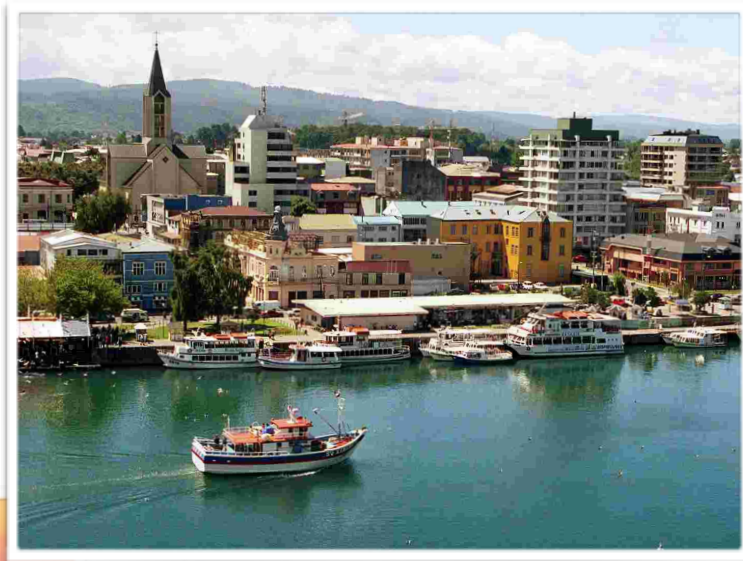


Valdivia, Chile



Volunteer Vets and Nurses Abroad Program

A Veterinary Experience of a Lifetime



The GAAP Veterinary Clinic

All you need to know about immersing yourself in Valdivia, Chile

Fun Facts about Chile

- Chile is the narrowest country in the world. It has an average width of just 110 miles and its narrowest width is only 56 miles.
- Chile is South America's most stable and prosperous nation.
- Its official language is Spanish, however the Spanish spoken in distinctly accented and unique compared to other South American countries.
- Chile has an amazing variety of climates and landscapes; from the driest desert in the world (Atacama) all the way down to Antarctica.
- Chile is crazy about soccer, winning the American Cup in 2015 and the Bicentennial Cup in 2016.
- This is the land of one of the best wines in the world.



Currency

- Chilean peso
- To get a very rough idea of what things cost, a trick is to double the first 2 numbers, example for \$3.500 CLP ($3.5 \times 2 = 7.0$) you get \$7.00 USD. So \$50.000 CLP is about \$100 USD.
- There is a bank machine in both the Santiago and Valdivia and airports but sometimes the one in Valdivia is non-functional so best to take money out in Santiago if there is time. The most convenient way to access money in Chile is to put a positive balance on your credit card and then take money out using your that card. Almost everything, at least hotels, restaurants and many stores will accept major credit cards. US dollars are not readily accepted here.

Immunizations

- All travelers should have routine immunizations up to date, including measles-mumps-rubella (MMR) vaccine, diphtheria-tetanus-pertussis vaccine, varicella (chickenpox) vaccine, polio vaccine, and your yearly flu shot.
- It is also recommended to receive immunizations against Hepatitis A and Typhoid.
- The Rabies vaccine is not necessary for travel in Chile.

- For more information, visit <http://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/destinations/traveler/none/chile>

Safety

- Most foreigners visit Chile without incident. The security environment is generally safe, and there is comparatively less violent crime experienced in Chile than other Latin American countries.
- Nevertheless, street crime, telephone scams, and residential break-ins are common, especially in Santiago, Valparaiso, Antofagasta, and Iquique. As in any large city, be cautious and aware of your surroundings. Be alert for pick-pocketing, purse and camera snatching, and thefts from backpacks and rental cars. NEVER put your pack, bags or purse in the overhead racks in a bus as travelers all too commonly are robbed in this way.
- For more information, visit <https://travel.state.gov/content/passports/en/country/chile.html>.

Tourist Visas

- Tourist visas are not required for US citizens staying in Chile for 90 days or less.

Arriving and Departing Valdivia

- The international airport that you would arrive at is in Santiago and is named "Arturo Merino Benítez International Airport."
- From Santiago, an 80 minute flight will take you to Pichoy airport, located 20 miles northeast of Valdivia.
- There is a shuttle that travels between Valdivia and the airport for about \$7USD. Tickets are purchased when you arrive- the ticket counter is near the exit door to the left.
- Note that the airport shuttle leaves almost immediately, so if you are trying to check internet or wandering around the airport, the shuttle will leave without you. If you miss the shuttle, a taxi can still drive you to Valdivia for about \$ 40USD
- You must have the name and address of the hotel with you to give to the shuttle driver. It's best to have it on paper as they do not speak any English at all
- If you run into problems, you can call the GAAP Clinic at (63) 225-8772 or Elena's cell at 9-63202094 or Guillermo's cell at 9-71395550.



Accommodation in Valdivia

- There are many options in Valdivia, including hostels for the budget traveler, bed and breakfasts or hotels. If you need help finding accommodation, contact us with your price range and we can help you find something to suit your needs.
- Two great options are: Hostel Entre Rios (<http://www.hostalentrerios.com>) or Aires Buenos Hostel (<http://www.airesbuenos.cl>).

