in Chile, Mercado Central (Central Market) stands on the site of the burned ruins of Plaza de Abasto. The old plaza had been set up in the early 1800s as a means of dispersing the flood of merchants who then occupied the Plaza de Armas. Designed by self-taught architect

Fernán Vivaceta, the market is considered one of the most beautiful public structures of its era: the government briefly considered using the building for a fine arts museum. A firm in Glasgow, Scotland, was commissioned to build the grand cast-metal roof that now shelters the market space. The lattices and cutouts of the roof were designed to suck air upward and ventilate the market. Part of the metal



Metalwork pilasters sheltering a busy and brightly lit restaurant at the Mercado Central

For hotels and restaurants in this area see p276 and p290



Intricate arches, cupolas, and metalwork fronting the Centro Cultural Estación Mapocho

design features intertwined balustrades, and two reclining women who represent peace and agriculture. Upon the structure's completion, the firm first assembled the building in Glasgow, then took it apart and shipped the pieces in crates to Chile.

After the 1872 exposition, Mercado Central became a premier market. Although Santiago's major wholesale fish and vegetable market has since moved elsewhere, Mercado Central is still an important commercial center. It is frequented by locals and visitors alike who come to see, smell, and buy the bounty of fish and shellfish found along the Chilean coast, or dine on a local dish at one of the many restaurants in and around the market.

⑩ Centro Cultural Estación Mapocho

Plaza de la Cultura s/n, Balmaceda and Independencia. **City Map** 2 E1.
Tel (02) 2787-0000. ☑ Cal y Canto.
Open 10am–7pm Tue–Sun. ☑
 ☑ ☑ ☑ [estacionmapocho.cl](http://www.estacionmapocho.cl)

Inaugurated in 1913, Estación Mapocho was built as a grand terminal for trains that connected Santiago to Valparaíso, northern Chile, and Mendoza in Argentina. The station was designed by renowned Chilean architect

suspended. The building, abandoned, fell into a state of disrepair. Eventually, the government chose to convert it into a cultural center, reopening it in 1994 as the Centro Cultural Estación Mapocho.

During the restoration, architects rescued the station's façade and preserved most of the edifice's ornate details, including its domed ceilings, stained glass, and masonry. Indeed, much of the attraction of visiting the beautiful Estación Mapocho today is to marvel at the splendor of its architecture and decor.

The Centro Cultural now hosts all manner of events, including music concerts, theater performances, and cinema. Many of the original salons have been converted into galleries and spaces for temporary art, dance, and photography exhibits of Chilean artists, but the building is worth a visit in its own right.

The signature event at the center is the austral spring's Feria Internacional del Libro de Santiago. Usually held in October or November, this fortnight-long book fair attracts both Chilean and foreign authors from throughout the Spanish-speaking world, as well as a more international mix. In 2015, the special guests were the Scandinavian countries of Denmark, Norway, Sweden and Finland. Up-to-date information on forthcoming book fair-related events can be accessed at www.camaradellibro.cl.



A music workshop at the Centro Cultural Estación Mapocho