



Connecting Lives, Sharing Cultures

Featured Country: **Chile**



Country Information

Chile is the southernmost country of the world or, as Pablo Neruda (Chilean Nobel Prize Winner) once wrote, the “country made for poets.” From flamingos in world’s driest desert in northern Chile, the towering presence of the Andes, to penguin colonies in the southern Patagonia region, the variety of Chile’s natural wonders is enchanting. You will learn about Chilean culture by sharing your host student’s special traditions as they practice and teach the customs of their various ethnic groups.

Lifestyle and Family

Like Latin Americans in general, Chileans are friendly. Chile is a vast mixture of races and nationalities such as Mapuches (the native Chileans), Aymara, Palestinians, Jews, Italians, Asians, Yugoslavians, Greeks and Germans. Because of this great ethnic diversity, Chileans are open to many different types of people. Life in Chile is very family oriented and children are taught to have a strong respect for their parents. Most families are patriarchal but mothers do have an equal hand in decision making. Sons and daughters are treated differently with the rules for girls being more stringent.

Teen Life and Sports

In their spare time, young Chileans like to get together at friends’ houses or go to movies. They also like to gather in the town square, go to parties, or just hang out in the local café. Most schools have the option for after school sports and activities.



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Dress

Chilean dress is very similar to Western style of dress. Students are required to wear uniforms to school. Chile goes through most of the same weather conditions as we do in the U.S.

Diet

Lunch is the main meal of the day. The main course usually includes meat (beef, lamb, pork or chicken) or fish with rice or pasta and vegetables. Dinner is served after 8 usually and is normally smaller portions of lunch. Food is mostly steamed, fried in vegetable oil, or barbecued. Fruits are varied and abundant in Chile throughout the year.



Language and Religion

Spanish is the primary language in Chile, but English, German and Mapudungun are also commonly spoken. About 70% of the population is Roman Catholic.



Alejandra's Mother's Day Message to her Host Mother, Jan

I want to thank my host mom, Jan Thoen, for everything she has done for me. We have been together for almost 4 months, and I have to tell you that this time together has been the best time ever. I really love you like my mom, because you are my mom, and even though I'm going back to my country in a few

months, i want you to know that you'll always be on my mind and heart. Thanks for let me be part of your family, thanks for help me every time i needed it, and thanks for give me the best experience that i could ever have had. Thanks for everything. HAPPY MOTHERS DAY!!

love, Ale

Apply now to host a student from Chile at www.afsusa.org/host-family/apply.