Environment

- Valdivia is located in south-central Chile, tucked away in a temperate rainforest, surrounded by rivers and close to the rugged coastline of the Pacific Ocean
- Total population: 154,432
- Elevation: 16 ft
- Climate
 - The average temperature during the summer months (December-February) is 63 °F, while in the winter the average temperature is 47 °F (June- August)
 - The average humidity is 80% for the region
 - It rains mostly between March and October; hail is possible during the winter, but it rarely snows

Amenities

- Valdivia is a small-medium size city with all the amenities you may need, including banks, hotels, hostels, restaurants, cafes, bars, Chile's best craft beer, pharmacies, grocery stores, and hospitals.

The Clinic

- The GAAP veterinary clinic works with a host of stakeholders and other veterinarians on a number of projects related to animal welfare and urban fauna control- primarily free-roaming dogs.
- It also works to bring educational activities to schools and public events.
- What your week will consist of at the GAAP clinic:
 - Prior to your arrival, you will be put in direct contact with the Senior Veterinarian at the GAAP Clinic to discuss your experience and strengths to see if there is a particular skill you would like to share with clinic staff
 - The first day (Monday) at the clinic will consist of getting to know the staff and the clinic layout, and to review the plan for the week. What makes our program so unique is the opportunity to tailor your week to the type of expertise you bring to the table. Therefore, quite a bit of flexibility exists depending on your skill set, your goals and interests.
 - Depending on your skill set, there could be opportunities to teach/review techniques, surgical emergencies, CPR, surgical tips, or any other specialty such as ophthalmology, cytology, anesthesiology etc. Depending on your Spanish proficiency, there are opportunities for teaching other veterinarians, engaging children in learning activities, or going on rural campaigns.



- The remainder of the week may consist of a combination of sterilizations and medical cases depending on what is scheduled and what you bring to the table. Everyone is expected to clean and prep for the next day.
- On the last day (Friday) of the week there will be a debriefing to review lessons learned throughout the week and to ask any remaining questions. There will also be time on Friday afternoon to travel to a town in the Andes: Pucon, about 3 hours drive from Valdivia. There you can enjoy the nearby natural hot springs or take part in one of the many adventure tourism opportunities.
- Most participants travel to the airport on Sunday.

Other Projects

- Depending on the time of year, the visitor can also get involved in whatever other project we might be working on at the time, such as education activities, veterinary services in rural areas, bird banding, etc.

Customs and Culture

- Valdivia has been shaped by its early Spanish colonial past and its later history of German colonization. It has often been described as Chile's most beautiful city.
- There are many free cultural events during the summer months of January and February, including concerts, sporting events and other entertainment.
- Halfway through February, Valdivia celebrates *noche Valdiviana* (Valdivian night), where local communities celebrate with a night parade of boats on the river.
- Valdivia continues to be home for the Mapuche, the aboriginal people of this land.
- Valdivia was also shaped by the largest ever recorded earthquake in the history of mankind in 1960. The Great Chilean earthquake rated 9.5 on the Richter scale.



Packing

- *Clothing*
 - ✓ Hiking boots and/or running shoes
 - ✓ Flip flops
 - ✓ Comfortable pants
 - ✓ Quick dry pants
 - ✓ 2-5 scrub tops/bottoms
 - ✓ Warm jacket, fleece, sweater or hoodie
 - ✓ Rain jacket
 - ✓ Hat (+/- gloves)
 - ✓ Shirts or t-shirts
 - ✓ Socks
 - ✓ Underwear
 - ✓ Warm pajamas
 - ✓ Shorts in summer
 - ✓ Bathing suit

- *Vet Supplies are provided; feel free to bring the following if you have specific preferences*
 - ✓ Surgical gloves
 - ✓ Surgical caps
 - ✓ Suture material
 - ✓ Surgical packs
- *Assorted*
 - ✓ Sleeping bag (optional)
 - ✓ Small notebook
 - ✓ Pens
 - ✓ Headlight
 - ✓ Stethoscope
 - ✓ Watch/travel alarm clock
 - ✓ Earplugs if noise bothers you
 - ✓ Any portable food supplies you are particular about (energy bars, granola bars)
 - ✓ Any medications, toiletries, contact lens/glasses, GI meds, First Aid
 - ✓ Sunscreen
 - ✓ Small bottles of hand sanitizer
 - ✓ Day pack
 - ✓ Waist wallet
 - ✓ Quality instant coffee (ie. Starbucks)
- *Flight*
 - ✓ Passport and a copy of your passport photo page and other important ID (driver's license) tucked in your pack
 - ✓ Tickets
 - ✓ Emergency contact info
 - ✓ Copy of travel/health insurance

Costs

- In addition to covering your flight and accommodations, we ask that you fundraise \$1500 to allow the GAAP clinic to operate year-round enabling them to provide low-cost veterinary care to pets in need. We can cover the cost of accommodation if you choose to stay at either Hostel Entre Rios (<http://www.hostalentrerios.com>) or Aires Buenos Hostel (<http://www.airesbuenos.cl>). Please discuss your preference with us. If you are coming as a 2-person team and sharing accommodation, we ask that you fundraise \$2500 total (which will include the cost of accommodation).
- We are here to help you make this dream become a reality with our fundraising tool-kit and one-on-one training session with our recruitment coordinator.
- The end-of-week trip to Pucon will vary with regard to cost depending on what activities you would like to partake in (hot springs, hiking up a volcano, rafting, relax, etc.) and local GAAP staff can help you set this up (to an extent). The trip to Pucon is optional- some volunteers may be gearing up for a much bigger trip after their stay with the GAAP and that is completely fine! We have put together a summary of Chile's main attractions if you need inspiration.

Any Questions?

- Contact our Recruitment Coordinator at maria@vetsinternational.org with any questions you may have.